

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE
CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

J. R. Jackson.

There is not a more fully attested truth of Scripture, nor a more firmly established fact of history, than the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. Consider the number and character of the witnesses "Above five hundred brethren" saw the risen Lord. Being "brethren"—that is Christians, saints—their testimony would at least be honest. And as regards intelligence, they comprised such men as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and the Galilean nobleman, also the eleven apostles—who, although unselected, were not inferior to any in natural discernment and ability.

Consider also the variety of persons, places, and times. The appearances of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection were at various times during the succeeding forty days, and to St. Paul a few years later on. At the sepulchre, in the upper room, by the sea side, on the mountain in Galilee, on the slope of Olivet, and on the road to Damascus. He was seen by ones, twos and threes, of men and women. By seven of the apostles at one time, by the eleven time and again. Then the "five hundred brethren at once." All these persons, all these times, in all these places could not possibly have been mistaken. They were each and all incredulous at first, "slow to believe," all compelled by overwhelmingly conclusive evidence. Then they were willing to risk the loss of all things, to endure any suffering, even death itself, rather than recant their testimony, knowing it was absolutely and gloriously true.

The practical point for us is—that the resurrection of Christ is the pattern and pledge of our own resurrection. "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that sleep . . . Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christs at his coming."

Ottawa, Easter, 1907.

THE MORE CORRECT WAY.

By Robert Marshall Blackburn.

To trust God and live thy life not in idle dreaming of a blessedness that shall be, but in perfect relations with the world of which you are now a part; doing God's will to-day, as the sure, the only way of securing to yourself the opportunity of doing God's will to-morrow; so to keep step with the process of the universe, which halt not for any, rather which move forever forward with silent, irresistible tread to predetermined ends; completing the span of man's life, carrying him forward from infancy to puberty, thence to old age and the grave; recking not of his action or inaction, his proficiency or deficiency, his progress or declension; whether in faithfulness to the lessons of the day, he be prepared for the changes of the morrow, or, in unfaithfulness, lag behind; so becoming the enforced subject of changes for which he is in no wise prepared; attaining, say, to the age and physical completeness of manhood, yet in mind and will and all that makes for moral completeness or manliness, remaining but in childhood still;—this: to keep step with the processes of Nature; to grow in grace as you grow in body; to measure up to the demands of each new day, each advancing period; completing relations by accomplishing their duties;—even this, it seems, is the More Excellent Way; and, that from it none may be tempted to depart, verily it also seems, God has kept the secret of the future from Him.—Philadelphia Westminster.

There are many sorrows in this world. Learn how to diminish them, or mitigate them. Don't go about increasing them with Cassandra wails. Wake up. Serve your day. Watch for sunshine.

SPARKS FROM OTHER ANVILS.

N. Y. Christian Intelligencer: If we, in our short-sightedness, cannot see the end from the beginning, what matters it so long as He sees it? An affectionate, confiding faith in God and His providence would save us half the annoyances of life that fret and worry us, for it would lift us up above the reach of them. The promise to all them that put their trust in God is, "they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Christian Guardian: From numerous small but significant indications we are of the opinion that the Government is open to conviction in the matter of the three-fifths clause. It has shown itself in other matters to be not insensitive to public opinion; and we imagine that if a sufficient number of the temperance electors of Ontario were to sit down quietly, and without any undue heat, but with such plainness of speech as to leave no doubt as to their meaning, write personally to their representatives, and ask their help in getting rid of this obnoxious three-fifths clause; if this action were sufficiently widespread, we imagine it would greatly help the Government in reaching the conviction that the three-fifths clause is not a desirable part of the local option law. What conventions cannot do is sometimes possible to private influence. Let temperance men try it, and watch the result.

Michigan Presbyterian: Whatever comfort the cultured mind may find in a theory that largely eliminates the problem of sin, whatever contemptuous condescension may be used in regard to the inspiration of the Scriptures, the Atonement, and the finality of death as deciding future destiny, it is a fact that to preach such doctrines to the heathen or to the sin-sodden multitudes at home would be worse than useless. The emphasis must be placed on salvation from sin, or redemption through the cross of Jesus, on the Bible as God-inspired and the revelation of God's will to man, and a future of endless rewards and punishments determined by the probation of earthly life. We may outgrow former methods of presenting these truths; but we shall never outgrow the truths themselves.

THE EASTER HILLS.

There liveth no home circle but hath some treasure gone.

Beyond the gold of sunset—beyond the gray of dawn.

The heart grows weary yearning, the eyes are wet with tears,

As we reach hands how empty out through the dreary years.

The sunlight on the Easter Hills so soft and still and fair,

You hold a cheering symbol to mortals everywhere;

You thrill the long-hid roses to beauty once again—

God warns the clay that many a day within the tomb has lain.

O Easter hills enchanting! O Easter breezes sweet!

Sing on your song of glory, when Love with Love shall meet.

We walk among the old ways with something of regret;

Old faces still will linger, wee forms are with us yet;

But shadowy and uncertain, keep just beyond our reach—

Too far for mortal touching, too far for human speech.

The moonlight on the Easter hills that whitens all the sod,

You are the opened volume of promises of God;

I seem to read your message of morn that finds surcease.

And after strife the future life like you shall hint of peace.

O Easter hills prophetic! O Easter roses, blow—

Bid us to conquer doubting till we shall know we know!

A MISSIONARY IN NEW FRANCE.*

Rev. Alex. Spark, D.D.

Born at Maykirk in Scotland, 7th January, 1762. Ordained minister to Scotch congregation at Quebec, 1784; opened this church for divine service, 30th November, 1810; died 1819. Is in outline, the life work of Rev. Alexander Spark, D. D., its first minister, as copied from the tablet to his memory in St. Andrew's church, Quebec. This is also, in brief, the history of Presbyterianism in New France during thirty-five years.

These were years in beginnings, although not the beginning of Presbyterian worship in the Ancient Capital. The beginning was made in 1759, the year of the conquest, when services were conducted by the Rev. Robt. MacPherson, the brave Chaplain of Fraser's Highlanders, the regiment who fought so valiantly at the battle of Louisbourg and at the capture of Quebec. Shortly after the occupation of the city by the British, a congregation, called the Scotch church was formed, and the first settled pastor, the Rev. George Henry, began his duties in 1765. The first place of meeting was a chapel in the Jesuits' College, which was set apart for the purpose by the King's representative. This was occupied until 1807, when the chapel was required for military purposes and hall was secured instead. Mr. Henry was succeeded in 1874 by the Rev. Alex. Spark.

For some time there had been a desire to secure land and erect a church, consequently, in 1802, a petition was addressed to King George III, praying that a lot of ground be granted to the congregation upon which to build a place of worship. The petition was signed by 143 persons amongst whom were some of the foremost makers of history in the new colony.

In answer to the petition a lot was granted on St. Ann street. Although this was in 1802, it was not until eight years later that the church was completed and opened for public worship.

Dr. Spark died in 1819. The Quebec Mercury of that date said of him: "We may say, beyond the reach of contradiction, that he was not only skilled in letters, but that in life and manners he showed a simplicity and innocence beyond what is seen in most men."

Within the city, Dr. Spark was a power for education and righteousness, and was a worthy representative of Presbyterianism in those early days when foundations were being laid. Outside the city, he had the vision of a church statesman, and the heart of a man of God, which had compassion on the people who were scattered up and down the river, like sheep without a shepherd. Just after the conquest, settlements of Highlanders were formed around Murray Bay and other ports. For these Dr. Spark cared as well as he could by visits from time to time. Upon these occasions he cheered them by his ministrations, baptized their children, and performed their marriage ceremonies.

Dr. Spark wrote repeatedly to the old land, asking for men to take charge of these new communities, but none could be spared. Those were not the days of missionary fever. So, without the school and without the church of their forefathers, the children and grandchildren of these remote settlers grew to speak only in the French language and worship as Roman Catholics. It has been estimated that over 10,000 who should have been Presbyterians are Roman Catholics, because no man was sent to care for these settlements in the early days. This loss to the Protestantism of Quebec has meant much in the standing of our church, and has remained an abiding warning to watch the settler, and follow him with the gospel, no matter where he goes.

*Y.P.S.C.E. Topic for March 31, 1907. 2 Tim. 1:7-13.