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THE RESURRECTION



THE RESURRECTION

Twelve Expository Essays

ON THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER OF ST. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE
TO THE CORINTHIANS

By SAMUEL COX

AUTHOR OF "THE QUEST OF THE CHIEF GOOD," "THE PILGRIM
PSALMS," ETC.

Fiducia Christianorum Resurrectio Mortuorum

LONDON
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89, FARRINGTON STREET
1881

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1881

To the Memory

or

MY FATHER

7

PREFACE.

MY leading aim in the following Essays has been to present the English reader with “a study” or “monogram” on St. Paul’s great argument on the Resurrection, contained in the Fifteenth Chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians ; to gather from the best authorities whatever would explain or illustrate that argument : and, in so far as this Chapter is concerned, to place him as nearly as possible on the ground of vantage occupied by modern scholars and critics.

No Chapter in the New Testament is perhaps oftener read, or less known, than this. For the most part we read or hear it when we are not in a studious or critical mood, when our eyes are heavy with sorrow and our hearts tender with regrets. As we gather round our dead, and consign their dust to the dust from which it was taken, the first words we hear, after “the Saviour’s welcome at the gate,” are not instinct with the Christian

hope. Job's passionate and despairing outcry on the misery and vanity of man, or the stately antique simplicity of Moses' reflections on the brevity of life, or the Psalmist's pensive elegy on human frailty, well accord with our grief indeed ; but they deepen and intensify, while they express, it. It is fit that we should hear them perhaps ; for they redeem, or should redeem, us from the selfishness of our grief. In the death of one they teach us to see the death of all. They draw down a pall which envelops not us alone, but the whole family of man, in its mighty folds. It is "the common event" which has befallen us, though for the moment it seem special and intolerable. We are but units in a vast procession of mourners. All the generations of men, as they pass across the earth, do but follow their dead. They have all known the bitterness we now taste ; they have all felt the shock beneath which our hearts reel and stagger and faint. And a great awe comes upon us, and calms our perturbed spirits. Why should we murmur and fret and complain because that has happened to us which happens to all ? Better brace ourselves to bear the common lot—the inevitable doom.

But now that the Law has uttered its voice, the Gospel takes up the strain. As our hearts hush themselves into silent, if bitter, submission to the universal decree, voices

of hope and triumph break the stillness. Not thus are we to leave the dead whom we loved and love ; not with this stern repression of an immitigable grief. St. Paul lifts his clarion to his lips, and there issues from it a strain so clear, so lofty, so riant with solemn mirth and exultation, that our submission rises into patient hope, our sorrow is turned into gladness.

“ Listen ! it is no dream : the Apostle’s trump
Gives earnest of the Archangel’s. Calmly now,
Our hearts yet beating high
To that victorious lay,
Most like a warrior’s to the martial dirge
Of a true comrade, in the grave we trust
Our treasure for a while.”

It is St. Paul’s “victorious lay” which gives the Christian tone to our Service for the Dead. As we listen to it, we cannot but be conscious of a certain sublimity in it. It stirs, and melts, and uplifts our hearts. But we seldom analyze the impression it makes on us, or thoughtfully consider the argument it involves, although “this high strain of hope” modulates through many mysterious chords, and this lofty argument touches on many profound themes, which might well move us to thought. Its main theme, the resurrection of the dead, is itself, in many of its aspects, an inexplicable mystery. The main ground on which the Apostle bases his argument, the resurrection of Christ, is a miraculous and contested fact.

And, besides these, some of the deepest problems of the spiritual life, some of the most difficult, if not insoluble, questions of human history and Biblical interpretation, are suggested or illustrated by this great prophet of "the Resurrection and the Life." Thus, for instance, he treats of the relation sustained to the human race by Adam and Christ, of the successive stages of the Resurrection, of "the end" to which all the ages lead, of the baptism for the dead, of the conviction of the primitive Church that the second advent of its Lord was close at hand, of the natural and the spiritual body, of the instant translation of those who are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord, of some of the physical and psychical conditions of the future life. These are themes calculated to provoke thought, and to repay it. It cannot but be well that we should study St. Paul's handling of them. The Chapter which we so often hear when our hearts are "soft with showers," which, therefore, so often falls on a prepared soil, will grow quick with suggestions, with comforts, with hopes, with assurances, when once we have traced out its logical development and have gained a more definite conception of its meaning and force.

In these Essays I have endeavoured to draw forth the contents of this sublime Chapter. I have not attempted to argue out the philosophical questions connected with

the Resurrection, and involved in it, whether it be regarded as an historical or a miraculous fact. That argument has been developed, and, as it seems to me, in a masterly way, by Mr. Westcott in his "Gospel of the Resurrection." Nor have I addressed my exposition to Scholars, though I would fain hope that even these may find hints here and there which will be acceptable to them. I have written for intelligent Christian men and women whose education has been purely English. I have tried to put within their reach the results of the best and most recent scholarship "in such a tongue as the people understandeth." Of tongues "not understood by the people," there are but a few words of Greek, and a few sentences of Latin, in the whole Volume; and these are in the "notes," and are either translated or explained.

There are at least two uses which I trust these Essays may serve. They may help, first, to confirm the faith of the general Christian reader. In these days, when even those who give themselves out as advocates of the Christian revelation, and who once seemed to be pillars of the Church, affirm that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus is not an essential of the Christian Faith, that it is a miracle and therefore cannot be a fact, that it is a fable springing from the predisposition of the Apostles to see visions and to dream dreams, it is very

meet, right, and our bounden duty to set forth the Apostolic teaching, to show how large and certain a place the resurrection of the Lord Jesus held in their thoughts, how *they* at least repudiate the notion of their having been deceived by any illusion, how sure they are that He did in very deed rise again from the dead, and how they base both the Christian dogmas and the Christian hopes on the fact of his resurrection. Modern theologians and critics contend that we may be perfectly good Christians, and yet disbelieve both his resurrection and our own. St. Paul, on the other hand, affirms : " If with thy mouth thou shalt confess Jesus the Lord, *and believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead*, thou shalt be saved." And it is important that we should know whether those from whom we derive our only knowledge of the Christian facts and dogmas really did, or did not, hold the resurrection of Christ to be a true historical fact, and the resurrection of man a grounded and reliable object of hope. It is important that we should know whether they, the Apostles and their scribes, thought this fact and this hope might be detached from the Christian scheme without seriously impairing it ; or whether they contended for them as of the very stuff and essence of the Gospel. In no way, I think, can their view be more accurately or more im-

pressively brought home to us than by a careful study of St. Paul's great argument. To me at least it is inconceivable how any candid man, after reading this Chapter, can doubt either that St. Paul was "in the Spirit" when he wrote it, if ever he was in the Spirit; or that he held the resurrection of Christ, with the facts, truths, and hopes it implied, to be itself the very Gospel of the grace of God. If this conviction should be quickened or confirmed in any heart by a perusal of this Volume, its main purpose will be attained.

The second use I pray God it may serve is, to comfort the sorrowful and the bereaved. Any love may give entrance to the love of God, any sorrow to the godly sorrow which worketh life. But the sorrow and love with which we mourn our dead lift our thoughts, with a natural and superior strength, into the unseen eternal world. Then we cannot but consider death, and the life it hides from us, and the terrors and glories it reveals. Hence no season of the spiritual life is more promising than this, if only we use it wisely. We do not use it wisely if, as the way of the world is, we seek to divert our thoughts from the great themes which they naturally haunt, or to distract our hearts from the tender iterations of grief, by an augmented devotion to the toils of gain or pleasure. Not thus is the true peace, or the true

comfort, to be found. These will be found only as we fix our thoughts on the sacred and august realities of that eternal world into which our friends have risen ; as we apprehend them in their true figure ; as we learn that death means more life and fuller ; as we prepare ourselves, and feel that we are prepared, for the life on which we too must soon enter. To this, the true comfort, if they will let him, St. Paul will surely help them that are sorrowful and cast down. Perhaps even this imperfect exposition of his words will help them. It is not less likely to give them help because it makes no direct effort at consolation ; because whatever comfort it gives must spring from its leading them to reflect on great themes, from its cheerful views of life, and death, and the life to be, from its large hope in the illimitable goodness and mercy of God. If, in virtue of these qualities, it carry light and comfort into a single dejected heart, that will be an ample reward for the pains it has cost.

And it has cost some pains. I have tried to make each Essay as thorough and complete as I could. I have read most of the best Commentaries on this Chapter, and have endeavoured to omit nothing that would contribute to a clear apprehension of its meaning. So often as I thought it would conduce to the reader's profit, I

have held my peace that wiser tongues might be heard. Some men God has endowed with gifts of thought and utterance so noble that, when once they have spoken, only one alternative lies before most of us : either to repeat what they have said, or not to speak on the themes which they have handled and appropriated. More than once I have found this alternative before me ; and, as I was bound not to omit any part of the Apostle's argument, or aught that would illustrate or commend it, I have been content to become an echo rather than a voice. In every such case I have, in text or foot-note, confessed my obligation : but to the numerous references to authorities contained in the Volume, I must now add a few words of special explanation and acknowledgment.

Now that "the Fathers" are so superbly edited, it is easy, by consulting indices and references, to make a great show of patristic learning. I have no wish to do that, as my knowledge of "the fathers" is very slight. I have therefore made it a rule only to cite passages I have met with in my own reading ; and of these to cite only such as, besides illustrating the text, were marked by some felicity or quaintness of expression, some stroke of humour or pathos, some scrap of biting logic or some graphic figure.

Of other authorities I am specially indebted to three,—

Stanley, Robertson, and Rückert. It would be superfluous, if not impertinent, to praise a standard work, such as "*Stanley on Corinthians*," which has taken its place among the acknowledged master-pieces of English exposition. Had the Dean written a commentary for English readers, instead of notes on the Greek text, there would have been little need for any other book on the same Scripture: if I have quoted little, I have learned much, from him. So, again, had *Robertson* lived to publish his "*Expository Lectures on the Corinthians*," it would have been almost impossible to follow so great a master in the art of exposition. Unhappily, however, his lectures on the Fifteenth Chapter are the most fragmentary of the whole series. But even these fragments are so precious that I have carefully gathered them up: they will be found in the first section of the Second Essay and the third section of the Eleventh, where the bread is his, and only the basket mine. *Rückert* I take to be less known in England than he deserves. His rugged independence of character provoked the hostility of the German critics, who have never given him his due. His commentaries, however, are marked by a directness of aim, a frank sincerity in grappling with difficulties, a simplicity and brevity of style which, never too common in the critical craft, are perhaps least common in its

German adepts. I have found his exposition of St. Paul's argument on the Resurrection very helpful and encouraging, and only regret that I did not meet with it till it was too late to use it except in confirmatory or explanatory notes.

As it may be convenient to some of my readers to have the whole Chapter from the Corinthians in a continuous form, I have inserted the translation used throughout this Volume in Appendix I. The Greek text from which I made it was that of Lachmann. I have indicated in foot-notes all the variations from Lachmann's text of the recently discovered Sinaitic Codex which are of any importance. And I venture to assure the unlearned reader that, wherever the translation differs from that of the Authorised Version, the difference is due simply to a closer adhesion to the authentic text of the primitive Church.

In Appendix II. I have told the story of the Corinthian Church down to the date of St. Paul's First Epistle. This Essay was written seven years before the other Essays contained in the present Volume. It is, if my memory serve me, little more than a compilation, the materials of which were drawn from Biscoe and Bennet on the Acts, Lewin's and Conybeare and Howson's Lives of St. Paul, Stanley and Robertson on the Corinthians,

and the authorities to which these writers refer. I print it simply because it gives in a compendious form a multitude of facts which lie scattered through many treatises, because it does throw some little light on St. Paul's argument for the Resurrection ; but, above all, because it may serve to remind the reader of the social, mental, and moral conditions of those to whom that argument was addressed.

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I.

THE APOSTLE'S CREED.

I COR. XV. 1-4.



GRIEF and logic are not of kin. When the emotions are highly wrought, we do not reason and argue; we feel, and our feelings shape and colour our thoughts. Nor, as a rule, do we afterwards care to revise the impressions made upon us in hours of sadness, lest, revising these, we should rekindle our grief. Hence arises a special difficulty in the task before us. The Chapter we are about to study is read by almost every church in Christendom, in its "Service for the Burial of the Dead," and connects itself in our memories with the most mournful and pathetic moments of our lives. It is sacred and hallowed in our thoughts. We listen to its verses as to a strain of "stately music heard in the stillness of the night," when we cannot sleep for sorrow. We have not been used to regard it as a linked sequence of truths logically developed. To break it up into fragments and consider the

argumentative force of its several parts, may seem well-nigh a profanation of our most sacred and tender recollections. This is the effort for which we have to brace ourselves, if we would enter into St. Paul's meaning—if we would master this sublime prose-poem. For the time we must hold in abeyance the hallowed and mournful thoughts we naturally associate with it, in order that we may learn what he has to teach us on the mysteries of life, and of death, and of life in and after death. We need have no fear but that the sweet stately music will come back to us, and come back with enhanced power, when we have mastered the several tones which compose its harmony.

The whole Chapter is an argument on the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, as a prophecy and example of the General Resurrection of the Dead. It divides itself easily and naturally into two main sections: the first, extending to the thirty-fourth verse, on *the fact* of the Resurrection; the second, on *the mode* of the Resurrection, extending from verse thirty-five to the end of the Chapter.

For the present, however, we confine our attention to the first four verses, and mainly to the third and fourth, which contain their leading theme: "Moreover, brethren, I would have you know the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand;

(2) By which, indeed, ye are saved, if ye hold in mind with what word I preached unto you, unless ye believed in vain; (3) *For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received: That Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; (4) And that He was buried; and that He has been raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures.*"

In these two verses (verses 3, 4), we have the earliest specimen of a Christian *creed*; that is to say, we have the first of those formal statements of the essentials of the Christian Faith, of which "the Apostles' Creed," "the Nicene Creed, and "the Athanasian Creed," are familiar examples, while more modern instances will be found in "the Creed of Pius V.," and in the "confessions" of Augsburg, London, Westminster, and Geneva. There can be no doubt, I think, that the Apostle Paul here gives us the compendious form which he habitually used, which, in those days of oral teaching, he repeated again and again, in order that he might fix it in the memory of his hearers; in order that, whatever else they forgot, they might not forget this. In fact, it appears to have been "a belief," "a creed," which they got by heart, and by which they tested the claims of those who assumed to speak to them in the name of Christ. Besides

other arguments in favour of this view, there is one which of itself is all but, if not quite, conclusive. It is this. We all remember how, in this Epistle,* St. Paul introduces the form of words to be used at the Sacrament of the Supper: "*For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.*" Then follow the words still used at the celebration of the Eucharist by every section of the Church. In precisely the same way he introduces the creed before us: "*For I delivered unto you that which I also received.*" The phrase common to both these passages seems to have been the phrase by which St. Paul habitually introduced settled and formal statements of Divine truth; and, therefore, we may reasonably conclude that *this* passage contains, not a mere casual utterance, but a well-considered and standing form of speech. It is *the creed* of the Apostolic Church which St. Paul here gives us, just as in Chapter xi. he gives us one of its liturgical forms. It is the gospel—what he often calls "my gospel"—which he preached in all the churches.

But if this Creed were already familiar to the Corinthians, why does the Apostle repeat it here? He repeats it simply because the Corinthians needed to hear it again and again. There were those among them who held an opinion common in the first century throughout the East,

* 1 Cor. xi. 23.

an opinion which largely affected the Christian thought of primitive times. They held that *matter* was the root of all evil, that only as the spirit was redeemed from its thralldom to the body could men hope to rise into a happy spiritual life. From this half-truth they inferred many consequences wholly untrue. When, for instance, the Apostle preached "the redemption of the body," they understood him to preach redemption *from* the body. When he taught that the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ were virtually the death and resurrection of all who believed on Him—their death to sin, their resurrection to life, they understood him as meaning that this inward spiritual regeneration was the true resurrection; they concluded that "the resurrection was past already"—not a thing to be looked for in the future, not a glorification of the body, but a present spiritual redemption and victory. The body was vile. God could not care for *that*; and all their care about it was, how to get free from it, and be quit of it. Hence they affirmed that there was "no resurrection of the dead" body; they rejoiced in the thought that the material frame, which had so long thwarted and betrayed the soul, was at last and for ever to lose all power over them.

Nay, as they reflected on the dignity of Him who had achieved this great spiritual redemption for them, they

began to doubt whether the Lord Jesus, the pure Son of God, had ever been brought into immediate contact with aught so vile and corrupt as matter ;* whether his body was a real body and his death a real death ; whether all

* Tertullian, in his Treatise "Against Marcion" (A.D. 207), tells us that the sect founded by that famous heretic rejected "the bodily substance of Christ," denied that He was "come in the flesh," alleged Him "to be a phantom," affirming that "He was not what He appeared to be, and feigned Himself to be what He was not—incaruate without being flesh, human without being man!" Against this misconception he argues, (1) that "if the Worker were imaginary, the works were imaginary," and so the miracles are disposed of; (2) that, "as a phantom cannot truly suffer," Christ suffered nothing in our behalf; and (3) that "if His flesh is denied, His death cannot be asserted," and thus the whole gospel is made of none effect, "God's entire work is subverted;" (4) that if Christ did not die, He could not rise from the dead, while, "if His resurrection be nullified, ours also is destroyed." (Adv. Marc., Book III., Chap. viii.)

In a later book of the same treatise (Book V., Chap. ix.), he resumes this topic; and after remarking that no doubt the Corinthians questioned the resurrection on the very same grounds on which the Marcionites denied it, "since the resurrection of *the flesh* has at all times men to deny it," he meets that denial with a striking and most ingenious argument. He says that in speaking of the resurrection of the dead, "it is requisite that the proper force of the words should be accurately maintained. The word *dead* expresses simply what has lost the vital principle (*animam*), by means of which it used to live. Now the body is that which loses life, and as the result of losing it becomes dead. To *the body*, therefore, the term dead is alone suitable. Moreover, as resurrection accrues to what is dead, and dead is a term applicable only to a body, the body alone has a resurrection incidental to it. So, again, the *re-surrection* embraces only that which has fallen down. 'To rise,' indeed, may be predicated of that which has never fallen down, but had already been always lying down. But 'to rise *again*' is predicable only of that which has fallen down; because it is by rising *again*, in consequence of its having fallen down, that it is said to have *re-risen*. For the syllable RE always implies iteration." It is only the body that falls to the ground at death; and therefore it must be the body that will rise again.

that pertains to his physical life was not a series of illusions—phenomena which seemed real enough, but which had no substantial existence, just as many other phenomena seem real to the eye while to the mind they are not real.

It was in this mood of thought that St. Paul met them, with all these novel and ingenious, but misleading, speculations in their minds. And he said to them: "I have no new gospel to declare unto you. I can only repeat the old gospel which ye have heard from the beginning. Do you remember how you 'received' it? with what simplicity, what faith, what joy? It is now what it was then. The change, if there be a change, is not in it, but in you. And, remember, in this familiar unchanged gospel you 'have a standing'—a standing of righteousness and peace, a place in the kingdom and love of God, an immovable basis for duty, for hope, for joy. You should not lightly relinquish a gospel which has done so much for you. Will any of your new theories do more for you, or even as much? This gospel, moreover, 'which ye received and wherein ye stand,' is that 'by which also ye are saved'—saved out of the adversities and tribulations of bondage to evil into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Is not 'the word I preached unto you' worth 'holding fast?' I at least desire nothing more,

and have nothing more to give you ; I can only continue to ' declare unto you the gospel which I preached, which also *ye received*, and wherein *ye stand*, by which indeed *ye are saved*,' if only you hold it fast. I will once more repeat the old truths in the old forms. I will once more recite the creed which you have so often heard from my lips, so often taken on your own. It is still true ; it still contains my whole gospel."

What, then, is this gospel, this creed, on which St. Paul lays such stress? It is very brief, very simple, as compared with modern creeds. It consists of three historical facts and two doctrinal propositions. The three facts are—the death, the burial, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ ; the two doctrines are—that the death of Christ was a death for sins, and that his death, burial, and resurrection, were parts of an ordered scheme, of a divine economy. *This*, according to the Apostle, is " the holy catholic faith, which whosoever believeth he shall, without doubt, be everlastingly saved."

May we venture to append even to this brief creed, " which except a man believe faithfully, he *cannot* be saved ?" No ; for, as we have seen, there were those at Corinth who did not accept all of even these few articles of faith. Yet St. Paul does not anathematize nor excommunicate them ; on the contrary, he calls them his

“beloved brethren,” and tries to teach them completer views of the truth—an example of Christian charity which we shall do well to bear steadfastly in mind.

The Apostle's creed includes the three following facts. First, that *Christ* really *died*—that his death was a genuine historical event, the date, manner, and place of which were all perfectly well known ; second, that *Christ was buried*—a real human body being laid in an actual grave, a grave familiar to those who dwelt in Jerusalem ; and, third, that *Christ has been raised*—the very body laid in the grave coming forth from it on the third day after its interment, as could be proved by hundreds of witnesses still alive. Of course the emphasis of the Apostle is on the simple historic reality of these facts. He repeats them in familiar words that the Corinthians may see he has not shifted his ground ; that the gospel which he had taught them from the first, and which at the first they had so gladly received, asserted the historic reality of these facts. He had *never* spoken of the death and resurrection of the Lord as scenes in a spiritual drama, or as fictitious and illusory phenomena, or as the critical points of a parable whose moral was the redemption of the spirit from its thralldom to the flesh. From the beginning, as they might see from the Creed which they had learned of him, and which, not improbably,

they still recited in their worship, he had used plain words in their plain historical sense, affirming the real death of a real physical body, its actual interment in a tomb which might be seen and touched, its well-attested resurrection from a grave in which it saw no corruption. These three facts—the death of Christ, his burial, his resurrection (and I suspect the burial is inserted mainly to show that St. Paul is speaking of a real death and a real resurrection) *—are the cardinal facts of Christian history. To believe in these is, so far forth, to hold the catholic Christian faith.

From these three facts, that he may complete his creed, the Apostle draws two doctrinal sequences. Christ died ; but to believe *that* will do no more for us than to believe that Lazarus died, unless we also believe that “ Christ died *for our sins*,”—*i. e.*, for the sin of the whole world. The death of Christ was not the common event which happens to all men. It was not, in some sense, a natural event. For in Him was no sin, and death is the natural consequence and proper wage of sin : in Him was “ the power of an endless life ” over which death had no

* So *Rickert*, in his Commentary on the verse, “ The mention of the burial of Jesus may have been intended to show that He actually died, and to forestall the cavil that possibly He was not truly dead, and so could not have been raised to life, but was only resuscitated from a condition resembling death.” So also *Maximus Taurinensis* : “ Sepultus est, ut qui vere mortuus.”

claim or sway. His death, therefore, unlike ours, was a voluntary action, a willing sacrifice, a death for others, not for Himself. He died for the sins of those who were dead in sin, that, coming into their death, He might give them his life. He took, and spent, the evil wage which we had earned, after having kept the law which we had broken. In this dogma of vicarious sacrifice, of voluntary expiation of sin, lies the special and infinite worth of the death of Christ. And St. Paul affirms this dogma plainly and strongly. With him, it is of the very stuff and essence of the Christian faith: it is the "first" thing to be taught and believed.

But, observe, St. Paul does not complicate and embarrass his affirmation with any theory of the mode in which the death of Christ takes away sin. He lays down no "moral" and no "legal" view of the atonement. Unlike modern churches and divines, he is content to leave men to theorize as they will, if only they receive the cardinal fact and dogma, that Christ's death was a death for their sins. They may hold that it was by an obedience unto death—an obedience which no terrors could daunt, and no seductions draw aside—that Christ atoned men to God. They may hold that, by his sacrifice of Himself, Christ satisfied the claims of a broken law and an offended Judge. They may hold that the obedience of

Christ *was* the satisfaction of our debt to law and God ; that in the power of his obedience unto death to induce obedience in us lies the atoning virtue of his sacrifice ; and so they may blend the moral with the legal view of the atonement. They may hold what theory they will, if only they honestly believe that the death of Christ redeems man from sin, and suffer their faith in its redeeming virtue really to redeem them. This is all that the Apostle demands of them, or of us. If they believe this, if we believe it, he acknowledges us and them as brethren beloved, as members of his church—*i.e.* the church to which he also belongs. He acknowledges us as holding with him, the holy catholic faith, although, in our weakness, we “confound the Persons” or “divide the substance” of the Trinity in Unity ; although we neither attempt nor profess to understand the mystery of the “three incomprehensibles, three eternal, three uncreated ;” although we dare not affirm that all who fail to keep these and other inscrutable mysteries “whole and undefiled, without doubt they shall perish everlastingly.” And if St. Paul acknowledge us, we shall not be unduly distressed should St. Athanasius* be ignorant of us.

* I do not forget that St. Athanasius did *not* compile the Athanasian Creed ; but till we know who did, his name must stand for that of the unknown author—that mysterious Incognito with his iron theological mask.

The second dogma in the Apostle's creed is, that the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus are parts of an ordered scheme, of a divine economy. "Christ died," he says, "*according to the Scriptures.*" "He has been raised again *according to the Scriptures.*" Why does he twice in his short creed repeat the phrase "according to the Scriptures?" Simply because the Scriptures reveal the law, the will, of God. Simply because whatever is according to the Scriptures is according to the Divine will, has been foreordained, or wrought by God Himself.

Now that the Hebrew Scriptures did foretell that the Christ should be "cut off out of the land of the living,"* that He should "make his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death,"† that his soul should not be "left in hades" nor his body "see corruption:"‡ this is so obvious, so familiar to all who read the Bible, as to need no proof. We all admit the fact. Let us mark the value of the fact then. For that the death and resurrection of Christ were according to the Scriptures, *i.e.*, according to the will of God, implies, demonstrates, that the sacrifice for our sins has found acceptance in heaven. If we did not know the Scriptures, nor the will of God as there revealed, we might conceive that a man should rise upon the earth free from all taint of

* Isaiah liii. 8.

† *Ibid.* liii. 9.

‡ Psalm xvi. 10.

personal sin ; that, in his great pity for the woes of mankind, he might, like the fabled Prometheus, exhaust his life in the endeavour to elevate men, to redeem them from their woes : but that even *he* could not answer to God for his fellows, that God was still bound to condemn, not to save. But, if we know the Scriptures and the will of God, it is impossible for us thus to misconceive the Divine love. They reveal the very scheme of redemption wrought by the Man Christ Jesus as in the heart of God from eternity, as the end and consummation for which He was preparing men through the ages by the ministry of his Spirit and by the labours of his servants the Prophets. The plan of the work wrought by Christ was designed by God. All the lines of his life were drawn by the hand of God before Christ took our flesh to atone our sin. Round his death and resurrection the lights of prophecy kindled with an unwonted splendour ; more than half of the Old Testament predictions concerning the Messiah point to these supreme facts. And therefore to accept the redemption of Christ is to accept the redemption of God. Through the sacrifice of Christ we learn that God's will is our salvation ; or rather, we see that salvation triumphantly accomplished which from the Scriptures or the Prophets we had already learned to be God's will. All doubt,

all fear, all hesitation is thus removed from our dubious and reluctant hearts. We believe in Christ; we also believe in God.

But here again let us observe that St. Paul quietly passes by all the subtleties of speculative minds. The second doctrinal article of his Creed is as plain, as uncomplicated with theories, as the first. He simply declares the simple fact, that the redeeming work of Christ was in accordance with the will of God. He exacts no definitions of us, no profession of faith in unintelligible statements of "incomprehensibilities," no subscription to articles on which honest men may honestly differ. He neither affirms anything nor requires us to believe anything as to *the mode* in which God accepts the righteousness of Christ on behalf of guilty men. He neither explains nor demands that we should explain how, if God ordained the death of Christ, He should hold Herod and Pilate, Caiaphas and Judas, the whole nation of the Jews, nay, the whole wicked world, guilty of that death. He makes no disclosure, no conjecture even, as to where Jesus was "those three days," or as to with what body He came from the grave, or as to how He appeared to and vanished from the eyes of his amazed disciples. He lays down no theory of that revived and greatened life, or of its connection with

our recovery from the tomb. On all these points, and on many more, he leaves us to think and to speculate as we will, so long as we do not impose our speculations on our brethren. All he demands of us is, that we should find an expression of the good-will of God in the death and resurrection of Christ; and he demands this because to believe that Jesus died for our sins will be no "gospel" to us, unless we also believe that "*God sent his Son*" to be the propitiation of our sins, and not of ours only, but of the sin of the whole world."

Expressed in modern forms the Apostolic Creed would run: "I believe that Christ died, was buried, rose again; and that He died for our sins, according to the will of God." The creed is brief enough, and simple enough when compared with the Nicene or the Athanasian Creed recited in the Episcopal churches, or with the creeds which Nonconformists hide away, as if they were a little ashamed of them, in the foundations of their chapels or the tedious legal technicalities of their trust-deeds. It "gives not the mind nor memory pain;" and yet, in the judgment of an inspired Apostle, it contains all that is essential to the Christian faith.

Nay, St. Paul goes even farther than this. Even this creed, which many would think too brief already, cardinal as are the facts and dogmas it contains, he will not

impose as "necessary to everlasting salvation," nor will he demand its acceptance as a term of church-fellowship. There were those at Corinth who, as yet, could not adopt even this succinct and simple creed in its integrity. They had their doubts about the resurrection of the dead body—about the physical reality of Christ's body. They read St. Paul's teaching on Christ's death and resurrection in a non-natural or spiritual sense ; as setting forth in parabolic forms the Lord's conquest over the lusts of the flesh, and that power of rising into a holy spiritual life which they coveted for themselves. "O to be free from the body of this death !"

"And, O, for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be !"

this was their cry. They believed that Christ could set them free ; that, if they trusted in Him, He would give them grace to subdue vile and fleshly lusts ; that He would so strengthen "the inward man of the heart" as that "the outward man of the flesh" should be crucified and slain by it. And this was gospel enough for them. If Christ would do this for them, they did not care very much about a future life ; they would serve Him without looking for so great a reward as immortality. And as for the body, *their* bodies, the vile sties in which their souls had been degraded and confined, so far from

hoping that these would rise again, they very devoutly hoped that they might rot in the grave and never have power—if the spirit should live on—to plague them any more.*

* Justin Martyr, who lived barely a hundred years after St. Paul (*circa* A.D. 114—165) wrote a treatise "On the Resurrection," of which some fragments have come down to us. He mentions those who held the body to be "vile and despicable," who "think meanly of the flesh, and say that it is not worthy of the resurrection nor of the heavenly economy:" and, like the Apostle, he takes pains to correct their misconception. He argues (chap. vii.), that man, fleshly man ("God took *dust* of the earth and made man"), was made in the image, after the likeness of God, and that "it is absurd to say, that the flesh made by God in his own image is contemptible, and worth nothing." He meets (chap. viii.) the objection that the flesh is sinful and forces the soul to sin along with it, demanding why the sins of both should be laid to the charge of the flesh alone. "How," he asks, "in what instance, can the flesh possibly sin by itself, if it have not the soul going before it and inciting it? For, as in the case of a yoke of oxen, if one or other is loosed from the yoke, neither of them can plough alone; so neither can soul or body alone effect anything, if they be unyoked from their communion." Nay, more: if the flesh alone were sinful, then Christ came to save only the flesh: for He came to call not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance—surely a very quaint and pleasant argument. Again: As the flesh is the handiwork of God, He must value and seek to preserve it. The sculptor and painter wish their works to endure, that they may win glory by them; and therefore they renew them when they begin to decay. Why then should we think that God will neglect his handiwork and suffer it to perish? If a man having built a house, sees it falling into decay, and neglects it, although he is able to repair it, should we not blame him for labouring in vain? "And should we not so blame God? But not such an one is the Incorruptible—not senseless is the Intelligence of the universe." In promising to save man, He promises to save the flesh. "For what is man but the reasonable animal composed of body and soul? Is the soul by itself man? No; but the soul of man. Would the body be called man? No; but it is called the body of man. If, then, neither of these be man, but that which is made up of the two be man, and God has called *man* to life and resurrection, He has called not a part, but the whole, which is the soul and the body."

Was there not something very noble and unselfish in these men, whose scepticism sprang from excessive spiritualism, not, like the modern scepticism, from excessive materialism? Sick at heart with the monstrous corruptions of the time, all they asked was—grace to escape them, to deny themselves hurtful physical indulgences, to cultivate only that in them which was high, and pure, and spiritual. All they asked was strength to live like *men*, until death should unlade them of their weary load of flesh.

Can we wonder that St. Paul loved these men? that he admired their heroic and unselfish strain of thought even while he corrected its errors? that he was glad to have them for his brethren, although Stoicism had taught them to hate the body, and very glad to know that he could teach them happier and broader, if not loftier, views of life in Christ? I think we need not wonder. If we have the spirit of Him who bruised no broken reed, quenched no smoking flax, it will occasion us no surprise that the Apostle welcomed them to the Christian fellowship; that, instead of expelling them from the Church, or dooming them to everlasting perdition, he set himself to teach them more perfectly the way of life. Instead of wondering with any amazement at a charity so much larger than our own, let us rather learn

and practise the lessons of St. Paul's wise gracious conduct.

Two lessons it teaches very plainly. First: Wherever we find men who honestly believe that Christ died for their sins, and are trying, through his grace, to subdue and renounce the lusts that conceive sin, we find our brethren, even though we know their creed to be deficient, not simply because it differs from ours, but because it differs from St. Paul's. Faith is of the heart and the will, not of the brain. Many a man who can neither draw nor follow a logical inference, can love Christ, the incarnation of all human excellence, with all his heart. And if he does *that*, and in virtue of it is becoming a good man, what does it matter that he has no theory, or an imperfect theory, of the Atonement, or that he has no definite conception as to the body with which the risen dead will come? It matters this much (for, even in our devotion to Christian charity, we must not be unjust to the claims of truth), that the more accurate and full his knowledge of Christian doctrine, the greater will be his help, of an intellectual sort, to Christian obedience. And therefore we should teach him what we know, or think we know, sparing no pains to get and to give him rounded and complete views of the truth as it is in Jesus. But we must not be impatient with him if he is slow to learn:

and still less should we fall to banning and excommunicating him. Let us by all means hold St. Paul's Creed in its fulness and integrity ; but above all, let us hold it in St. Paul's spirit,—that spirit of tender allowance for the infirmities of the weak which breathes through all his writings, that spirit of fervent charity to which even, he never gave nobler expression than when, writing to these same Corinthians,* he said,—“ I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.”

The second lesson is : That if we hold St. Paul's creed in St. Paul's spirit, we shall be very willing to hold as much more as we can. He delivered his creed “ *first of all.*” He delivered it first, because the fact and dogma that Christ died for our sins according to the will of God, was of all facts and dogmas the most momentous to sinful men—the very first thing they needed to learn. But if he taught this first, he also taught a good deal more than this. He never failed to preach “ Christ, and even Him crucified ;” but, having taught the simple lesson of the cross, he was for ever urging men to go on to perfection. For them, as for himself, he was always reaching forth to that which was before him in knowledge and in attainment aiming to embrace and to impart the whole

* 2 Cor. xiii. 15.

counsel of God. And if we are of the same mind, *we* shall not be content with that whereunto we have attained. We shall not say, "This brief Apostolic creed contains all we need to know—all we care to know." We shall rather say, "Under the facts and dogmas of this short simple Creed there lie hidden mysteries of truth, treasures of knowledge and grace which God has thrown open to us, if only we care to possess them; and, please God, we will grow as rich as we may." This is the only temper which becomes us as students of the Word, as servants of Christ; the temper which combines the widest charity for the defects of our brethren with the most eager zeal to rise, for ourselves and that we may help them to rise, out of all defects, whether of knowledge or of obedience. It was the temper of Paul. It is the spirit of Christ.

II.

HISTORICAL AND MORAL PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION.

1 COR. XV. 5—19.



IN this paragraph, the Apostle has two main themes in hand, which themes, as his manner is, he runs together and interweaves, fusing his logic in the ardours of a sacred passion. His themes are (1) the historical testimony to the resurrection of Christ; and (2) the moral consequences of denying the resurrection from the dead. For the sake of greater clearness, let us treat these themes separately, disentangling the interwoven threads of his argument.

I. *The Historical Testimony to the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.*—Now historic testimony implies an historic faith, *i.e.*, a faith built upon facts which really occurred. Religion, and even the Christian Religion, is not necessarily historical. It may exist in at least

two forms—as *essential* Christianity, and as *historical* Christianity.* It not only may exist, it has existed, in these two forms. If we would gather the full force of the Apostle's argument, we must understand how, and in what sense, there may be a Christian faith quite apart from any knowledge of the Christian facts or the Christian Scriptures. At first, and to some of us, this may seem impossible, if not inconceivable. We may be disposed to say: "There can be no Christianity apart from the historical facts of Christ's life as revealed in the Scriptures of the New Testament."

But consider: What do you mean by the Christian Faith? what are its essentials? what prime moral truths was the New Testament given to reveal? Surely they are these, and such as these: that God is the Father of the human race—all men, not only some men, being his children; that only as He loves and helps us can we do his will; that the obedience He requires is not ceremonial but moral; that it consists in doing his will from the heart, not in the punctual observance of rites and forms; that He appoints our lot and task for us, and makes it possible for us in all conditions to serve and

* Robertson, of Brighton, in his fragmentary exposition of the Corinthians, draws this distinction between essential and historical Christianity: and throughout the first section of this Essay I have freely used his thoughts and suggestions.

honour Him ; that the one principle which reconciles us to Him is the charity which sacrifices self to the good of others. If we can conceive of men as having learned these truths without the mediation of Christ, and as living by them, although they never read a Scripture : shall we not admit that they have possessed themselves of the moral essence of Christianity, and that their obedience is acceptable to God ? But this is no mere hypothesis, no abstract conception of the brain. Both before and after the advent of Christ there were at least a few wise heathen, Hindoo and Arab and Persian, Greek and Roman—such men, for instance (to cite only well-known names) as Socrates and Epictetus—who were “a law unto themselves.” Taught by God, though not taught through the Scriptures, they rose to an apprehension of these essential truths, and rendered them an obedience which often puts our obedience to the blush. The inspired Apostles claim these men as brethren, rejoicing that “*in every nation* he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.” Of these men, too, the early fathers of the Church delighted to affirm that they were “unconscious Christians ;” that in virtue of the Eternal Word within them they had been led to apprehend and obey the very truths Christ was revealed from heaven to teach. So that we shall be in good com-

pany, we shall have the highest sanction, if we believe that, as there were Jews who were no Jews, so also there were Christians who were not Christians: if we believe that, as among the Gentiles there were those who, "without the law, did by nature the things contained in the law," so also among the heathen there were those who, without the Gospel, believed and practised the truths which the Gospel reveals.

These wise and good heathen held *essential* as distinguished from historical Christianity; that is, they had in substance the moral doctrines Christ came to teach, although they were ignorant of the historical facts of the life in which He taught them.

In this moral form Christianity is susceptible of moral proof alone. It must appeal to the native instincts and capacities of men; to their reason, their conscience, their experience: it must commend itself to their judgment, to their sense of spiritual need. They hold it simply because, on the whole, so far as they can see, it is the best key to the moral problems of life, and furnishes the most efficient aids to moral goodness and perfection.

By *historical* Christianity, however, we mean much more than this, and require for it a very different kind of proof. For by historic Christianity we mean, not simply certain abstract moral truths, but these truths as actually existing,

as *incarnated* in the life, work, teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. To receive *this* Faith is not only to believe a creed, but to see it in Him, to learn it of Him, and to gain from Him the strength and grace by which we practise it. If the wise heathen believed God to be their Father, so also do we ; but we also believe that, while "no man hath seen God at any time," "the only-begotten Son, in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." If they held all men to be his children, so also do we ; but we also believe that the Son of God became man that we men might become the sons of God in and through Him. If they believed that only as God helped them could they do his will, we also believe that the Eternal Son of God sheds down on us the Holy Spirit by whom we are constrained to obedience. If they held that the righteousness acceptable to God is not formal or ceremonial, but moral and spiritual, so also do we ; but we also hold that moral and spiritual excellence is no longer a mere dream, an ideal, an aspiration of the human heart, but that it has existed as an actual and supreme reality, existed in its most perfect and consummate form, in the man Christ Jesus. If they believed that the one principle which reconciles man to God is a self-sacrificing charity, so also do we ; but we also hold that the Lord Jesus, moved thereto by a love stronger than death, Himself

became the sacrifice for the sin of the whole world, and that, in his atoning sacrifice, we find the only sufficient motive of our charity and self-denial.

This is *historical* Christianity as distinguished from essential or moral Christianity. And we affirm this to excel that, not only because within its ampler verge it embraces a larger body of truth, or because it makes the truth accessible to all men instead of to the wise and gifted few alone ; but also, and above all, because it places truth before us in its highest form, in the form in which, by a law of our nature, it becomes most winning and impressive to us. Reverence for persons, the love of individual men and women, precedes the belief in truths. In every province of human knowledge we take our first steps from love or in deference to the authority of parents and tutors. We trust what they tell us, and rise through our trust to the point at which we can test what they have taught us for ourselves. We wish to please them, and therefore we bend ourselves strongly and gladly to tasks which were else unwelcome. It is to this law of our nature that historical Christianity appeals. There may be, there have been some gifted souls who have risen—ah, with what effort and pain and misgiving !—to an apprehension of the truths of God without any knowledge of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life.

But they have been few and far between. As a rule, men come to comprehend spiritual truths, not by intuition, nor by reasoning them out from the data of moral experience, but by their love for that Divine Person who clothed the truth in "the loveliness of perfect deeds." All the truths which have the deepest hold upon us reach us in this way. We acquire them, not through laborious intellectual research, but through our trust in some wise teacher or some good man capable of kindling a moral enthusiasm in our hearts.

Take, as an illustration, this very truth of the resurrection of the dead and the mode in which our faith in it wavers and fluctuates. Sometimes it appears distinct and credible to us, nay, indubitable; at other times it becomes remote, dubious, improbable, well-nigh incredible. If we search for the cause of this oscillation of thought and faith, we shall commonly find, I think, that we doubt the truth when we are hurt and depressed by some new instance of the baseness and depravity of men. Persons whom we know—perhaps the persons we know best, ourselves namely—are guilty of some great meanness or wickedness. We are shocked and ashamed. We begin to ask why creatures so base should be permitted to live for ever, perhaps to doubt whether they will live for ever. On the other hand, we see them

attempt or achieve some noble action ; we see them touched and raised to the heroic point by the inspirations of love—love of country, or love of wife and children, or love of wisdom, or love of God ; and we begin to believe again in the nobility of human nature, in the possibility of its perfection. It is incredible to us that creatures so noble in faculty and capable of so high a strain should perish. We are sure that they will, that they must, live for ever. In short, our faith in truth depends largely on our faith in persons, and changes as that changes.

It is simply an extension of this law which makes historical Christianity so much more valuable to us than a doctrinal creed—a series of moral propositions ; and faith in the resurrection of Christ so much more potent and impressive than the abstract truth of the general resurrection of the dead. Believing the Gospel Record, we believe that there is a future life for man, not simply because we crave it, nor because the analogies of nature suggest it, nor because at times we find in ourselves or our fellows noble faculties which fit us for it ; but because we believe in Jesus the Perfect Man, in Christ, “the Life indeed.” In Him the humanity, so weak and imperfect in us and in our neighbours, is strong, noble, complete. All the littlenesses and basenesses we find in

ourselves are as nothing when compared with his divine and perfect manhood. Our faith is not a mere assent to the abstract truths which He taught, but a passionate devotion to Him who loved us; who, in the greatness of his love, lived and died for us, and rose again to recreate us in his image, after his likeness. And, therefore, in so far as we hold fast our faith in Him, we believe in life and immortality even when men shock us by their baseness, even when we ourselves are base: for our faith rests *on Him*, not on ourselves or them, and must stand firm until his perfection change to imperfection.

Now just as a moral Faith requires moral proof, so also an historical Faith requires historical proof. It is the historical proof to the historical fact of Christ's resurrection which St. Paul here lays before us. Mark what the proof is. Historical facts depend on testimony. If we are to be convinced that a certain event transpired in the past, our very first demand is that men of character and credibility should assure us, from their personal knowledge, that it did take place. If their character is high, if their credibility has been put to the test and stood it, if they were competent judges of the fact, if we see that they had no motive for bearing false witness, and were incapable of bearing it, however strong the

inducement, we really have no alternative : we can only listen to and receive their testimony.

Have we this kind of proof for the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ ?

Within thirty years of His death, St. Paul affirms that there were hundreds of witnesses to the fact that God had raised Christ from the dead, most of whom were still alive. Mark how absolute he is. Modern theologians, bent on eliminating the miraculous element of Revelation, have been known to affirm that "the Apostles were deceived," misled by their hopes, by "their predisposition to visions," and that "the resurrection of Christ is not an essential of the Christian system." But St. Paul will not admit either conclusion. Just as he affirms that the resurrection of Christ is an essential of the Faith—"if Christ be not raised, our preaching is vain and your faith is also vain"—so also he denies the possibility of mistake on the part of its witnesses. He will not hear of it. He will not for a moment concede that either he or his brethren were betrayed by illusory phenomena, by their predisposition to visions, by their strong imaginations. The only alternative he admits is (ver. 15): "Either we are '*false* witnesses'—false, and not mistaken, or else the fact we attest is true. Either the fact is true, or we are the most profane and blas-

phemous of false witnesses—witnesses who lie about God, and before and against God.”* There was no mistake. On a fact so sacred and momentous there could be no mistake. The resurrection of Christ was, or it was not, a matter of plain fact. Either He did, or He did not, appear after his death to Cephas, to James, to the Twelve, to the Five Hundred. So many men, some of them amongst the most cautious, slow, sceptical of men, could not possibly have been deceived. If the

* “They step forward as witnesses who have seen the risen Saviour, while yet He is not risen. They are thus false witnesses. They declare that God has raised up Christ, when He has not done it. They have thus become false witnesses of God. . . . The expressions are finely chosen so as to place the crime in as clear a light as possible. ‘We are *found* false witnesses.’ We are not only such, but we are discovered to be such; we stand in that position. ‘False witnesses,’ not deluded, but deceivers—those who testify that they have seen what they have not seen. ‘False witnesses of God.’ The genitive is used in order to point out Him of whom they testified, namely, God, that *He* had done what He had not done: and this testimony Paul terms ‘against God.’”—RÜCKERT, *in loco*.

“The Apostles, and all who testified that they had seen Christ after his resurrection, would be shown to be liars and sinners against God, whose witnesses they had professed to be, and of whom they had testified that He had done a thing which He did not do. They would thus appear to have been testifying rather *against* God (than for Him), since they had ascribed it to his holy will, that He had been pleased to raise Christ from the dead, whilst He had not done so.”—BILLROTH, *in loco*.

“For all testimony is *against* God which says that God did something which He did not do. (*Contra* Deum enim est testimonium omne, quod Deum fecisse dicit id, quod non fecit.) If then it be a crime to speak falsely of a man, how much more of God? If any one adulterate the coin of the realm, he is severely punished: how much more he that adulterates that of God: for miracles are the coin of Deity (*Miracula enim Dei moneta*).”—GROTIUS, *in loco*.

fact they affirmed did not take place, they had no motive for affirming, but every motive for denying it. If the man Christ Jesus were only a dead Jew—what could they possibly gain by setting themselves against all the currents of public opinion and private interest? *He* could not help them. The priests and magistrates could very obviously injure and degrade them. Was it likely, is it credible, that for the sake of a lie—a lie so monstrous and unprofitable as that a poor dead Jew had come to life—they would forfeit the respect of their neighbours, incur the ban of the priests, provoke the wrath of the magistrate, that they would give up all the sweet uses of this life and risk an everlasting damnation in the world to come? Had they been the vilest reprobates from “the stews” of Corinth or “the hells” of Rome, a folly so monstrous, so motiveless, would have been incredible. But if, instead of reprobates de-humanised by vice, they were brave, veracious, disinterested men, in what terms can we express the incredibility of the hypothesis?

Look then at St. Paul. Here was a man the whole bent of whose nature and culture predisposed him to reject the Christian facts. A devout and learned Jew, bound by conviction and by every motive of interest and ambition to be zealous for the Hebrew Faith, in his zeal for it, he had “persecuted the Church of God.”

Is it so much as conceivable that he should belie his convictions, sacrifice his interests, surrender his ambitions, in order to lie about the God whom he held in the profoundest fear and reverence? To my mind there is an indescribable pathos in the mere fact that he should pen the monstrous hypothesis. That *he* should be a false witness of God—he, who worshipped God with the most awful reverence, whose love for Him was the root from which all other affections grew, whose whole life was a sacrifice to righteousness and truth! That *he* should be a liar who loved the truth more than life, more than rest, more than peace! Can you believe it? Can any man believe it? If this Paul, who has laid his whole heart bare to us, whom we know better than we know any of our neighbours—if *he* were a liar, whom can we trust? Yet he says he was a liar, if Christ did not rise from the dead.

Most of us are familiar with the sound of truth. If a man speak to us from platform or pulpit, and does not believe, or does not feel, what he says, there is an instinct in us which at once detects his insincerity. If we go into a court of law and hear an advocate trying to make the worse appear the better cause, to snatch a verdict rather than to demand justice, we can generally detect his want of faith in his client's case, although he

simulate all the fervours of sincere conviction. There is a certain *ring* in truth by which we distinguish it from all counterfeits. Well, read—I do not say all St. Paul wrote, or even much of it, but read—only this chapter on the Resurrection. Can you believe that the man who wrote it was saying what was false, what he knew to be false as the words fell from his pen? Does it not *ring* with the clear accents of truth throughout? Is not every word *vital* with truth and sincerity? I defy you to read it, and then say that its author was consciously bearing false witness of God. You cannot but admit that he believed the fact he affirms—believed it with all his heart. And St. Paul says the fact was one on which there could be no doubt, no mistake: that either he had seen the risen Lord or that he was uttering a wilful lie—affirming that God had raised Jesus from the dead when he knew very well that the dead rise not.

Other witnesses are the Apostles Peter and James (ver. 5 and 7).^{*} Now James was a just man, one of those rigid uncompromising Hebrews, untender but true,

^{*} For the appearance to Peter, compare with v. 5, Luke xxiv. 34. Of the appearance to James we have no other mention in the New Testament. But in "the Gospel to the Hebrews," probably the most ancient and sober of the apocryphal Gospels, we are told that James, the brother of the Lord, vowed that, after partaking of the Last Supper, he would not break his fast until he had seen the Lord "arise from them that sleep." To him, therefore, the Lord presents Himself on the morning of the resurrection. He commands

to whom not a lie merely, but the mere toleration of a lie, seems to have been impossible. And Peter was a brave man—a brave man being almost invariably a man of honest fearless speech, for “ ’tis conscience,” *i.e.*, consciousness of fault and defect, “ that makes cowards of us all.” It is very true that, in a moment of passionate excitement and bewilderment, he told a lie, denying the Master he loved. It is also true, as we might have expected from the character of the man, that, after telling it, “ he went out and wept bitterly.” This sin at least was foreign to his nature, a sin from which he might well account himself safe. And it was after his bitter repentance, when his whole demeanour was changed, that he went forth and proclaimed, before brutal priests and brutal mob, that the Man, whom he had denied and they had crucified, God had raised from the dead. Both James and Peter devoted their lives to the affirmation of this fact. They died for affirming it. Are we to believe that a conspicuously just man and a man as conspicuously brave devoted their whole energy to the commission of a sin utterly alien to their several characters? that the just man lied and the brave man lied, and yet that a table and bread be brought. And immediately, “ He took the bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to James the Just, saying, ‘ My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man has risen from them that sleep.’ ”—JEROME, *De Vir. Ill. c. 2.*

remained brave and just? that two of the most religious of men spent their whole lives in lying about God, and yet grew in piety to the end? Unless we are prepared to believe this "miracle of the devil," we must accept their testimony to God's miracle—that He raised up Jesus from the dead. We cannot get quit of miracle. We can only choose between an evil miracle which shocks reason, and conscience, and heart, and a miracle of divine mercy in which heart, and conscience, and reason may repose and rejoice.

Not only Peter, and James, and Paul, but "the Twelve," *i.e.*, the whole Apostolic College,* are found false witnesses, if God raised not their Master from the dead (ver. 5, 7). That is to say, the very men, and the only men, who gave up all to follow the truth—men who at the lowest were raised by faith in Christ to a moral elevation above any the world had then touched—men so hard to persuade as Thomas—men of John's pure and heavenly spirit—were liars all of them, and knew that

* "*The Twelve.*" Probably only ten of the Apostles were present. Iscariot certainly was not with them. And from the fact that in ver. 7 an appearance "to all the Apostles" is mentioned, it seems likely that this appearance to "the Twelve" is that recorded in John xx. 19—23, and from which Thomas also was absent. "The Twelve" was an official title; and there is no more impropriety in using it of the Apostolic band when one or two were absent than there was in the Roman use of the words *triumviri*, *decemviri*, *centumviri*, when their numbers were not complete, or in Xenophon's allusions to "the Thirty" after the death of Critias.

they were liars, and died in the endeavour—which God permitted to succeed—to palm their lie upon the world ! If we could believe that, what else could we believe ? If we could believe that the wisest and holiest of men were mere rogues and impostors, bent at all hazards on duping the world to its destruction, what would become of our faith in humanity or our hope for it ? What would be left us but to escape as speedily as we could from this vile crowd of liars and their dupes ?

Lest it should be said that the Twelve were Apostles and leaders, and had a faith to establish, even though that faith were founded on a lie, we have the testimony of the Five Hundred Brethren, most of whom remained alive to St. Paul's day (ver. 6). The appearance of the Lord to this large company of the brethren must have been that manifestation of Himself on the appointed mountain in Galilee which St. Matthew records,* since nowhere but in Galilee could so many as five hundred disciples of Christ have been found. Among the Five Hundred, as among the Twelve, there were men of a sceptical habit, men not to be cajoled, nor easily convinced of the truth of any fact which transcended the limits of previous experience ; for St. Matthew tells us that when Jesus appeared to them, "they worshipped

* Comp. Matt. xxviii. 16, 17, with Acts i. 15.

Him, *but some doubted.*" It was not till they had received every proof which scepticism could demand that they confessed the Lord to be verily risen from the dead, and went forth into all nations to preach Jesus and the Resurrection. Why should these five hundred peasants and fishermen have believed a lie, if it were a lie so easy of disproof? *They* were not committed to any imposture. They were not predisposed to believe that it was Jesus of Nazareth who talked with them. If they had once hoped that this was He who should redeem Israel, they had buried the hope in his grave. As the sequel proved, they were men so good and brave, that they could leave parents, wives, children, houses, lands, goods, in order to carry the tidings of salvation through the world, and die for their faith, not with composure only, but with a joy that turned the horrors of martyrdom into holiday festivity and triumph. And these men—so cautious, so sceptical, so brave, so good—were fully persuaded that God had raised Jesus from the dead, and, in virtue of this persuasion, conquered a hostile and unbelieving world.*

* Dr. Prideaux and others urge the testimony of the Five Hundred as a decisive proof of the resurrection of Christ. "Had it been an imposture," they argue, "so many false hearts and tongues could never have acted in concert; nor would they all have kept a secret which remorse, interest, and perhaps often torture, might urge them to divulge; especially as there had

What, then, shall we say to this testimony to the resurrection of Christ? What *can* we say? Is it credible that five hundred of the best and bravest of men—men the most devout and with the most awful reverence for God—lied about God and conquered the world with their lie? If we are not to believe the historical fact to which they bear witness with one consent, what can we believe? To what historical fact more than a century old can we produce so many witnesses of a character so high and noble? If we are not to believe the Twelve and the Five Hundred, we can believe no man, and least of all ourselves. To reject their testimony is to reject all testimony; it is to reduce the whole realm of historical fact to a mirage shifting for ever into new and still deceptive forms. To suppose that men of their character banded together as false witnesses of God to palm an imposture on the world, and that they succeeded in their attempt, is to accredit a miracle the most monstrous, malignant, incredible; it is to seat the dark spirit of evil, the very father of lies, on the throne of God. Unless we are prepared for that, we may meet all the forces of scepticism with the triumphant conclusion,

been one traitor amongst *the Twelve*, on account of which, had they been conscious of fraud, a general suspicion of each other's secrecy must have arisen."—VALPY'S *Greek Testament*, *in loco*.

“Now is Christ raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep.”

II. *The Moral Consequences of denying the Resurrection.*
—“If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not raised” (ver. 13): “our preaching is vain and your faith is vain” (vers. 14, 17): “those who fell asleep in Christ perished” (ver. 18): “we are of all men most miserable” (ver. 19). The fourfold argument which the Apostle uses in these verses is known to logicians as the *reductio ad absurdum*. He does not so much attempt to demonstrate his own conclusion, as to show that the opposite conclusion is loaded with absurd and monstrous consequences which render it altogether intolerable.

Now, some of the Corinthians did hold this opposite conclusion. They denied the resurrection of the dead body. They said, “All Paul’s teaching about the resurrection means simply an inward spiritual revival, a death to sin, and a rising to holiness. He does not teach, we cannot believe, that these vile bodies, the native home of evil, are to be raised from the tomb. Once quit of them, we are quit of them for ever.” St. Paul meets this misapprehension of his meaning in various ways, and, among them, by pointing out the consequences to which it logically conducts.

(1.) The first consequence is, *That if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not raised.* This was the first absurdity involved in their denial of the resurrection of the body. For the Apostles affirmed that they had been eye-witnesses of his resurrection, that they had seen, and talked, and eaten with Him after He came forth from the grave. "Jesus and the Resurrection" was the theme of their ministry. If He had not been raised, then they, the very men whom the Corinthians confessed to have taught the truth, and the highest truth, were false witnesses of God. The pure water of truth sprung from the turbid and infected fountain of a lie!—a conclusion self-contradictory and absurd.

Nay, more: whatever else He was, the Lord Jesus was a man. He took our flesh, shared our nature. If *man* perishes in the grave, the man Christ Jesus perished in the grave. That *this* man should have perished, St. Paul holds to be monstrous and unnatural. *He*, at least, was true, and pure, and good—the best man the world had seen. While He was alive, He affirmed that He would both lay down his life and take it up again. It was on the ground that He was pure from sin, and therefore beyond the scope of death, which is the wage and consequence of sin, that He founded his claim to be the

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Lord and Redeemer of men. On this ground He joined issue with the Sadducees who denied the possibility of any resurrection, and with the Pharisees who denied the possibility of *his* resurrection. If Christ did not rise, the Pharisees and Sadducees were right, and He was wrong. If Christ did not rise, then the wisest, the holiest, the most perfect of men held and taught a lie—founded his life and ministry on a lie. If Christ did not rise—if all He gained by his grace and wisdom, his piety and love, was thirty years of toil and sorrow, culminating in a shameful death under a frowning heaven—what is God that we should serve Him? what is life that we should love it? what is virtue that we should pursue it? If we believe in a God at all, if we believe that righteousness and love are his attributes, it is utterly, monstrously illogical to suppose that under his rule, by his ordinance or permission, the best Man—the Man so wise, so gentle, so pure, that at his name every knee bows in reverence—after a brief sad life, full of labour, and grief, and defeat, went down into the thick blackness of annihilation. Such a life *demand*s a life beyond the grave. A story so fair must have a sequel. A work so divine must mount to its natural and appropriate close. If He who hung upon the cross did not rise to the throne, there is no God, or God is not just.

This is the dilemma to which St. Paul reduces us. If we would believe in God, we must believe that He raised up Christ from the dead. We cannot

“assert eternal Providence
And justify the ways of God to man,”

if *the Man* had no reward but the cross, no crown but the crown of thorns. But if He, if one man, was raised from the dead, how say some that there is *no* resurrection of the dead? One instance to the contrary disposes of an universal negative as effectually as a thousand or a million. The raising of one man proves that there *is* a resurrection, that there may be a resurrection for all.*

(2.) The second consequence is, *That if Christ be not raised, then is our preaching vain; and your faith is also vain: ye are yet in your sins.* To affirm that the Christian faith should fail to redeem men from sin, is as absurd, in the Apostle's judgment, as that the life of Christ should end in death. But the absurdity is not obvious; it needs to be drawn out. The implied premiss on which the Apostle's argument rests is—That any faith which does not offer immortality is incompetent to

* So Rückert, *in loco*. “What is universally impossible cannot occur in a particular definite instance. If there be found no place for the return of the dead to life, then Christ is not restored to life, but is dead, as all others are.”

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deliver men from their bondage to evil lusts. And this thought was habitual and familiar to him. It crops out in all his Epistles; it finds distinct expression in ver. 32 of this Chapter. He there openly affirms that, if men believe they are to die like beasts, they will live like beasts; that, if they have no hope of immortality, they will say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." It is this thought which finds indirect expression here, where he argues that if there be no resurrection, no future life, his preaching and their faith in it are "vain"—*i. e.*, impotent, unsubstantial, futile—and cannot redeem men from sin.

Does not universal history confirm his thought? Have not men in every age, when hopeless and despairing of the future, resigned themselves to the cravings of appetite and passion? Is it not natural that they should? Do not *we* find that it needs the strongest hope, the firmest persuasion of a happy immortality, to raise us above the urgencies of sense? With these craving passions constantly solicited from without, should we not only too easily become as the beasts that perish if we believed that we should perish with them? There may have been splendid exceptions to the rule, though even that is doubtful. Of the wise heathen, who reflected the lustre of "that Light which lighteth every man that cometh

into the world," the wisest and best—men such as Socrates, Plato, Cicero—have left behind them elaborate arguments in favour of a life to come, and have strongly insisted on the retributions of the future state. Probably the Stoics—Seneca, Epictetus, Aurelius (and I account Epictetus the best man I have met out of the Christian pale)—had no more than a mere conjecture, a mere shadowy and indefinite hope of life in death and beyond it. Possibly, though there are hints in *the Enchiridion* which point in the opposite direction, they had not so much as that. Certainly a distinct belief in the immortality of man was not among their common and strongest incentives to a righteous life ; their ruling motive was a certain stern admiration of virtue for its intrinsic charms, for its present rewards, combined with a steadfast faith in the kind justice of God. But even of the Stoics I know only two—Epictetus the slave, and the Emperor Aurelius—in whom these motives were of a power to raise them above the lures of sense and luxury, of the lust of the eye and the pride of life. And our own hearts will tell us, that to the great mass of men motives so lofty and abstract would have little attraction ; that only faith in a future retributive life is sufficient to save them from their lusts. If St. Paul had not been able to point to a resurrection which gave assurance of the life to come, he

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might well have felt that his preaching was vain, that the faith of his converts was also vain.*

Nevertheless, we must not forget that there are those who do not accept this conclusion. There is here in England a small, but very influential, class of thinkers who maintain that then only do we rise to the true virtue and the true piety when we serve God without hope of reward. The hope of reward, even in a future life, they affirm to be only another form of that selfishness from which it is the very office of religion to deliver us. They

* *Athénagoras*, the accomplished Athenian philosopher, who became one of the earliest and ablest defenders of the Christian faith (*circa* A.D. 177), in his essay on "The Resurrection of the Dead" (chap. xix.), has a passage on the moral consequences of denying the resurrection which has much besides its antiquity to recommend it. He says: "If no judgment were to be passed on the actions of men, men would have no advantage over the irrational creatures, but would rather fare worse than these do, inasmuch as they keep their passions in subjection, and concern themselves about piety and righteousness and the virtues, when a life after the manner of the brutes would be the best, virtue would be absurd, the threat of judgment a theme for broad laughter, indulgence in every kind of pleasure the highest good, and the common resolve and one law of all these would be that maxim, so dear to the intemperate and lewd, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die!'" He proceeds to argue that, "if the Maker of man takes any concern about his own works, and the distinction is anywhere to be found between those who have lived well and ill, it must be either in the present life or after death." Obviously, such a judgment does not take place in this life, for here "neither do the good obtain the rewards of virtue nor the wicked receive the wages of vice;" *ex hypothesi*, there is to be no such judgment hereafter: and therefore men, unjudged and unrewarded, are reduced to the level, or below the level, of the beasts that perish. This is the argument of Anaxagoras; and though, as we shall find, it needs some qualification, it throws welcome light on two or three of the points we shall have to touch.

deny the resurrection ; they do not accept the doctrine of a future life. They say that so long as *we* believe it, and hope for it, and make it our motive for obedience to the Divine law, we are simply seeking a selfish reward, and have no true charity or piety in us.

Now this view is so plausible, it has so much truth in it, we so often hear it, that it becomes us to consider it fairly, and to ask whether or not it expresses the whole truth. Probably we shall all admit, that to do that which is right merely because it pays best *is* selfish ; and that it remains selfish even when we ask what will pay best, what will be most for our personal advantage and enjoyment in eternity as well as in time. If a man say,—“I should like to commit this sin, or to indulge that base passion, but I won't do it, because if I do I shall suffer for it hereafter”—if he have no nobler motive than that, he is simply striking a profit and loss account ; he is occupied with a commercial rather than a religious transaction. Nor is *the quality* of his action altered if his “hereafter” is a long way off, in the future, not in the present, world ; if he abstains from a sin merely because he is afraid of hell, and wants to go to heaven. In him there is no love of truth or virtue for its own sake, no willingness to sacrifice himself from love to God or his neighbours. He is a prudent rather than a pious

man. He lacks the divine charity which led Moses to entreat that God would blot him from his book unless Israel might live ; which prompted Paul to wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren's sake, his kinsmen according to the flesh ; and which moved the Lord Jesus, not simply to wish Himself accursed, but to become a curse for us. Religion is not a judicious speculation or a good investment ; its very essence is the love that conquers and sacrifices self.

So much we shall probably admit. But does it follow that we must therefore give up the hope of immortality? Is that a base and selfish hope? Not of necessity; for both Paul and the Lord Jesus indulged that hope, and St. Paul was not selfish, nor was the Lord Jesus. We need not—when we are at our best, we do not—long and hope for a future life selfishly. To us it is not, or it should not be, a mere hope of being well off and happy in our personal conditions ; but a hope for more life and fuller, a hope that we may still be permitted to serve God in serving our neighbour, and that we may serve both God and our neighbour better than we do here. It is *this* hope which redeems us from selfishness, from sin. Apart from this, we can neither love God nor man as we should. Ah, how poor our life in this world is if we are sincerely trying to be good! What a constant struggle

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against taints of blood and defects of will, against the temptations of sense and intellect and passion ! How often we suffer defeat ! what a succession of miseries we have to meet ! how fruitless the conflict and labour often seem ! If we did not hope some day to break from these gross, miserable, degrading bonds—to become perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect—what should we have to live for ? Posterity ! But if the men of future ages, after living a life like ours, are to perish, to rot in cold oblivion, why should we care much for them ? or, rather, pitying their miseries, should we not best prove our care for them by an universal act of suicide ? Take away the immortality, or possible immortality of men, and you take away all dignity and value from their life, all motive for loving them and serving them. It is only as we believe in our immortality and theirs that we can much care for them or deny ourselves in much for their sake. If the dead live not, our preaching would be vain, and their faith vain. We should neither free men from their sins, nor greatly care to free them. But a religious faith which does not save men from sin is a mere contradiction, a mere absurdity. It is the very meaning and function of religion to *rebind* erring men to God, to his love and service ; and how can sinful men be reconciled to the holy God except as they are delivered from their

sins? A religion that does not redeem, is no religion. And therefore St. Paul uses a sound argument when he affirms that the Gospel, or faith in the Gospel, would be utterly vain and worthless if it promised no resurrection from the dead, if it gave no sure and certain hope of immortality.

(3.) The third consequence is, *That if there be no resurrection for men*—and there can be none if the Perfect Man was not raised—*then those who fell asleep in Christ perished.** This, of course, is simply a deduction from the first consequence; for if Christ were not raised, those who slept in Him would share his fate—the Christian dead would perish as He perished whom they loved and served. But St. Paul draws out this deduction, and lays emphasis upon it, I apprehend, because he knows it would touch the hearts of his readers and predispose them to receive the truth. It is hard for us to believe that *we* shall perish when we die; for even when the body grows weak with age, the spirit is young and strong; we feel capable of much and higher work; life has held out many promises not yet fulfilled. Imperfect,

* "If Christ has effected no deliverance, then perdition will be the common doom of all without distinction, the living and the dead. In respect to the living, however, there is one advantage. Though he have hitherto mistaken the way, he may yet by some other path reach the goal: but all the dead—they are given over a prey to perdition without redemption."—RÜCKERT, *in loco*.

craven, and sinful as we know ourselves to be, we feel that we have it in us to become good and brave and wise, if only we can rise into more favourable conditions ; and therefore we find it hard to believe that God will cast us away, and his pains on us—that He will not condescend to find a place and service for us in some mansion of his house. But it is harder still to believe that the men and women we have loved—who taught us what we know, who seemed to live so much more with God than we do, and who fell peacefully asleep in Christ—have been “ cast as rubbish to the void.” Deep down in our hearts, beneath all our hopes of life and goodness for ourselves, there may lurk a profound distrust of ourselves ; we may concede that we are so mean and selfish and wicked that *we* deserve to be consumed with the refuse of the world. But *these*, who have been so good, who have loved us so well, who have done so much for men, who have been so serviceable and honourable, and who, when they went from us, seemed more fitted for usefulness than ever,—are we to believe, can we believe, that they also have perished ? that there is nothing left of them but a little dust ? It is incredible, inconceivable. What, all the wise teachers who have departed this life stored with high faculties trained to noble uses—the martyrs who, for the love they bore the truth, went gaily

to their death—prophets and apostles who wrought righteousness, did wonders, subdued kingdoms—our fathers and mothers who served God in their generation with a constant heart—our innocent children, whose brief lives were a mere round of love and purity,—are they all gone—gone for ever? Has God no place for them, no use for them, in this vast universe? Have they, after witching the world with their nobleness, their charity, their wisdom, their innocence, their self-sacrifice, passed into eternal nothingness? If they have, what is life but an evil dream, with no God to order it, but only a dark, blind chance? That the obstinately wicked and perverse should perish, we could understand; that *we* should perish, we could understand, so perversely wicked are we: but that the holy and beloved dead who fell asleep in Christ should have perished—this is monstrous and incredible to us so long as we have any faith in God and his wise ordering of human life. They have not perished; they do but sleep. And soon they will awake from their happy dreams, to bless us once more with their wisdom and their love.*

“One sweet sad voice ennobles death,
And still, for eighteen centuries saith
Softly,—‘Ye meet again.’”

* “The ancients were wont to call the days of their death *Natalis*; not Dying, but Birthdays. It hath been the custom in the Holy Church (saith

(4.) The fourth consequence is, *That if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.* Not that the value of virtue and piety altogether depends on there being a life to come. They have intrinsic claims upon us. They are their own reward. Even though we expired at death, it would still be well that we should deny the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, that we should "remember God" and live together in neighbourly good-will. But the Christian life is self-conquest, self-denial, for ends so large that they cannot be reached in this world. To us, as we often say, the present is only a scene of discipline, a school in which we painfully acquire the virtuous habits we are to illustrate hereafter. If there be no hereafter, our pains are wasted—we have been mocked and deceived. Our life has been built up on an illusion; it has been ordered on a scale too vast. We have laboured for eternity, and, in preparing for that, we have wasted the years of time, or have neither improved nor enjoyed them as we might. Can anything be more miserable than to have been thus diverted from our proper aim and bliss? to have flung

Haymo) when a Saint of God departed this Life, to call it, not the day of his Death, but the day of his Nativity. . . . And when a friend leaveth this World, we are to bid him but Good night, in sure and certain *Hope* to meet him again in the great morning of the World."—GREGORIE, in a *Sermon on the Resurrection*.

away our years in chasing a bubble that bursts as we stretch out our hand to grasp it? * Think of St. Paul. Here was a man of the highest capacities and gifts. He devotes them to teaching a mere fiction. To teach it, he endures innumerable hardships, incredible labours; denies himself all the sweet uses of life. And all for what? All for nothing—all for a lie! Here is a life the most toilsome and hazardous, and it closes in frightful irreparable disappointment. Is it so much as conceivable that God should betray his noblest and most heroic children into a confusion so miserable, a defeat so hopeless?

We, indeed, are not Apostles, and do not waste our lives in labouring to teach men a lie. But think, too, how the case stands with us. If Christ did not rise, if there be no resurrection of the dead, still we have believed Jesus and the resurrection. It is our faith in Him and the

* "If through the course of this life we repose our entire reliance on Christ alone, abjuring all other grounds of confidence and sources of happiness, and yet Christ be not raised, but be still dead, our faith a dream, our sins not taken away, and Christ able to accomplish nothing which He promised—then we of all men are the most wretched." He is miserable who has no hope: far more miserable is he who has lost hope, who once "had a hope, who directed to it the whole force of his mind, regarding it as infallible, offering up everything else to it, when at the termination of his course, he finds himself deluded, and is compelled to know that he has sacrificed everything to a shadow, an empty dream; in short, that all his longing and struggling, his hastening and running, his losses and pains, have come to nought."—RÜCKERT, *in loco*.

heavenly life of which He spake, by which we have attained any virtue or goodness that we possess. That is to say, all our truthfulness, charity, kindness, temperance, have sprung from an utterly false view of human life; while those who have been greedy, sensual, selfish, impious, have nevertheless taken the true view, and, believing this life to be all, have revelled in the lusts of the flesh. It is not their base pleasures that we envy them. We are not the most miserable of men because we have refused to serve our lusts. But if we could believe that, under the rule of God, to trust a lie was the only way to become kind, and pure, and good, that to know the truth was to become mean, and selfish, and base,—what misery were comparable with ours? For us, the very foundations of the universe would be shaken out of their place; we should have no dignity in our life, no hope in our death: on earth we should have no choice but to believe a lie, in heaven no God but an enemy and a betrayer. We should be of all men most miserable: for that we *were* men would be our misery.

Unless, then, we are prepared to believe these monstrous absurdities, that, although there is a Just and Almighty Lord, the best men are the most miserable, that the noblest perish unrecompensed, that God rewarded the perfect life of Christ with annihilation, we must

believe that "Christ is risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that sleep." St. Paul will not permit us to detach the resurrection from the Christian faith and still call ourselves Christians; he affirms it to be of the very substance of the Faith: nor will he suffer us to suppose that he and the other witnesses of the resurrection were misled by their hopes, by illusory phenomena, by their "predisposition to visions;" he affirms that they were *false* witnesses and not mistaken, if Christ did not rise. Our only alternative lies between believing a series of incredibilities, to believe in which would simply be the death of all love for God and man; or believing in a miracle, to believe in which at least promises life and peace and joy everlasting. If it be hard for us to accredit a miracle of grace and mercy, it would be harder still, it is simply impossible, for us to believe in an unjust and cruel God who betrays us, by a lie, into vain endeavours after holiness and virtue; and then, as the reward of our credulity, smites us into sudden eternal death. With this sole alternative before us, if we must either accept four absurdities so monstrous and unnatural that they dethrone God and reduce human life to an evil dream, or believe in a supernatural act of grace—supernatural to us, but most natural to Him who is above nature as well as in it—our choice is not hard. We cannot part

with God. We must believe in Him, and therefore we also believe in Christ. We believe that God raised up Christ from the dead, and rejoice in the sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection unto life. We believe that "God both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his power."

III.

THE ADAM AND THE CHRIST.

1 COR. XV. 20—22.



TWO points of his great argument the Apostle has already made good. He has proved (1) the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and (2) the general resurrection of the dead. For (1) the resurrection of Christ he has adduced a weight of testimony such as can be adduced for few historical facts: his own testimony, that of Peter, of James, of the twelve Apostles, and of the Five Hundred Brethren. All these witnesses had ample opportunities of investigating the fact they attest. They were not pre-disposed to accredit, but rather to discredit it. It was contrary to their hereditary and personal prepossessions. Their belief in it was "a confession of error before it was an assertion of faith." It was no "idle assent, but the spring of a new life," which transformed their character, and gave a new turn to their thoughts, their

affections, their aims. And, therefore, since with one consent they affirm that God raised Jesus from the dead, unless we condemn them as "false witnesses of God," we must accept their testimony.

In proof of (2) the general resurrection of the dead, St. Paul has insisted on the monstrous and absurd consequences which follow on a denial of it. The alternative he places before us is, "Either admit that the dead rise, or confess that, under the rule of a wise and just God, the best men are the most wretched, and the noblest of men perish unrecompensed; that the Gospel is a lie, although it is also the purest system of faith and morals ever vouchsafed to man, and that the reward of Christ's sublime life was annihilation." In brief, his alternative is, faith in the resurrection or a denial of the Divine Providence. If we believe in God, we must also believe in Christ; we must believe that He is risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that sleep.

This is the conclusion in which St. Paul lands us. Resting in this conclusion, he permits himself for a time to leave the strict line of his argument. Here, as often elsewhere when he touches on the exaltation of Christ, he carries it up to the highest point, where it loses itself in the glory of God. Verses 21—28 contain a digression, in which the "mysteries" of the Christian faith are

opened to us, and our thoughts are strained to their loftiest pitch.

The starting-point of this digression is, "Now is Christ raised from the dead, *the firstfruits of them that sleep*" (ver. 20). We shall reach the significance of the image here employed only as we recall the antique Hebrew custom to which it refers. On the second day of the Paschal Feast, the Jews brought the first sheaf cut in their fields, and presented it before the Lord. The sheaf was of barley, and, in later times, was taken from the vicinity of Jerusalem. On the eve of the festival, certain members of the Sanhedrin went out into the fields to select and tie together the finest ears. On the following evening these were cut with all possible publicity and carried to the Temple. This was the firstfruits, and not till this had been offered to the Lord could the reaping begin. What did the Jews mean by giving the first and best sheaf to God? Simply that they dedicated *that* to Him? No; they meant *that* simply as a symbol, an earnest of the entire harvest. By dedicating the first sheaf they meant to dedicate the harvest to God, to acknowledge that this also was his, that it should be accepted as his gift and consecrated to his service. Here, in England, when a landed proprietor shuts up a private road on one day in the year, does that mean

that the road belongs to him on that day only? It means that he claims it on that day in order to assert his right to it on every day. In like manner, God claimed the first sheaf for his altar to vindicate his claim to the whole harvest. Thus St. Paul himself elsewhere argues, "If the firstfruits be holy, the lump"—*i.e.*, the mass, the entire harvest—"is also holy." So that when he here affirms Christ to be "the firstfruits of them that sleep," what he means is, that in raising Christ from the dead, God claimed the first and best in order to show that all were his, raised *the Man* in order to prove that in due time He would raise *all men*. Death, the reaper, brought this first and most perfect shock of corn to God, to testify that the whole produce of the field—"the field is the world"—was holy to the Lord. The resurrection of Christ is the earnest of the general resurrection of the dead.

This is the Apostle's first thought; and this is part of his argument. It connects and binds together the two strands of thought he had already woven, attaching the resurrection of all men to the resurrection of the Man Christ Jesus. But here he diverges from the strict line of his argument. He asks how it comes to pass, on what grounds, Christ's resurrection is the earnest of the general resurrection. And the answer to this question plunges

him into the deepest mysteries of the faith. His answer is: "*Since* by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in the Adam all die, so also in the Christ shall all be made alive*" (ver. 21, 22).

He is not content with affirming the obvious fact, that as Adam died, so all men die. He traces the death of all to the death of the one: "By man came death;" "in the Adam all die." Nay—a harder saying still—he affirms the work of Christ to be coextensive and coefficient with the work of Adam. If all men died in Adam, all men live, or will live in Christ: "By man came also the resurrection of the dead;" "in the Christ shall *all* be made alive." If words have meaning, if the parallel between the Adam and the Christ is not illusory and misleading, St. Paul here affirms that the redemption of Christ is of as wide a scope, and of as potent an efficacy, as the sin of Adam; while, in the Epistle to the Romans,† he just as plainly affirms the results of Christ's redemption to be, if not of wider scope, at least of deeper efficacy than the sin which brought death into the world and all our woe. And, therefore, unless we choose to palter with words in a double sense, it is not enough to

* The Greek particle (*διουθεν*) which we translate "since," is a particle both of time and causality: and here it seems to imply that as it was man who destroyed life, so also it *must* be man who should restore it.

† Romans v. 12—21.

say that, through the grace of Christ, life is *offered* to all men and pressed upon them. For, first, that is not true. Millions of men, who died through Adam's sin, although they never heard his name, have not been offered life in Christ. And, again, read thus, the parallel does not hold good. The sin of Adam did more than offer death to men; it brought death upon them, and made it the common inevitable lot. If the grace of Christ is of an equal range and potency with the sin of Adam, *that* also must do more than offer its results to men; it must give them life—life in Christ must become their common inevitable lot. No interpretation which limits the benefits of his redemption to those who believe on Him can be accepted as satisfactory; since if the results of his "grace" are not as wide, as universal, as the results of Adam's "trespass," St. Paul draws a false parallel. Our "death" does not depend on our faith in Adam; how, then, can our "life" depend on our faith in Christ?

To find an interpretation, however, which shall at once square with the plain facts of human life and retain the plain meaning of St. Paul's words, is a task so difficult that, so far as my reading extends, the Commentators have utterly failed to achieve it. Not willingly, I think, but of compulsion, because no happier interpretation was within their reach, they have limited the

scope of Christ's redemption, which the Apostle declares to be universal, to those who believe in Him. It may sound impertinent to say, but I intend no impertinence in saying, that for the most part they are not satisfied with their own reading of St. Paul's words. As they move along the lines of his parallel, shortening the one, although they cannot shorten the other, they seem ill at ease; they bear themselves like men not content with the result they have reached, but confessing that they see their way to no larger result. Even if they are content with it, there are many who dare not accept it. When we study the parallel which the Apostle, both here and in the Romans, draws between Adam and Christ, we find it impossible to admit that any who suffer death through the trespass of Adam are to be shut out from the life which came by Christ. When, to take another instance, we hear the same Apostle express his hope * in "the living God, who is *the Saviour of all men*, especially of them that believe," and find the Commentators affirming that all he means is, "That God has made full and sufficient provision for the salvation of all," but that only in the faithful does "the universal salvation become actual," although we are sure they mean honestly, we cannot but feel that they make St. Paul say very much

* 1 Tim. iv. 10.

less than he meant. There must be a sense in which "the living God" is the actual "Saviour of *all men*;" there must be a sense in which "*all* are made alive in Christ," or we must admit that the inspired Apostle was less careful and exact in his use of language than uninspired men.

This is the alternative to which many of us have been driven; and, as we cannot for a moment admit St. Paul to have been in error, our only hope lies in discovering an interpretation of his words which we can cordially adopt. Such an interpretation I am about, with some natural diffidence, to suggest.*

First of all, then, let us observe that throughout the Scriptures, Christ, the Perfect Man, is also set forth as the Creative Word, "the Word," and "the Wisdom" of God. Without Him was not anything made that was made. By Him, "the Quickening Spirit," Adam was made—made in his image, after his similitude. Adam, by his trespass, defaced that divine image; but he did

* It is with an unfeigned diffidence that I offer even a suggestion on a point so difficult and perplexed. I do not suppose that a solution so obvious is as new to others as it is to me. Probably it has long since been discussed, perhaps condemned, although I have fallen in with no trace of it. I submit it to my brethren, on the simple ground that every student of the Word, who has lit on an interpretation which enables him to read in their plain sense passages previously obscure, is bound to propose it to those who have shared his perplexity.

not altogether obliterate it. He brought evil, disorder, death into our nature; but there was still in that nature some remnant of its original beauty and goodness. Evil was in men, but they did not straightway degenerate into demons, and say to evil, "Be thou our good." There was conflict in their souls in lieu of peace; but the very conflict implied some good in them at war with the evil. Evil might be the stronger in many, but in some good proved the stronger. And to this day our nature is a compound in which good and evil are strangely blended; the good of God, the evil of ourselves. In every child, if we see some bad tendencies, we also see some good tendencies, an image of God; and so long as they remain children, unless we spoil and pervert them, we see more good than evil. In them, our Lord's words, "Except ye become *as little children*, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven," warrant us in saying the good is very strong, the image of God fair and manifest. Whence do they derive that goodness? They derive it from Christ, the Creative Word. All in himself and in us that Adam could not, or did not, wholly spoil, is a remnant of man's original endowment; it is the work and gift of Christ. If in us, and in all men, there are two natures, two "laws," two "men," at strife—the one tending to evil, the other protesting against evil and inciting to good—

we derive the former from Adam, the latter from Christ. And therefore it is that the better man, the better self, in us speaks with an authority which the worse self never claims. When the evil self tempts us to sin, it never says "You must," or "It is right," but only "You may," or "It is not very wrong." It attempts to cajole and betray us; only the better self claims authority and commands. Why? Simply because the one is human, the other divine; simply because we derive the one from Adam, the other from Christ.

But, according to St. Paul, it is not as Creator alone that Christ saves us and gives us life: it is also as Redeemer, as the historic Christ, as the "Second Man," as "the Lord from heaven," who took our flesh and dwelt among us. Now, how the redemption wrought by Christ should affect and quicken us even before we receive it by faith, how it should work on our nature in the very way in which Adam's sin works upon it, is one of those things which are confessedly hard to be understood. Whatever our view of the dogma known as "original sin," I apprehend we all admit that the sins of the father do affect the very nature of his children, that we inherit predispositions to the forms of evil in which our parents have indulged, that *they* may be responsible for "defects of will and taints of blood"

with which *we* have to contend ; and that therefore, if by transgression our first parents fell from their purity, it may very well be that we are the worse, and the worse off, for their transgression. But it is not equally easy to see how the redemption of the Lord Jesus, how even his assumption of our nature, should have a similar effect on us before we believe on Him ; how we are the better for his "obedience," just as we are the worse for Adam's "disobedience." Yet a little consideration may suffice to show us that whatever Christ does must affect the whole human race in precisely the same way in which it is affected by Adam's sin, and even in larger measure and degree. For what gave Adam his power over us and the conditions of our life ? Simply the fact that he was our father ; in the subordinate sense, our maker. Like begets like. God begot Adam in his likeness ; Adam begot men in his likeness. Because Adam was our father—in some sense, our maker—whatever he did affects us. Had he perished in the garden, we should have perished in him. Had he remained obedient, we should have shared the reward of his obedience. As he transgressed, we suffer for his transgression. But who made Adam ? Christ, the Creative Word ; the Word that afterwards took flesh and became man. If, then, whatever Adam did affects us, simply because we descend from him, will not

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whatever Christ—from whom also we descend—does, affect us? and affect us by so much the more as Christ is greater than Adam? If we can conceive such an event as that Christ, the Living and Creative Word, should have perished, should not we all—Adam and the whole race—have perished in Him? And if He, our Maker, assumes our nature, and renders a perfect obedience, shall we not, must we not, all be the better for his obedience? He made us all. We all were, and are, in Him; and, therefore, whatever He does must affect us all. As well might the sun move from its place without influencing, in every part, the whole solar system, as the eternal Christ descend to earth, and dwell a Man among men, without sending a vital influence through the whole of humanity. The effect of his action on us is not, and cannot be, altogether limited by our conception of its effects, by our faith in its gracious purpose. We must be touched and changed by it, we must be the better for it, even though we never heard his name.

But what the better, and how? It is very natural that we should ask that question, and try to answer it. But before I suggest an answer to it, let us distinctly understand and admit that, even though we cannot answer it, we must not therefore refuse to believe what both reason and Scripture affirm. Plainly, the Scriptures teach that

the benefits of Christ's redemption extend to all men—to as many as die, to as many as are touched by Adam's trespass. Quite as plainly, reason affirms that, if Adam's offence injures all men, simply because they derive their life from him, much more must the obedience of Christ benefit them all, because both they and Adam derive their life from Christ. *This* is true, for both Scripture and reason affirm it, whether we can or cannot say *how* all men are the better for the redeeming work of the Lord from heaven.

Once assured of the truth, we may the more freely search for an answer to the question it suggests. That question is: *How* are all men the better for the grace of Christ? In what sense are they "saved" by it, and "quickenened" by it? How, in short, is St. Paul's parallel between Adam and Christ to be vindicated and explained?

Death, moral and physical, was the consequence, the reward, of Adam's transgression. Had he become *only what he had made himself*, he would have sunk irretrievably into evil. Had we in our nature only that which, in the strictest sense, we derive from *him*, we should be only evil, and that continually. That he did not, that we do not, become the mere bondslaves of evil, is all of "grace;" it is because we derive from Christ other and

better qualities than we inherit from Adam, because Adam derived from Christ other and better qualities than those which he added to or superinduced upon his nature. As we have seen, even before we believe in Christ, we have two natures, two men, in us ; or, as we phrase it, we have a better and a worse self contending in us for the mastery. Consider the children you know. Have they not, besides that in them which produces evil tempers and wilful disobediences, that also which inclines them to be simple and good, unselfish and tender ; that which makes them not only very sweet and dear to us, but the express type of Christian character ? Is not this better self, till they are spoiled, the ruling self?—stronger in them than the evil ? If not, why did the Lord Jesus place a little child before us as the pattern of heavenly excellence ? Nay, consider the very worst man you know. Is there not a double nature in him ? Even though he is in bondage to evil lusts, does he not, in his inmost heart, know it to be a bondage ? Does he not at times loathe the very sins he commits, and himself for committing them ? Is he not conscious that that in him which speaks for truth and righteousness has a rightful authority over him—that he *ought* to obey this rather than fleshly lusts ? In a word, has not even he a better self ? Does he not know that it is the better, and that it

should be supreme? Consider your own hearts. Remember what you were before you were "in Christ," if, happily, you are in Him. Even then, was there not the very conflict in you which is still carried on, the conflict between evil and good, between the natural and the spiritual, between the lower and the higher natures? If, putting aside for the moment all theological technicalities you were to say plainly and simply how the case stood with you, would you not say, "Yes, even then I approved the good, although I did that which is evil. I never did wrong, never yielded to base or sensual passions, without knowing that it was wrong—that I was bringing my better self, my true self, into a thralldom hateful and injurious to it. I knew that conscience claimed, and rightfully claimed, authority over me, that I was bound to obey it. At times I did obey it, though too often I gave way to cravings which I knew to be wrong."

These, then, are the facts of human experience which we have ascertained: that all men have two natures, two selves, a better and a worse, contending in them; that in children the better is stronger than the worse nature; that even in the worst men the better nature is more authoritative than the worse, that they know it to be the better, and that it ought to be obeyed. How shall we account for these facts? Shall we say, "We derive both these

natures from Adam?" or shall we not rather say, "Just as from Adam we derive an evil nature prone to sin, so from God we derive a better nature which wars against the evil in us. It is because this better nature comes from God, rather than from man, that it is stronger in us through the earlier years of life, and even to the end speaks with high and commanding authority?" If we read the facts of life in this latter sense, we read them in St. Paul's sense. Only St. Paul gives this reading a special form. He believes *Christ* to be God; he believes that it is *from Christ* that we derive the better self, just as it is from Adam that we derive the evil self. Nay, he calls this evil self "*the Adam*" in us, and the better self "*the Christ*" in us. He affirms that the interior conflict between evil and good, of which we are all conscious, is a conflict between the Adam and the Christ in us—between the "living soul" and the "life-giving spirit." So that, if we accept his terminology, we can say:—*This* is the benefit all men derive from the redemption of Christ, even before they believe in Him, even though they never believe in Him—that they have "the Christ" in them, just as the harm they inherit from Adam is that they have "the Adam" in them. But for the grace of Christ they would never have had that "better self," of which they are conscious even when they wrong it by sinning against

it. This "better self" would not have had the strength it has in them while they are children, nor the authority it claims to the very end of their lives. That they have a higher nature, which imperatively cries out for God, for goodness, for truth, which protests against the degradations of evil, which will not suffer them to be at peace so long as they serve sensual and selfish lusts,—this is the gift, the free gift, of the grace of Christ; and by so much as Christ is greater than Adam, nearer and more inward to us, by so much is the free gift of Christ of a more sovereign potency than the offence of Adam.

Whatever objections may lie against this answer to the question, How are all men the better for the grace of Christ?—and we shall presently consider the more obvious of them—it has at least one advantage: it enables us to read St. Paul's parallel between Adam and Christ in its plainest and most obvious sense. We read in the Epistle to the Romans, "The grace is not as the trespass. For if through the trespass of the one many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. (And the gift is not as that which came by the sin of one; for the judgment came of one to condemnation, but the free gift of many offences unto justification. For if by the trespass of the one death reigned through the

one, much more they who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as by one trespass judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by one righteous act the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as through the disobedience of the one the many were made sinners, so by the obedience of the One shall the many be made righteous." We read in the Epistle to the Corinthians, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead : for as in the Adam all die, even so in the Christ shall all be made alive." And when we read these and the like passages, we see, we cannot but admit, the Apostle to be arguing that the happy effects of Christ's obedience reach at least as far as the disastrous effects of Adam's disobedience, that both extend to all men. It shocks not our reason and humanity alone, but also our plain sense of honesty, to be told, as many tell us, that after all the Apostle does not mean to affirm that the grace of Christ reaches and blesses all men, though the sin of Adam unquestionably affects them all : that, in fact, the redemption of the Man from heaven is far more limited than the offence of the man taken from the dust. Yet how are men, even the sinful and disobedient, the better for Christ's redemption,

unless they derive from Him that better self which protests against their sins, which is ever striving to induce obedience, which is so strong in them in those early years when they most need its strength, and which always, even when they are at their very worst, claims an authority over them which they cannot deny, although they may disregard it? It is this thought, this conviction, this interpretation, which enables us to take St. Paul's words in their plain meaning, and to follow his parallel, on both sides of it, to all lengths.

Nevertheless, this interpretation is open to objections of varying degree and force. Perhaps the first objection to it in many minds will be this: "But Adam was the first man; we are affected in nature and condition by his sin in virtue of our descent from him. Christ did not come into the world for four thousand years after sin was in the world. How, then, can his redemption affect all men—even those who lived before his advent, and in whom there was the same conflict between evil and good, between the lower and the higher self, of which we are conscious in ourselves?" It might be enough to reply that Christ was in the world *before* Adam, or how could He have made Adam? that He has never left the world; that He was in Adam as a spirit of righteousness and truth after the fall, and in all who lived before the

Advent: for how else could He have taught them what they knew of the spiritual and eternal world? how else could they have striven against his Spirit? how else could they have tempted—as St. Paul tells us* some of them did—“tempt the Lord” Jesus? How else could the same Apostle affirm† that “all the fathers ate the same spiritual food” with us, “and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them, *and the Rock was Christ?*” But the fact is that this objection springs from our purely human way of regarding things. We are in time, and judge events by the measures of time. We are so made that we can only conceive of events locally and in succession—*i.e.*, within the limitations of time and space. But these limitations do not rise to heaven, nor restrain the Inhabitant of Eternity. There is no before and after with Him. His actions are not confined within the measures of our thoughts. If the eternal Christ had been the last man on the earth, none the less his redemption would have passed in its effects through all the eras of time,‡ and

* 1 Cor. x. 9.

† 1 Cor. x. 1–4. Comp. Heb. xi. 26.

‡ Keble has given fine expression to the backward sweep of Christ's redemption in his Hymn on “The Circumcision of Christ:”—

“Now of Thy love we deem
As of an ocean vast,
*Rising in tides against the stream
Of ages gone and past.*”

have moulded the destinies of all generations. We indeed cannot tell how ; but neither can we comprehend the mere conception of eternity : how, then, can we hope to comprehend Him who sits above all the years of time, seeing them rise, and change, and pass beneath his feet, or to calculate the issues of his redeeming work ?

Again, it may be asked, " But if all men are to live in Christ as all men die in Adam, does not the parallel, if fairly worked out, involve the ultimate recovery of the whole human race ? does it not replace human free-will with a divine necessity, and compel us to admit that all men, quite apart from their exercise of moral choice and their consequent varieties of moral condition, will be redeemed to life eternal ?" I think not ; for consider how the case stands. From Adam we derive a sinful nature, and come under the law of death. But are we obliged to yield to the sinful predispositions we inherit from him ? Have we no power to resist and conquer them ? It is part of our very argument that we derive a better nature from Christ, a nature which cries after God, which craves truth and goodness, which can know no rest till these are attained ; and that in virtue of this higher better nature we can, if we will—our willingness

implying our glad acceptance of all the aids with which God has mercifully provided us—subdue our evil perverseness and follow after that which is good. Both the Adam and the Christ are in us : the Adam with his “offence,” the Christ with his “grace ;” the Adam with his “disobedience,” the Christ with his “gift of righteousness.” And we have to choose between them. Yielding to the Adam, we die ; but if we yield to the Christ, we shall “never die,” but “reign in life” through Him. We are not compelled to yield to the one ; we know and feel that we ought not to yield to it : why, then, should we be compelled to yield to the other? If we are not obliged to yield to Adam’s sin, why should we be obliged to yield to Christ’s grace? We stand between the two, our will having perfect freedom of choice and action between the moral qualities and influences of which each is the centre. And therefore, even though all men should not be saved unto life eternal, yet all men are “made alive” in the Christ in precisely the same sense in which they all die in the Adam. The parallel holds good : wherever “the trespass” has come, there “the righteousness” has come ; wherever “death” has entered, there “the life” has entered : the results of Christ’s grace *are* coextensive and coefficient with the results of Adam’s offence.

If any, moved thereto by that dubious "*even though* all men should not be saved," still ask: "How think you? Will the better life which all men derive from Christ lengthen out into life everlasting?" we can only reply with the Apostle, "In the Adam all die; in the Christ all shall be made alive." Both the Adam and the Christ are in you and in all men. So often as you eschew evil and do good, the life of Christ stirs within you and asserts its lawful supremacy. So often as you yield to the evil that is in you and do the wrong you recognise as wrong, the Adam moves within you and usurps a throne to which it has no claim. If you submit to the usurpation, if you persistently "walk after the flesh," grieving and resisting Christ the Spirit, He may depart from you; your whole life may settle and degrade into a mere sensualism; you may serve and cleave to the Adam in you, to the perishable, till you perish with it, and you are "destroyed from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power." On the other hand, if you "walk after the spirit," if you follow and obey the Christ in you, Christ will be in you, the life of your life, and "the hope of glory." Death will have no more dominion over you than over Him.* All

* "Before man is life and death; and whether him liketh shall be give him" -- *Ecclesiasticus xv. 2*

you derived from Adam may decay, or lose its power—your flesh with its appetites and passions, even the “living soul,” with its intellectual energies, its lofty thoughts and imaginations. The eye may lose its lustre, your limbs their roundness, your muscles their vigour. The mind may relax its grasp, the memory grope in darkness, the imagination fail. But your hope of life and immortality does not rest on these. These all belong to the nature you derive from Adam, and by which you hold intercourse with the visible and the temporal. It is not in what you inherit from Adam, but in that you derive from Christ, that life and immortality reside. “As the outward man perishes, the inward man is renewed day by day.” The spirit ripens as the body decays. Again and again you have seen in those whom you love and have lost for a while how, as the organs of sense dissolve, and the intellect can no longer manifest itself in bright and vigorous forms, all spiritual graces—meekness, long-suffering, faith, hope, charity—shine with new force and lustre, giving their most splendid promise as the day goes down and the spirit nears its home. It will be thus with you. The Adam will die that the Christ may live; the image of the earthy will fade and disappear that the image of the heavenly may reveal itself in its true proportions

and fairest hues. Corruption will be clothed in incorruption, the mortal in immortality; and you will "pass in music," singing no wailing dirge nor "hearse-like carol," but the song of conquest and triumph, "Now thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

IV.

THE SEQUENCES OF THE RESURRECTION.

1 COR. XV. 23—28.



HAVE said that the paragraph which commences with ver. 21 and ends with ver. 28 contains a digression. It would have been more exact had I said that it contains two digressions; one, on the ground of the Apostle's hope for the general resurrection of the dead, and the other, on the time and manner in which that hope will be fulfilled. St. Paul's ground of hope is expressed in the words: "As in the Adam all die, so in the Christ all will be made alive; since as by man came death, by man also there has and will come the resurrection of the dead." But having found this immoveable basis of hope, as he rests upon it, he asks: *When*—when and *how* shall it be fulfilled?

This second digression is even more profound and mystical than the first. It deals with the future rather

than with the past, with the realities of the eternal world rather than with the facts of historic time, with dispensations and œconomies beyond our reach of thought. By studying his words patiently, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, we may form some conception of his meaning ; but we must not hope, I fear, to answer the questions which our partial conception of his meaning is sure to suggest. One of the advantages of taking any complete Scripture in hand is, that we are compelled to study passages which, because of their difficulty, we should otherwise pass by. But one of its drawbacks is, that we are also compelled to start questions to which we can give no adequate reply. Perhaps, however, *that* is good for us too. It may remind us how little we know and can know, and serve to confirm us in that humility to which alone the deep things of God are revealed.

The Apostle's question now is : When and how will the dead be raised ? And, generally speaking, his answer amounts to this. The resurrection of the dead is not a single act, nor is it confined to a single period ; it is a continuous process, a series of sequences. Commencing with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, it is to culminate in the final utter destruction of death and of him that has the power of death. All men are to be raised, "but every one in his own order," or, as the Greek phrase is,

“every one in his own *troop*.”* For the moment, as the Apostle looks out on the world, he sees, as its central fact and movement, an universal conflict between life and death, between the Lord of life and the tyrant of death. Christ the Lord has already achieved and celebrated a personal victory; but all other men either lie in apparent defeat, or are still in the press and thick of the conflict. What is to be the ultimate issue of that conflict? Its issue is to be that, through the power of his life, they also are to overcome. Troop after troop, through age after age, they will achieve their conquest, and defile before their victorious Captain with loud joyful acclamations and songs.

“Every one in his own troop,”—this is St. Paul’s first and general answer to the question, When and how will all men rise and live in Christ? But from this general, he passes on to a more special and complex, answer. He proceeds to distinguish three several stages in this continuous process, three several triumphs in this victory.

First, “Christ the firstfruits” (ver. 23). Now here we have a second reference to the Hebrew custom of offering the first sheaf of the harvest to God. This first sheaf,

* The word *τάγμα*, *ordo*, order, is not properly abstract, but it signifies that which is *ordered*, *arrayed*—as the ranks, divisions, cohorts in a warlike host.—RHCKERT, *in loco*.

as we have seen, was presented before the Lord to denote that not this alone but the whole harvest belonged to Him, and should both be received as his gift and devoted to his service. In like manner, Christ, the firstfruits of the dead, was raised to life and glory, in order to denote that the whole harvest of the dead belonged to God, and would, like the firstfruits, be given to Him who is not the God of the dead but of the living. The very fact that the Man Christ Jesus has been raised is, therefore, the pledge that all men will be raised. The harvest will follow the first sheaf into the garner of God. The first victory over death is the happy infallible omen of an universal victory.

Christ's resurrection, then—the resurrection which St. Paul has shown in the earlier verses of the Chapter to be attested by so many infallible proofs—is the first triumph in a series of triumphs over death. And the second triumph is that of the dead who die in the Lord. First, “Christ the firstfruits; *afterward they that are Christ's at his coming*” (ver. 23). “They that are Christ's” are, of course, those who believe on Him, who are one with Him, in whom his life is and reigns, subduing all inferior forms of life unto itself. In them He is to repeat his ancient victory over the grave. His life in them, as in Himself, is to conquer all the forces of death. It is impossible

that they, with his life in them, should be *holden* of death, though death may keep them in ward, or in trust, for a while. When Christ comes in his glory, they will break their bonds asunder, and escape into life and bliss everlasting.

All this is simple and familiar to our thoughts. But when we consider the phrase, "Christ *at his coming*," and ask, "When will that be?" or, "Do the dead in Christ rise before the other dead?"—and we can hardly help asking these questions, we begin to speculate on times and seasons which God has not disclosed to us, although He has spoken of them in his word. All we can wisely attempt is to listen to what He has said, and to put on it the simplest construction that we can. Just to clear our thoughts on this theme, let us ask St. Paul to be his own interpreter. His fullest utterance on it is contained in his Epistle to the Thessalonians.* The Thessalonians believed the second advent of the Lord to be imminent; and, for a time, St. Paul appears to have shared their expectation. Moreover, they apprehended, though he did not, that only those who were alive when Christ came would behold his glory, and reign with Him upon the earth. Hence they mourned, as those without hope, over their brethren who departed this life, and thus

* 1 Thess. iv. 13—17.

lost their thrones. To comfort them, the Apostle affirmed that as surely as Jesus died and rose again, so surely would God bring those who sleep in Him with Jesus at his coming. Those who are alive and remain will have no advantage over the Christian dead. When the trumpet sounds, and the Lord descends from heaven with a shout, the dead in Christ will rise from their graves—*rise first*; and then those who are alive will be caught up into the cloud of his glory, to meet Him and those who come with Him. Here, then, though he does not speak of an after and general resurrection of the dead, St. Paul does speak of a resurrection in which only those who sleep in Christ will take part, and those who look for his advent.

As his meaning is still obscure, let us call in another interpreter. In the Apocalypse,* St. John, to whom future things were revealed with a fulness and precision vouchsafed to none else, describes at length the very time and scene which were in St. Paul's mind. A great angel descends from heaven to bind him that has the power of death for a thousand years. Thrones are set, and all who have suffered for Christ's sake occupy these thrones, and live and reign with Him through the millennium for which the Spirit of Evil is bound. "*But the*

* Rev. xx.

rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." Then, when the millennium has lapsed, the devil is loosed for a little season to deceive the nations. The final conflict between good and evil ensues, issuing in final universal victory. "All the dead, small and great," are raised to stand before God, to be "judged out of the Book of Life;" Death and Hades, with all who hate life, are consumed; and there commences a reign of everlasting peace. How much of this Apocalyptic vision is symbol and figure, we cannot tell. But it is impossible to read it, and especially the plain words about the first and the second resurrection, without admitting that, at least in St. John's thought, there were to be in the future two successive triumphs of life over death: the first, at the resurrection of those who are in Christ; the second, at the general resurrection of all the dead. It is impossible, I think, to compare it with St. Paul's language to the Corinthians and the Thessalonians without feeling that he, though more briefly and obscurely, is contemplating the same sequence of events. *He* also looks forward to an Advent at which those who believe in Christ will rise to reign with Him, and to a subsequent Advent at which all who are in their graves will hear his voice, and death, the last enemy, will be destroyed.

This view of the future illustrates many other Scriptures, and is confirmed and expanded by them. Thus, for instance, we read :* “ Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘ Behold, the Lord cometh with myriads of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict the ungodly ’” of their ungodly actions and speeches ; and again, † “ Do ye not know that the saints will judge the world ?” But how should the saints come with the Lord to judge the world, unless they had already risen, unless they had had part in the first resurrection ? The great Scripture, however, that which grows most luminous in this view of the future, is our Lord’s sublime discourse on the end of the world, which St. Matthew ‡ has recorded for us. It would take too long, it would be out of place here, to enter on a minute and elaborate exposition of that discourse, and to vindicate point by point the interpretation which many of the ablest Commentators put upon it. It will suffice briefly to touch its outlines.

The discourse commences with the Parable of the Ten Virgins, all of whom were chosen and called, all of whom bear lamps in their hands. But all are not equally provident. Five of them are foolish enough to think their task too easy, to suppose that the lamps, once lit and fed, will burn on without further care ; and when the Bride-

* Jude 14, 15.

† 1 Cor. vi. 2.

‡ St. Matthew xxv.

groom comes their lamps are "*going out*,"—not "gone out," as the Authorised Version renders, but at the point to expire. The other five give all diligence to make their calling and election sure. They carry oil in their vessels with their lamps; and when the Bridegroom comes they go out to meet Him, while their foolish sisters hurry off to buy new oil for their lamps. Judgment begins at the House of God. In the Church, if there are many who do not grow careless because the Lord delayeth his coming, who wait with patient expectation and provident forethought for his advent, there are others who trust that the lamp of life, once kindled in their souls, will burn on, unfed, for ever. They do not watch, and pray, and prepare. And so when the Lord comes, they are not ready for Him; they cannot go forth with joy to meet Him. Yet they may be saved. For all we are told of the foolish virgins is that they miss their opportunity, that they are too late *for that time*. We are not told that when they went to buy oil, *the shops were shut*; but only that they were buying oil when they should have been burning it, and therefore were too late for the marriage supper. It is not the final judgment, not the judgment of the world, but the judgment of the Church which is here set before us. Those who miss the first, may be in time for the second, resurrection.

The same thought is variously expressed in the Parable of the Talents. All who receive talents from "the lord" are his slaves, all are of his household. Two are faithful to their trust. And when their lord comes to reckon with them, they do not say, "Lord, when saw we thee or received talents from thy hand?" but, "Lord, thou didst trust us with certain talents, and by using we have added to them." They know him, and what he demanded of them. One servant fails. The foolish virgins thought their task too easy: the slothful servant thinks his too hard. When his master comes, he has nothing but excuses to offer, and bases his excuses on a wilful and insolent misconception of the master's character. He is cast into the outer darkness. Can this be a parabolic delineation of the first resurrection, of the judgment of the Church rather than of the world? Surely it can. For there are those in the Church—alas, how many of them!—who misconceive the character of God, who think of Him as "a hard man" demanding more than they can give, who plead their inability to keep his pure broad commandments, and so do not do even as much as they might. Among the awful possibilities of life there is also this: that "those who have once been enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of

God, and the powers of the world to come," may fall away beyond the reach of penitence, and therefore beyond the reach of redemption.* No description of the judgment of the Church would be complete which did not depict the guilt and punishment of those who thus "crucify the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame." And of these "the wicked and slothful servant" is, or may be, the express type.

But at this point in our Lord's discourse, we pass from the first to the second resurrection, from the judgment of the Church—a judgment which may extend through the millennium—to the judgment of the world. For now not only "virgins" and "servants," but "*all the nations*" are gathered before the Son of Man who has come with the myriads of his saints to judge the earth. The dead, small and great, stand before Him. They part and separate, defiling these to the right and those to the left of the throne of his glory. Those who stand on the right are the "righteous," the "sheep who were not of this fold," *i.e.*, not of the Church, the men of every nation who, taught by his Spirit though not through his Gospel, have wrought righteousness. To them the King will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation

* Hebrews vi. 4-6

of the world ; for ye have ministered to me." Mark their response. They cannot say, "Lord, Thou didst entrust us with talents ; we have used them for Thee, and, by use, have made them more." They do not know Him, nor his gifts. They object : " But when saw we *Thee*, and ministered unto *Thee* ? " Mark also the Lord's reply : " Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of *these my brethren*,"—and here we must suppose Him pointing his gracious hand to the saints who have come with Him to the judgment—"ye did it unto Me." In short, all the details of this solemn scene indicate that "the saints" are distinct from "the righteous ;" that they are already with Christ in glory, not before Him for judgment. We can only give the words of our Lord their natural force, as we view them in the light of St. Paul's conception of the future, and receive his teaching and St. John's on the first and second judgments, the first and second resurrections.

We may hope that we have now arrived at the meaning of the Apostle's words, since we find our interpretation of them confirmed and illustrated by other Scriptures. As he conceived the future, between the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and "the end," there will be two great crises : first, a resurrection of all who die in the Lord ; and, second, a resurrection of all those who had no part in the first resurrection. These are the successive troop

or armies which are to defile before the Divine Victor over death. But now that we know his meaning, are we much the wiser for it? is our outlook into the future much more clear and full? I suppose not. Probably we feel that the future is still dark, even though it be dark with excess of glory. All we have gained is that we can attach a clearer sense to the Apostle's words, that we are a little more certain what the divine mystery was which he had in his mind, but which no words of his could convey to us. And it will be our wisdom, I think, to receive his words into simple and incurious hearts, to read them in their plainest sense, to be content to know that the whole future of our race will be illustrated by triumphs of good over evil, of life over death, and not too curiously to inquire when or how these things shall be.

But if we cannot comprehend the triumphs which precede it, how can we hope to comprehend the victory in which they culminate? If we cannot even picture to ourselves that glorious sequence of events which the future is to reveal, how can we conceive "the end," "the consummation," in which it is to close and rest? We cannot conceive, much less comprehend, it. Nevertheless we may consider the Apostle's words, and endeavour to ascertain what he intended them to con-

vey. "Then the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power" (ver. 24). These words are expanded in the verses which follow. God has promised to put all things under the feet of man, and therefore under the feet of *the Man*, Christ Jesus (ver. 27). Hence Christ *must* reign until He has subdued all his enemies, until even Death, the last enemy, is subdued (vers. 25, 26). When God has put all things under Christ, then Christ Himself will be "put under" God, that "God may be all in all" (ver. 28).

What *does* it all mean? It means, I apprehend—but, of course, I speak only of the sense of the words, not of the mysteries which underlie the sense—that all rule, all the authority of man over man, all the power of death over the race, and even all the grace of Christ in the Church, are divine expedients for delivering men from their bondage to the lusts which destroy them, and for quickening them into a new better life: that the authority of man and the power of death only reach their true and benignant ends as they are penetrated by the Spirit of Christ: that Christ, therefore, must reign till these various forms of rule, all of which are checks on the evil that is in the world, are penetrated and suffused by his Spirit; till, by virtue of that Spirit, men

are quickened, raised, transfigured : and that then, when human governments, the power of death, the reign of Christ, have achieved their purpose, "the end" will come; the divine expedients, having served their turn, will vanish away, and higher forms of life take their place; we shall know God, not only through the Son, but as He is in Himself, and the God whom as yet we know only through Christ, even the Father, will become all in all of us. Now these thoughts heaped and crowded together, as St. Paul's manner is, are large and difficult to grasp; but if we take them separately, and give some little pains to them, we may easily catch his main drift.

It is not difficult, for instance, to see how all forms of human rule and authority are, at least, *intended* to check the evil dispositions of men, to restrain the vices which are inimical to private and public peace, to save us from anarchy, from the tyranny of brute force and unbridled selfishness. Bad and miserable as the world is, or sometimes appears to be, we know that it would be far worse and deeper sunk in misery but for the restraints of domestic and political authority. These, at least, save us from many vices and wrongs to which we should otherwise succumb. No form of government is so cruel and debasing as anarchy. Nor is it difficult to see that

even the death we often fear is a wholesome check upon us. The mere fear of it holds back the tyrant from many crimes, the reprobate from many indulgences, the criminal from many offences, and is to all men at times a necessary and beneficial restraint.

Nevertheless human rule is apt to be austere and unlovely. Till it is penetrated by the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of justice and charity, if it does some good, it also does much harm; and, in so far as it does harm to men, it is the enemy of Christ. Death, again, is a mere bugbear to us, a horror, a dread, till the light of life and immortality shine upon it and through it; and, in so far as it inspires the fear that hath torment, death is the enemy of Christ. Therefore God has ordained that Christ shall reign till He has put all enemies beneath his feet, till He has subdued unto Himself all the authority of man—all the power of death; till His Spirit has penetrated all forms of domestic and civil control, and suffused death itself with the splendours of life. But when He shall thus have drawn all things under Him, the reign of Christ will have achieved its purpose; the world will be full of living men who dwell together in the sweet degrees of charity, and to whom death means more life and fuller. Having achieved its purpose, the reign of Christ may well come to an end.

It will come to an end. It will be merged in the universal kingdom of the Father. The Mediator will be lost in the God to whom He has reconciled all men, from whom they can never more be alienated. God, even the Father, will be all in all.* Unlike the princes of this world, the Divine King will reign, not *when*, but only *until*, He has put all enemies under his feet.

So far, then, the Apostle's meaning is not hard to follow, although profound mysteries underlie it.

"As angels, or some brighter dreams,
Call to the soul, when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep."

But though St. Paul's thoughts transcend our wonted themes, we may rise with them, and peep into the glory to which they mount. As we consider his words, as we separate and ponder his crowded thoughts, we can see that he conceives of the Resurrection as a vast connected process. Commencing with the resurrection of Christ the firstfruits, it passes on, first, through the resurrection of

* "I am of opinion that the expression by which God is said to be 'all in all' means, *that He is 'all' in each individual person*. Now He will be 'all' in each in this way: when all which any rational understanding, cleansed from the dregs of every sort of vice and with every cloud of wickedness completely swept away, can either feel, or understand, or think, will be wholly God; and when it will no longer behold or retain anything else than God, but when God will be the measure and standard of all its movements"—*ORIGEN, De Principiis, Book III. Chap. vi.*

them that are Christ's at his coming, then, through the resurrection of all the dead, small and great, to an "end" in which the very church and kingdom of Christ merge into the universal kingdom of God the Father. We can even faintly apprehend that what he shadows forth as "the end" is, that the mediatorial work of Christ is to reach its golden close; that we, who as yet know God only through the Son, are to know Him in some way more immediate, more intimate, more sublime: that we are to see Him whom as yet no man hath seen or can see, to know Him as He is and as we are known by Him, to be transfigured by his glory and to be satisfied with his likeness.

Whatever ineffable mysteries it may involve, whatever hard questions it may suggest and not answer, *this* is the bright glorious prospect which lies before us. To our mortal weakness, indeed, it may not seem bright and glorious; we may find no beauty in it that we should desire it. For we love the Christ through whom the Father has shown and declared Himself to us; we do not care to rise above our need of Him: the thought of losing Him is intolerable to us. Let us therefore remember that we do not lose a child when we find and love his father. We then really find the child, understand him better, love him more. And, in like manner, we

shall not, in finding God, lose Christ. We shall then first truly find Him, know Him as we never knew Him before, love Him with a more perfect love.

If this thought speak comfortably to memory and attachment, there is another thought which appeals to our most inward and sacred ambitions. Whatever else and more may be meant by Christ delivering the kingdom to his Father, and God becoming all in all, at least this must be meant :—That the future is to be a grand progress through the linked sequences of an ascending scale; a golden ladder which we shall climb, round after round, till we stand amid the awful and transfiguring splendours of the Eternal Throne; a constant advance towards the central Light, a constant increase in life, power, wisdom, charity: a beatific vision, which grows and spreads as we gaze upon it, and pours an enlarging volume of energy and peace into our souls.

It is incredible, yet it is most true. It is incredible that such poor things as we—so weak, so wicked, driven before every wind that blows, the easy prey of evil—are reserved for destinies so lofty and sublime. Incredible as it is, it is nevertheless simply and absolutely true. If we believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, we must believe that He will also raise us who believe on Jesus, that He will quicken, purify, energise our

infirm polluted spirits. When the trumpet shall sound, we shall be caught up into that cloud of the Divine Glory, from which both Moses and the Prophet like unto Moses came forth clothed with an insufferable splendour, to be for ever with the Lord.

If we want fresh proof and the confirmation of our hope, our want is met in the assurance that Christ must reign till God has put all his enemies, even down to Death, under his feet. *His* enemies! But how can death and evil be the enemies of that Divine Being whom they cannot reach? They are his enemies because they are *ours*, because He has made our cause his own. And if our enemies are God's enemies, can we doubt the issue of the conflict? Is not our triumph assured? It is assured, if for no other reason, yet for this; that God is at war, and that Christ is at war, so long as a single soul is bound and oppressed of evil; that there cannot be peace in the universe, that Christ cannot be satisfied, that God cannot be *all* in all, until we are redeemed from every bond, until we, who sometime were captives, are freemen, warriors, victors in the strife. Only when all who love life and pursue it are redeemed can the work of Christ rise to its golden close, and his kingdom be delivered to the Father. Let us, then, stablish our hearts upon Him.

V.

THE BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD.

I COR. XV. 29.

AT this point St. Paul abruptly resumes the argument which he had dropped at the close of the nineteenth verse. In the intervening verses he has been occupied with two digressions on themes the most profound and difficult. His first digression is on the ground of his hope in the resurrection of the dead; the second, on the time and mode of the fulfilment of that hope. He hopes, he believes that the dead will rise, because as in the Adam all die so in the Christ all are to be made alive. He also believes that every man will rise in his own order or troop; that there is and will be a series of resurrections, extending from the resurrection of Christ the firstfruits, through the resurrection of the dead who die in the Lord, to the general resurrection of the other dead, and culminating in an eternity of peace and joy in which all

forms of rule, even the mediatorial rule of Christ, will have come to an end, and God Himself will be all in all.

From these mystic heights of speculation St. Paul suddenly descends to the level of his former argument. He had previously adduced as proofs of the Resurrection the illogical and absurd consequences of denying it. If the dead rise not, then Christ is not risen—the most perfect of human lives closed in irremediable darkness and defeat. If the dead rise not, the Christian Faith, which alone can redeem men from their sins, is an empty and fatal delusion. If the dead rise not, those who fell asleep in Christ, the best and most heroic of the sons of men, perished unrewarded. If the dead rise not, *we*, we Christians who do our best to follow in their steps, are of all men the most miserable. Unless we are prepared to admit that under the rule of a wise and just God the best men are the most wretched, that the noblest perish unrecompensed, that the one Faith which saves men is a lying imposture, that the only perfect Life ended in utter defeat, we must admit that Christ is risen from the dead, and that the whole body of which He is the Head will follow its ascended Lord. This is the argument of verses 13 to 19: and here, at the 29th verse the Apostle resumes it. He now states

other absurd consequences which follow on a denial of the Resurrection. He argues that if the dead rise not, then (1) those who are baptized for the dead gain nothing by their baptism; and (2) that he, and those like him, who daily went in jeopardy of their lives for Christ's sake and in his service, were mere idiots for their pains. These are not broad philosophical arguments; they are *argumenta ad hominem*, i.e. arguments which would have a special force in the minds to which they were addressed. Let us try to make out what their force was, limiting our thoughts for the present to the first of these arguments.

St. Paul argues that if the dead rise not, then neither the dead, nor those who are baptized for the dead, are profited by that baptism. Now the mere sound of his words is enough to indicate that, though we have emerged from the shadows of his profound digression on "the End," and are once more in the daylight of plain argument, our track is still difficult and perplexed. Beyond this point our course looks clear and bright; but here, where we stand, we must be content to study our way step by step, perhaps even to plant our feet on ground which will quake and give beneath our weight. In plain prose, this allusion to the Baptism for the Dead has been interpreted in different senses almost

ever since it was written ; and only extreme ignorance or extreme arrogance will affect to speak with authority, or even with decision, on a point so long disputed and in itself so doubtful. All I shall attempt is to give my readers what historical and exegetical helps I can toward the conclusion which is now adopted by those whom I take to be the most erudite, competent, and impartial judges.

St. Paul's words are : "*Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead ? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for the dead ?*" And the first, the most obvious, sense of these words is, that in the Corinthian Church there were those who had been baptized in the place, on the behalf, of friends who had died unbaptized, and that they expected that either they or the dead would be the better for it. Such a baptism as this *we* hold to have been a mere superstitious observance, which could have had no happy effect on the dead, whatever it might do for the living. It is therefore very difficult for us to believe that the Apostle would refer to it, and base an argument upon it, without rebuking it. When *he* encounters a superstition, we expect him to resent and denounce it. Hence many Commentators have declined to accept his words in their plain obvious sense ; they have exhausted their ingenuity in

inventing a sense more in accordance with his character and habits. "What shall they do, or gain," says the Apostle, "who are baptized for the dead?" "Baptism," say certain Expositors, "by a natural figure of speech, stands at times for the heavy afflictions in which men are plunged, as when our Lord* speaks of his mortal agony as a baptism He has to be baptized with: all St. Paul means is, What shall they gain who are *afflicted* for the dead, if the dead rise not?" But the more common expedient is to put an equivocal sense into the word "dead," and to assume that St. Paul uses it in that sense. Here are some of the leading interpretations† of this famous question:—"What shall they gain who are baptized *only to die?*" "What shall they gain who are baptized *when dying, as a sign that their dead bodies shall be raised?*" "What shall they gain who are baptized *for the removal of their dead works?*" "What shall they gain who are baptized *into the death of Christ?*" "What shall they gain who are baptized *for the hope of the resurrection of the dead?*" "What shall they gain who are

* Matt. xx. 22; Mark x. 38, 39; and Luke xii. 50.

† The authorities for these interpretations are given by Bengel, Olshausen, and Rosenmüller *in loco*: many of them are given in the article on Baptism in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible: but as I write for unlearned readers, as moreover I have not the means of verifying some of their citations, there is no need, nor would it be right, to transfer their references to these pages.

baptized *into the place of the dead martyrs?* "What shall they gain who are baptized *into the name of the dead?*" *i.e.* into the name of John or Christ. "What shall they gain who are baptized *in order to convert those who are dead in sin?*" "What shall they gain who are baptized *over the graves of the dead?*" *i.e.* over the graves of martyrs—a custom which both Eusebius and Augustine declare to have existed in the post-apostolic Church. "What shall they gain who are baptized *for the good of the Christian dead?*" *i.e.*, to accomplish the number of the elect, and to hasten the kingdom of Christ.*

Each of these interpretations has been gravely and learnedly propounded by the Christian Fathers or Divines; and we, who are neither so wise nor so godly

* The only interpretation, I think, which can at all compete with that which I am about to give, is this—"What shall they do who are baptized *in the place of the dead?*" Grammatically St. Paul's Greek would perhaps admit of that interpretation. For Dionysius of Halicarnassus (lib. viii.) has a construction very similar to that of the Apostle in a passage which most modern Commentators appear to have overlooked, although Valpy (*in loco*) called attention to it nearly forty years ago. The passage is quoted by Vigerius (c. ix. s. ix. r. 1), and runs in English: "These, as soon as they entered upon their office, judged it expedient to enrol other soldiers *for the killed*"—*i.e.* *in place of those who were killed*—"in the Antian war." In the Greek Dionysius uses *ὕπερ τῶν ἀποθανόντων* just as in the text St. Paul uses *ὕπερ τῶν νεκρῶν*. Where, however, the grammatical construction is so peculiar and doubtful, the historical evidence carries the greater weight; and that seems to point decisively to the interpretation preferred in this Essay.

as they, certainly have no right to play "Sir Oracle" when admitted to this "glorious company," this "goodly fellowship." Yet, when once we place their interpretations side by side and compare them, it is hard to repress a smile. Taken together, they sound like a series of ingenious answers to a conundrum, no one of which is the true answer. And thus they read us a most impressive homily against putting forced, or supersubtle, or "spiritual" meanings on the plain words of Scripture, against reading them in any but their plain historical sense. If the most godly and erudite of men only raise a smile by their ingenious contradictions when they leave the simple and obvious path of interpretation, what are *we* like to do if we should wander from it?

There can be no need to refute these opposing constructions of St. Paul's words. They refute each other. They simply warn us that we *must* abide by the natural and obvious sense of the passage, in whatever difficulties it may land us.* Take them literally and St. Paul says,

* I have not cared to enumerate the more improbable and absurd conjectures into which even acute and learned men have been betrayed on this theme. But it may be as well to mention what is probably the most grotesque of all the proposed interpretations of this baptism for the dead ever advanced, certainly the most grotesque of which I have any knowledge. *Facinus* (Coburg, 1793) conjectures that by those who were baptized for the dead St. Paul meant, *those who dive into the sea to bring up the dead bodies lost by shipwreck!*

that in the Corinthian Church men were baptized for, in the stead of, the unbaptized dead.

Have we, then, any historical traces of such a custom? We have many. It is beyond a doubt that in the three first centuries A.C. there were Sects who practised this vicarious baptism. Tertullian* and Chrysostom† attest that it existed among the Marcionites—a Christian sect which flourished A.D. 130—150. Epiphanius‡ relates that a similar custom prevailed among the Cerinthians, a still earlier sect, and adds: “There was an uncertain tradition handed down that it was also to be found among some heretics in Asia, especially in Galatia, in the times of the Apostles.” St. Chrysostom, in his Homily, gives us a graphic picture of such a baptism. He says: “After a catechumen was dead, they hid a living man under the bed of the deceased; then, coming to the bed of the dead man, they spake to him and asked him whether he would receive baptism: and he making no answer, the other replied in his stead, and so they baptized the living for the dead.” If we vividly

* *De Resurrect. Carnis*; Chap. xviii.; and *Adv. Marcion*, Lib. V. Chap. x.

† Homily xl., in 1 Cor. xv.

‡ *Heres.* xxviii. 6. His allusion to the heretics of apostolic times is probably aimed at the Nicolaitans (Rev. ii. 15). So at least I venture to conjecture; for Irenæus, in his work “Against Heresies” (Book III. Chap. xi. § 1) hints that the Cerinthians reproduced errors disseminated “a long time previously by those termed Nicolaitans.”

conceive the scene—the living man crouching under the bed of the dead man, and speaking for the tongue now mute for ever—it is no doubt somewhat grotesque; yet the motive which prompted this custom was by no means absurd. Epiphanius tells us that the motive was “lest in the resurrection the dead should be punished for want of baptism, and not subjected to the powers that made the world.” Hilary* alleges a similar motive: “The Apostle adduces the example of those who were so secure of the future resurrection, that they even baptized the dead, when by accident death had come unexpectedly, *fearing that the unbaptized might not rise, or rise to evil.*” The testimony of these early fathers of the Church to the existence of this custom is the more valuable from the fact that they all, save Hilary, condemn it as heretical, and will not for a moment grant that St. Paul alluded to it, or would allude to it, without condemning it.

Similar observances have obtained in all ages. The *Februarian* lustrations for the dead are familiar to all readers of Ovid.† Tertullian‡ refers to them as very much on a level with the Corinthian baptism for the

* St. Ambrose in 1 Ad. Cor. xv.

† *Fasti*. Book II. lines 19—28, and 267—452.

‡ Adv. Marcion, Book V., opening sentences of Chap. x.

dead. They were designed to contribute in some indefinite way to the welfare and happiness of the Roman dead. A like practice* was familiar to the Jews. With them, if any man died in a state of ceremonial uncleanness, which would have required ablution, one of his friends performed the ablution; *he* was washed, and *the dead man* was accounted clean. In a kindred spirit the Patristic Church once placed the eucharistical elements in the mouths or hands of the dead.

Now a custom which has obtained so widely, and is of a vitality to survive the death of form after form, which still lives virtually in the Roman "masses for the dead," must have had some humane and noble motive. Nor, I think, is the motive far to seek. Death often lends new life to love. When we have lost those who were nearest to us, we remember all that was good and endearing in them. We sorrowfully recall our offences against them. We long to do something, anything, to prove the sincerity of our love and regret. No comfort is at all comparable to the thought that we may still serve them, or in any way contribute to their happiness. These are common human feelings—feelings as native to the Corinthians as to us. Suppose, then, that in Corinth a son, who had often listened to the Christian preachers,

* Lightfoot, *ad loc.*

lost the father who had listened with him. Both, let us assume, have been impressed by the truth, but they have not been drawn by it into the Christian fellowship. The fear of loss, or of change in themselves, or of suffering and martyrdom, has withheld them from "the laver of regeneration." The father dies: and now the son resolves that he will hesitate no longer. He will put on Christ by baptism. But the dear father now dead—can nothing be done for him? *He* might have been baptized had he lived a little longer: perhaps, as he lay a-dying, he lamented that he had not been bolder, that he had not shaken off all nice respects of men and interest, and followed the promptings of his conscience and heart. Are his good intentions, his regrets, his wishes, to come to nothing? Are they to be utterly baulked because death was so sudden with him? Is he "not to rise, or rise to evil," simply because he delayed to take the decisive step, because he did not openly avow the faith which animated his heart and purified his life? May not his son's baptism be in some sort the father's too? May not the son say to the minister of the Church: "My father would have been baptized had he lived: I will be baptized for him?" If he did say that, we may be sure the minister would respect his feeling: possibly he might even share it. For we must not forget how

ignorant the Corinthians were, and that on the main sacramental and doctrinal points. Those who had much to learn concerning the Eucharist* and the Resurrection of Christ might well have much to learn on Baptism and the Resurrection of the Dead. And if vicarious baptism were administered by any one teacher, if those were admitted to baptism who were moved thereto by love of the dead as well as by love for Christ, we can easily see how a superstitious custom would soon grow up in the Church, how men would come to think that the unbaptized dead would be the safer and the happier if *they* were baptized for them—in their name, in their stead. The Roman Catholic dogma expressed in masses for the dead lives and reigns in myriads of hearts mainly because it appeals to an universal feeling—the feeling of love and pity for those who have been taken from us—the very feeling which in Corinth led, though not perhaps exactly in the way I have indicated, to the baptism for the dead. *We* may know, we do know, that every man must give account of himself unto God ; that the state of the dead is not affected by our observance of religious duties. But, nevertheless, which of us, in the first keen anguish of bereavement, does not feel as though our tears, our prayers, our outcries, must have some effect upon them ?

* 1 Cor. xii

which of us, if he doubts the safety and acceptance of his dead, does not long to do anything that might help to make them better and happier?

It is not hard for us, therefore, to understand how naturally the custom of vicarious baptism for the dead would grow up in passionate ignorant hearts, which knew little of the truth, and were only too apt to confound baptism with salvation.

But granting that, a second and much more difficult question arises. However ignorant the Corinthians were, St. Paul knew this baptism for the dead to be a mere superstition. Can we suppose that he would foster it, that he would so much as argue from it without condemning it?

It is this question, indeed, in which the whole difficulty lies. But for our doubt on this point, we should be content to take the Apostle's words in their plain historical sense. And to this question no certain, no authoritative reply can be given. We must each of us answer it for himself—if we can. I am by no means sanguine of the result. For St. Paul was a man so frank, so sincere, that we can hardly conceive of him as appealing to superstition for the support of truth. And yet—did he not at times, and that from the purest motive, make a similar appeal? Did he not, in be-

coming all things to all men, that he might save some, often accommodate himself to the views and feelings of those whom he addressed even when he could not share them, nay, even though he knew them to be misleading and untrue? We can hardly suppose that St. Paul admired the allegorical method of interpretation which was so dear to many of the Jews. A man of so wise a spirit as he, must, we should think, have seen that that method of interpretation, at least in the hands of most men, sacrifices the true sense of Scripture to subtleties over which the learned may differ and dispute for ever. Yet, in speaking or in writing to men who used this method, he often adopted it. Thus, for instance, in his Epistle to the Galatians,* he allegorises the story of Abraham's two wives and their children. Hagar stands for Mount Sinai, and Ishmael, the son of the bondmaid, for the Jews who were in bondage to the Law. Sarah stands for the heavenly Jerusalem, and Isaac—later born, but the son of a free woman—for the Christian Church, to which, in these later days, Christ has given liberty. *That* is purely in the Rabbinical style; it is precisely the mode in which the Hebrew "masters" allegorised away the true sense of Scripture, and reduced its stories of human life to spiritual myths and fables. Can we

* Gal. iv. 21—31.

suppose that St. Paul approved their method of handling Scripture, that he was blind to its dangers? Yet, as we see, he uses it to those who loved it, in order that, by speaking the language with which they were most familiar, he might teach them the truth as it is in Jesus.*

So, again, as he passed through Athens,† he saw an altar with this inscription: "To the Unknown God." The Athenians meant by that inscription only some god whom they did not clearly know, some such god as might well consort with the crowd of divinities in their Pantheon. "*Him*," says St. Paul, seizing on this opening, "I declare unto you." But it was not any such god

* Clement of Alexandria (*circa* A.D. 200) was not so great an adept at spiritualising the literal and historic senses of Scripture as some of the later Fathers. But in his great work, the *Stromata*, he allegorises this same story in a way which is as good an illustration as could be desired of the dangers of that method of interpretation. Handled thus, Scripture may mean anything—*i.e.* nothing. With Clement, Sarah stands for the wisdom that is from above, and Hagar for the wisdom of this world: Abraham stands for the accomplished Christian Scribe who by consorting with secular philosophy is prepared to receive heavenly wisdom for his bride. He says (lib. I. cap. v.): "Sarah was at one time barren, being Abraham's wife. Sarah having no child, assigned her maid, by name Hagar the Egyptian, to Abraham to get children. *Wisdom*, therefore, who dwells with the man of faith, was still barren and without child in that generation, not having brought forth to Abraham aught allied to virtue. And he, as was proper, thought that he, being now in the time of progress, should have intercourse with *secular culture* first (by Egyptian the world is designated figuratively); and afterwards should approach to her according to the divine promise, and beget Isaac."

† Acts xvii. 16—32.

as was in their thoughts that he had to declare—not one god among many, but the only wise and true God. They utterly misapprehended his meaning. When he had ended his oration on Mars' Hill, they concluded him to be a setter forth of "strange *gods*," of whom "Jesus" was one, and "Anastasia," or "the Resurrection," another, instead of a prophet who believed in one God, the Maker of heaven and earth. Here again, therefore, he was accommodating himself to views which he could not share ; he appealed to the polytheism of a heathen race in order to set forth Jesus as the Saviour and the Life of men.

So, once more, when he took a Jewish vow, and, after a Jewish custom, shaved his head at Cenchrea ;* or when, to please the Jews, he went and purified himself in the Temple ;† or when he caused his "son Timothy" to be circumcised :‡ was he not coming under that yoke of law which, for himself he had renounced, and from which he laboured to set all men free? He knew, he taught, that to submit to Jewish ordinances was to turn back to "the weak and beggarly elements" from which he had been delivered by the grace of Christ. He warned§ converts of a Jewish leaning, "if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." And yet, again and

* Acts xviii. 18. † *Ibid.* xxi. 26. ‡ *Ibid.* xvi. 3. § Gal. v. 2.

again, he became as a Jew that he might gain the Jews ; to please or to save them, he came into that perilous bondage to law than which nothing could be more repugnant to his breadth and freedom of spirit.

Is it impossible, then, that he who deferred to Jewish scruples, who, for love's sake, acted as though still under the legal yoke ; he who in writing to allegorisers himself allegorised on the plain sense of Scripture ; he who, to gain the itching ears of Athens, appealed to their very idolatry in order to win acceptance for the Gospel with which he was charged :—is it impossible that, in persuading the Corinthians of a resurrection, he should appeal to a superstitious custom which he himself did not approve ? If a logical consequence of their baptism for the dead was, that the dead must live and rise in order to be the better for their baptism, might he not point out the logical consequence without pausing to rebuke the custom ? Was it, after all, so unlike him to accommodate himself in this way to the errors and prejudices of those to whom he spoke ? On the whole, and recalling similar facts in his history, I do not think it was. It is not impossible, not incredible, that he should use the Corinthian baptism for the dead as an argument for the resurrection of the dead, the force of which *they* would feel, although it had no force for him. He may have argued

from their custom, and not have sanctioned or meant to sanction it, although he does not expressly condemn it.*

Nevertheless, one does not like to conceive of St. Paul as doing *that*. To introduce a fallacious argument amid sound arguments simply because it would tell, is a course we should hardly have expected him to take. The least we should expect of him is that, if he condescended to use such an argument at all, he would disconnect himself from the superstition on which it was based, and hint his disapproval of it.

And this much, though most of the Commentators† seem to have overlooked the fact, I think we may say he does. There are traces of his tacit disapprobation of this baptism for the dead even in our English version.

* Rückert, with his usual acumen, indicates a parallel instance more to the point than any cited above. He bids us notice how, in 1 Cor. xi. 5, *et seq.*, St. Paul mentions the public speaking of women in the Church without a word of disapproval, although, in 1 Cor. xiv. 34, he expressly prohibits such speaking.

† Erasmus, however, did not miss this point. He was clear that St. Paul did not mean to endorse the practice to which he here alludes, that he intimated a tacit reprehension of it in the question, "What shall they do? What will become of them?" He paraphrases the Apostle's words thus: "I approve the faith, not the deed: for while it is absurd to think that a dead man is profited by another's baptism, yet they are right in their trust in a resurrection to come." See Meyer, *in loco*. So Hilary—whom I have already quoted in proof of the existence of such a custom in the primitive church,—adds:—"By using this example, *as* (St. Paul) *does not approve of their conduct*, but he shows their own settled faith in the resurrection."—ST. AMBROSE in Ad. 1 Cor. xv.

Mark the tone of his argument before and after the 29th verse, and you will see how completely he identifies himself with his friends at Corinth. If the dead rise not, he says in the previous verses, *our* preaching is vain, *your* faith is vain, *we* are false witnesses, *ye* are yet in your sins, *we* are of all men most miserable. In short, it is all *we* and *you*; there is a tone of the most intimate friendship, the most perfect identity of interest. The same tone dominates the subsequent verses. If the dead rise not, why stand *we* in jeopardy every hour? By *my* boast of *you*, I protest *I* die daily, and so on. Contrast with this, the tone of ver. 29. "Else," *i.e.* if the dead rise not, "what shall *they* do who are baptized for the dead? If dead men are not raised, why then are *they* baptized for the dead?" Is not that in a very different tone to the preceding and following verses? St. Paul no longer speaks of *we* and *you*, but of *they* and *them*, as though he were speaking of strangers, of men with whom neither he nor his friends were in perfect sympathy. And this change of tone is much more marked and obvious in the Greek. *There* there is not only a change in the personal pronouns, but an use of the definite article, and a subtle force in the selected tense,*

* ἐπεὶ τί ποιήσουσιν οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν; Not only by the change to the third person, but also by the use of the article οἱ and by the

which cannot be given in an English translation; but which clearly indicate that the Apostle is speaking of a custom with which he will identify neither himself nor his friends. To give effect to his change of tone and the niceties of his grammar, we may paraphrase his question thus: "What will become of *those*," or, "What good account of themselves can *they* give, who are in the habit of being baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not? The very ground and motive of their custom is cut from under their feet by a denial of the resurrection, and therefore they, of all men, should be the very last to deny it." With this paraphrase before him, even the English reader will see that the Apostle is simply driving a custom he does not sanction to its logical result, that he is simply posing those who observed it with a logical dilemma they could not escape.

Our conclusion of the whole matter then—although we must hold it only as ours, and not as the final authoritative conclusion—must be: That the custom of baptizing the living for the dead did obtain in some sections of the early Church, for we cannot suppose St. Paul to

tense—οὐ βαπτίζομαι instead of οὐ βαπτίζετε—St. Paul separates himself from those who observed this custom, and tacitly reprehends it. The Greek question fairly rendered is not, as I have intimated above, "what will *you* do who *are* baptized for the dead?" but, "What can *those* say for themselves who *are* in the habit of being baptized for the dead?"

have *invented* a superstition : that very probably it existed, at his time, in the Corinthian Church, in some one of the factions into which that church was split : and that the Apostle used this custom for a logical purpose, although he disapproved of it and quietly intimated his disapproval.

Before we part with this subject, it may be well to advert to one of the grave moral questions it suggests. I have spoken of the humane and universal feeling in which this vicarious baptism probably had its rise and strength. Because we are men and women, we share that feeling of love and pity for the dead. *We* have lost those who were dear to us ; and, in all likelihood, we have longed, when they had gone from us, to do something that might serve or gratify them. If we have lost even one of whose reconciliation with God we had so much as a groundless doubt, we have probably known an anguish as keen as man can bear. We have felt that we could have borne anything better than that ; that we should not have murmured could we only have known that our beloved was with God, safe and happy in the better world. Nay, if we have hope for all our dead, we can sympathise with the anguish of those who have no hope, or a hope that flickers in every gust. We can see

that if fears for their eternal welfare had been added to our sorrow at the loss of those who were very dear to us, that added burden would have been enough to break our hearts. We admit that no misery could be so sharp, so utterly beyond the reach of solace as this. And the question I would fain suggest to as many as need to consider it is:—Do *you* mean to inflict this misery on the friends who survive you? Do you mean to leave them in doubt, and with grounds for doubt, whether you have made your peace with God? Are your children to long, when you are taken from them, that they *could* be baptized for the dead? Do you desire that they should have to reflect: “My father, my mother never made any public avowal of their faith in Christ, never partook the sacraments of the Church, never gave indubitable proofs of their acceptance of the Divine mercy. I wish they had! I wish they had! I wish I could do it for them! I wish I could discharge on their behalf the duty they neglected or postponed until it was too late!” If only because you love those who will be after you, and would save them from vain longings and inconsolable regrets, it will be well for you to consider this question, and to act out your answer to it without delay.

VL

THE HOURLY JEOPARDY: THE DAILY DEATH.

1 COR. xv. 30—34.



WE have now reached the second of St. Paul's *argumenta ad hominem*. The first is that argument for the Resurrection from the Baptism of the Dead which we have just considered. The second, is the argument which he derives from the perils he hourly encountered, and the sufferings he daily endured. This second argument, partly because it is so simple, and in part because it bears a close resemblance to those we have already considered, we may dispose of very briefly. The more briefly we can dispose of it the better, since it is set in a verbal frame which suggests many subsidiary topics of no slight interest.

Baldly stated, detached from its varied and suggestive details, the argument is: That it was only because he

believed in the Resurrection that St. Paul put himself in constant jeopardy ; that therefore, if there be no resurrection, if dead men do not rise, his whole life was a monstrous failure and mistake. His career as a Christian Apostle was a succession of miseries, indignities, wrongs, labours, mortal perils. Grant a life beyond the grave, admit that his hope in the Resurrection would not make him ashamed, and his career was noble and heroic : deny it, and his career was a senseless bravado, a degrading blunder, without motive, or inspiration, or worth.

Now the Corinthians held St. Paul to be the wisest, manliest, noblest man they knew, out-teaching the philosophers, outdaring the most famous heroes, of antiquity. And *we*, as we recall the wise and noble of past ages, can hardly single out one from that goodly fellowship whose life was, in our judgment, of a loftier inspiration, or richer in virtues, excellencies, and high spiritual endowments. To us, therefore, as to them, his argument, the argument he draws from his personal character and experience, carries great weight. To concede that his life was built on a vain delusion, or a rank imposture, that it was therefore a wretched mistake, would be to darken and confuse all our conceptions of human life and excellence. Good trees do not spring from evil roots. Manliness, largeness of heart, nobility of aim, a passionate

devotion to truth, a charity capable of all sacrifices—these are qualities which do not grow out of a lie, or faith in a lie. Because St. Paul loved all men with a charity wholly independent of response or return; because he pursued truth in scorn of consequence; because he was one of the manliest of men; because he affirms that all that was best in him sprang from his faith in Christ as the Resurrection and the Life; because we know that faith transformed him from a narrow furious bigot into the greatest and most catholic of the Apostles—we are disposed to believe in the Resurrection and Life of men, to accept the Faith which produced in him fruits so rich and noble. We are prepared to admit that there must have been some truth and substance in the Faith from which a life so excellent and lovely drew its vigour.

This is his argument; and if it is of little force in the courts of Philosophy and Metaphysics, it appeals directly to our common sense, to our knowledge and appreciation of human character. It is not a proof to be nicely weighed in the scales of logic: it addresses itself straight to our hearts, and finds from them an immediate response. We say at once, "That cannot be a lie which made St. Paul so true and great a man." And, for the present, that is all he asks us to say.

But now, as the main argument of these verses is so

simple, we may look the more carefully at the words in which it is couched. Let us take them in their order as they come.

St. Paul begins by asking: "If the dead rise not, "why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" and he affirms, "I die daily" (verses 30, 31). There is no difficulty to detain us here. We know what his life was like. We know that no words express it more truly than these—a daily death, an hourly jeopardy. Elsewhere,* he furnishes us with a more detailed description of the death in life he had to endure, and thus supplies us with the best commentary on these words. Comparing himself with other ministers of the Cross, he claims to have been and to have done more than they all: "in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft: (from the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep :) in journeyings often; in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers; in perils by countrymen, in perils by heathen; in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea; in perils among false brethren; in labours and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." And, as

* 2 Cor. xi. 23—28.

though some of his heaviest sufferings and most mortal perils had come from those who should have been his friends and helpers of his faith, he adds: "Besides these things that are from without," I have had to endure what was often harder to bear, "the concourse of those who daily come to question me, and the care of all the churches." Well might such an one as Paul say, "I die daily; I stand in jeopardy every hour!"

But mark *how* he says it, for the manner of his speech is no less significant than its substance. "*I protest by my boast of you* which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily" (ver. 31). Instead of "I protest," we might read, perhaps ought to read, "*I swear*," for St. Paul here uses a common Greek form of oath. Throughout his writings, indeed, he frequently employs the most solemn adjurations. Thus we find him saying, not only "I protest," or "I swear," but also "As God is true,"* and "I call God for a witness against my soul,"† and "God knoweth I lie not."‡ Do we need to justify his resort to oaths? It is easy to do that: for even the Lord Jesus often employed an adjuration. The Greek, or rather the Hebrew word, which we translate "Verily, Verily," and with which He who was the truth so often confirmed his

* 2 Cor. i. 18.

† Romans i. 9; and 2 Cor. i. 23.

‡ 2 Cor. xi. 31.

more solemn and mysterious utterances, is an oath. Nay, both in the Old Testament and in the New,* the Almighty Himself is represented as taking an oath, as swearing by Himself because He could swear by no greater, that He might put an end to the strife of doubt, that "by two immutable things," his oath and his word, He might confirm the faith of those who trusted in Him. If He in whom is no darkness at all may say, "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah;" if He in whose lips was no guile may say, "Verily, Verily," surely St. Paul may say, "I swear," or "As God is true."

But let us also note *by what* he swears. It is "by my boast of you which I have in Christ Jesus." The Corinthians were the seal of his apostleship, their excellencies were his pride and joy. Nothing was dearer to him or more sacred than the fact, that the Lord Jesus Christ had used him for their salvation. When he would appeal to that which he held to be most precious and binding, when he would pledge his chief treasure, he swears by his boast in them, by his sacred pride and joy in them. His very oath, therefore, must have touched their hearts, and have predisposed them to a cordial acceptance of that which he was about to advance. It is, indeed, by these half-hidden strokes of pathos, by

* Heb. vi. 16—18; and Gen. xxii. 16—18.

these delicate touches of a most tender and loving nature, that St. Paul declares himself to us and constrains us to love and admire him.

The next verse (ver. 32) is more difficult. Having described his whole life as a succession of mortal perils, the Apostle cites one special instance of the jeopardy in which he always stood. "If, after the manner of men," with only human motives and hopes, with no prospect of a resurrection to eternal life, "I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what did I gain by that?" If we assume that St. Paul did on one occasion fight with beasts in the Ephesian *stadium*, his argument is plain. It is in the exact form of many of his previous arguments. It means that here again he was a mere idiot to incur deadly peril, if he were teaching a lie. He taught that Christ had risen from the dead, that in Christ all were made alive. It was for this he suffered. But if Christ were not risen, and dead men did not rise, he had run the imminent risk of death for nought. The difficulty of this passage does not lie in its logic; we can all follow that and feel its force. It is the fact on which his argument is based that has been called in question. Paul was a Roman citizen, and could not therefore be legally condemned to fight with wild beasts. Had he been illegally condemned to the arena, he could very hardly have escaped from it

with his life : such escapes were so rare as to be, if not incredible, at least highly improbable. In the Acts of the Apostles, moreover, which give us a tolerably full account of his perils at Ephesus,* there is no hint of any conflict with wild beasts ; nor does the Apostle ever refer to such a conflict, when, as he often does, he pens a catalogue of the dangers through which he had passed. On all these grounds, some of the ablest Commentators conclude that he is here speaking metaphorically, not literally : that what he means is, not that he had to contend with the beasts of the arena, but that he had to encounter men as brutish and fierce as wild beasts. Such figures of speech are common in all ages and lands.† “ The lion is dead ” was the form in which the Emperor Caligula’s death was announced to Herod Agrippa. “ The devil is loose,” was the form in which our King Richard’s escape from the Austrian dungeon was con-

* Acts xix.

† In addition to the examples given above, I may refer the reader to the following instances : Lactantius calls tyrants “ wicked beasts.” *Θηριώδεις τύραννοι* is a familiar Greek phrase. Philo says : “ It is only the just man who deserves the name, Man. The unjust man is but a *wild beast* under a human form.” The Psalmist speaks of his human enemies as dogs, bulls, lions.—*e. g.*, Psalm xxii. 12, 13, 20, 21. The enemies of God are symbolised in the Apocalypse as “ beasts.” The Greek poet, Epimenides, called the Cretans “ evil beasts ;” and Paul quotes the phrase in Titus i. 12. The Apostle speaks of being “ delivered out of the mouth of the lion ” in 2 Timothy iv. 17 ; where probably “ the lion ” stands for the Emperor Nero, or his *locum tenens*, Helius Cæsareanus.

veyed to his dastard and usurping brother, Prince John. But the closest parallel to St. Paul's words, if we are to take them metaphorically, is to be found in the Epistle of Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, to the Romans: "From Syria even unto Rome *I fight with beasts*, both by land and sea, both by night and day, *being bound to ten leopards, I mean a band of soldiers*, who, even when they receive benefits (probably these 'benefits' were gifts bestowed on the guard by Christians who wished to secure their kind treatment of the aged and infirm martyr), show themselves all the worse." Heraclitus, moreover, expressly calls *the Ephesians* "beasts," using the very word which St. Paul employs. And no one who reads the story narrated in the Acts † will deny the propriety of the epithet. The multitude which, at the prompting of Demetrius, "*rushed* with one accord into the theatre," like a herd of bulls in wild stampede, although "the more part knew not wherefore they were come together;" and, still like bulls, bellowed some one thing, and some another: and then, like beasts irritated by a red rag, as soon as they heard that Alexander was a *Jew*, went mad with rage, and for two hours stood shouting, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians,"—these were surely

* Epis. ad Rom Chap. v. opens with the words cited above.

† Acts xix. 23—34.

more like beasts that want discourse of reason than rational men. As St. Paul listened to their din, the epithet of Heraclitus may have occurred to him and have fixed itself on his memory.* And if his letters to the Corinthians were written after the tumult at Ephesus, he may here allude to that confused and terrible scene. The metaphorical reading is perhaps the more probable. It is a question we cannot decide. Let every man judge for himself. All we need affirm is, that either from wild beasts, or from men as blind and furious as beasts, the Apostle was in imminent deadly peril during his sojourn in Ephesus—a peril so imminent and so deadly that he uses it as a type of all the great perils of his life. In Ephesus, as elsewhere, he risked all, because he believed in Christ as the Resurrection and the Life.†

To run such a risk daily and hourly, St. Paul affirms

* Dean Stanley remarks very truly that such an allusion to the speech of Heraclitus "would be in accordance with the vein of classical quotation opened in the next verse."

† Whatever this peril at Ephesus was, there can be no doubt that it was extreme, and that it made a profound impression on the Apostle's mind. Even when he wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians he had not forgotten it. He adverts to it (Chap. i. verses 8—10) in words tremulous with emotion: "We would not have you ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which befell in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, inasmuch that we despaired even of life: nay, we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves" (*i. e.*, whenever the question "Death or life?" arose, our response was always "death"), "that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, who raiseth the dead, who rescued us out of so great a death."

to be impossible to men who did not believe in a future life. (ver. 32). Those who believe that dead men are not raised, instead of affronting mortal perils for the sake of principle and conviction, sink into sensualism and self-indulgence. Their motto is,

"Let us eat and drink,
For to-morrow we die."

The Apostle cites this motto from the prophet Isaiah.* In the prophet it has a special historical reference.

* Isaiah xxii. 13. There can be no doubt, I think, that St. Paul quotes the prophet. Yet it is curious to note that at Anchiale in Cilicia (the Apostle being of Tarsus in Cilicia) there was a statue with this inscription: "Sardanapalus, the son of Anacyndraxes, (Sennacherib), built Anchiale and Tarsus in one day. Stranger, eat, drink, and play, for all the rest is not worth this"—*this* being a *phallus* which the fingers of the statue were in the act of giving. Dr. Hales is clear that this inscription was in St. Paul's mind, and bids us admire how, by quoting an iambic from Menander in the next verse, the Apostle "elegantly and classically intimates from a better heathen authority, that the conversation of such sensualists as ridicule the hope of a better life is subversive of sound morality as well as religion."

In commenting on this verse, Master John Gregorie has a quaint piece of learning which must not be omitted. He writes: "But if the Beasts and we have all one breath, then why do not their Spirits too return to God that gave them? If Incorruption have put Corruption on, we may very well eat and drink as we do, for to-morrow we die indeed. The unlikely Heathen ploughed in more hope than so. In Hieroglyphical Learning, the *Egyptians* set down the *Axis* of a *Pyramid* for the Soul, and therefore the Figure of their Sepulchres was Pyramidal. The mystery is Geometrical, that as by the conversion or turning about of a Pyramid upon his *Axis*, the *Axis* remaining still the same, there is a Mathematical Creation of a new Solid or Cone, so by the Revolution of a certain time of years about the Soul (the Soul continuing still the same in a constant course of immortality), a new Body shall arise and reunite again." —GREGORIE'S *Works*, vol. i. p. 124.

Jerusalem was besieged by the Babylonians. The city was full of "stirs" and tumults. Its rulers had been taken captive. The slain lay unburied in its streets. Dearth preyed on the living. By all these calamities God was calling his people to repentance, to trust in Him, to amendment of life. Instead of responding to his call, they hardened themselves against Him: waxing desperate with despair, they gave themselves to reckless mirth and revelry. They slew what oxen and sheep were left them. They ate flesh and drank wine. They cried, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." It is this outcry of desperate ghastly mirth—which has been heard in Athens, in Florence, in London, in Paris, as well as in Jerusalem—which St. Paul quotes, which he puts into the mouth of those who deny a resurrection unto life. To them, human life is a mere siege. The hosts of death are encamped against it. The fatal assault may be delivered at any moment. Why should they restrain their appetites? Why deny themselves to-day for a to-morrow that may never dawn? Why desire a morrow which brings no hope with it? Better eat and drink, and snatch what little pleasure may be had!*

* Perhaps the saddest yet most musical expansion of this thought is given in the Book of Wisdom. The writer puts these words into the mouth of the ungodly, who knew not that "God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity," who "neither hoped for the wages

This was the tone taken in the Apostle's time by the degenerate Epicurean School. It was more and worse than a philosophic mode of thought. It was the prevalent tone of the empire. Consciously or unconsciously, either as rebuking or as pandering to the licentiousness of the age, its poets, satirists, historians, moralists describe it as infected throughout with an utter hopelessness, a boundless license, with a despair of itself and the future, and with that devotion to fleshly lusts which is the natural consequence of despair. In Corinth the ghastly revel was at its height. There was no wickeder or more abandoned city under the sun—none in which

of righteousness, nor discerned a reward for blameless souls," and who, therefore, "reasoned with themselves, but not aright," saying: "Our life is short and tedious, and in the death of man is no remedy; neither was any man ever known to return from the grave: for we are all born at an adventure, and we shall be hereafter as though we had never been; for the breath of our nostrils is as smoke, and a little spark is the moving of our heart, which, being extinguished, our bodies will be burnt to ashes, and our spirit vanish as the soft air; and our name shall be forgotten in time, and no man hold our works in remembrance, and our life shall pass away like the trace of a cloud, and shall be dispersed as a mist that is driven away with the beams of the sun, and overcome with the heat thereof. For our time is a very shadow that passeth away; and after our end there is no returning, for it is fast sealed, so that no man cometh again. Come on, therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth. Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and let no flower of the spring pass by us; let us crown ourselves with rosebuds before they be withered; let none of us go without his share of voluptuousness; let us leave tokens of our joyfulness in every place: for this is our portion, and our lot is this."—*Wisdom of Solomon*, chap ii verses 1—9.

vice veiled its despair under a mask more brilliant and gay. It was impossible, therefore, that the Christians of Corinth should fail to hear such words as the Apostle quotes from the Prophet: the spirit of these words was in the very air they breathed, and it is only too probable that they were infected by it. It would be their constant temptation to yield to the common tone and influence of their native city. And if once they lost their hope in the Resurrection, in a future life, that temptation would gather tenfold force. Hence it is that St. Paul, when writing to them, lays such emphasis on the resurrection of the dead, that he argues it at such length, with such power. If he can help it, he will not so much as have them listen to those who jest about the future life, or deny it, or urge them to riot and excess because they must soon perish. They may think there can be no great harm in hearing what these scoffers have to say. "There is harm in it," replies St. Paul, "and harm which it needs no special inspiration to detect. One of your own poets has long since discovered it. Hear what he says, and be not deceived :

'Vile speeches honest customs do corrupt.'

And if *you* listen to the Epicurean speeches which are rife about you, *your* habits of thought and life will degenerate. You will lose the clearness and strength of your faith in

the life to be : and that once lost, you will give less heed to keeping your present life sweet and pure."

The sentence which our Authorised Version renders, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and which I have ventured to render, "Vile speeches honest customs do corrupt," is one which it is very difficult to transfer from one language to another without spilling some of its contents by the way. It is an Iambic verse from the *Thais* of Menander.* This poet was famous for "the elegance with which he threw into the form of single verses or short sentences, the maxims of practical wisdom in the affairs of common life." In brief, he was a great master of the epigram and the proverb, and many of his witty pithy sayings are still preserved. The sense of this proverb is simply, that speech is not the slight ineffective thing we often suppose it to be ; that, when it takes an evil tone, it is capable of corrupting even an ingrained and customary honesty ; that even our best and most confirmed habits are in danger from it ; and that therefore it will be our true wisdom not to listen to the vile speeches of evil-hearted men.† If we have outgrown the

* Tertullian renders Menander's adage by a Latin trimeter : "*Bonos corrumpunt mores congressus mali.*"

† "And as those whose speech is evil are no better than those who practise evil (for calumny is the servant of the sword, and evil-speaking inflicts pain : and from these proceed disasters in life, such being the effects of evil speech) ;

use, it may be doubted whether we have outgrown the need, of this proverb. I think I have known men who would talk with a smile of actions they would blush to do. I have seen them listen complacently to jests against good morals, or against religious truths, or woven out of Sacred Names, although they themselves condemn irreligion and immorality. Their excuse is that it is "only a jest," that "words break no bones," that "a little freedom of speech does no harm." The wise Greek poet was not of their mind: nor was the holy Apostle. *They* thought that speeches against morals and religion did great harm, that there was a subtle and infectious poison in them from which even the health of good customs and habits was not secure, that even the most honest heart was not always proof against the insidious corruptions of vile talk.

From the words with which St. Paul closes this paragraph (ver. 34)—clear, sharp, penetrating, as the tones of a trumpet—there is reason to fear that the good Christian customs of some of the Corinthians had suffered from the vile speeches of the heathen. If some of them denied the resurrection on grounds drawn from the Greek philosophy, others of them must have denied it because they

so also those who are given to good speech are near neighbours to those who do good deeds."—*The Stromata* of Clement of Alexandria; Book I. chap. x.

feared it, because they had fallen into habits which would not brook the judgment of God, or the Apostle would hardly have cried to them, "*Awake to righteousness, and sin not.*" For the Greek verb is very strong ; it means, "Wake up from your orgies;" and he would not have used the word unless some of them had been drawn into the Corinthian revelry, nor would he have bid them "sin *no more,*" if they had not already sinned. They had been deceived, then ; they had lapsed into heathen vices ; they had listened to the song, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," till their blood was infected by its evil magic. Their only hope lay in rousing themselves to righteousness. They would come to "the knowledge of God" as they set themselves to do his will. They would learn that there was a resurrection unto life as they ordered their present life wisely, holily, and in the fear of God. If they had lost or relaxed their hold on the "gospel" which Paul had preached and they had received, if they doubted the resurrection, it was because they did not want to rise to a judgment they had too much cause to fear, because sensual addictions had clouded over their early faith. It was their loose manners which were narrowing their creed. And therefore the Apostle, having first heaped proof on proof that his gospel was true, pours on them the trumpet-blast of his warning and

rebuke : " Wake up from your orgies. Rouse yourselves to righteousness. Sin no more. Shame on you, that even yet ye have not the knowledge of God."*

Of the many points of interest incidentally suggested by these verses, none, perhaps, is more pertinent to the present time than St. Paul's use of the Greek poets ; for there are still good people who object to the introduction of what they call secular topics into religious discussions or exhortations, and of illustrations drawn from secular literature. Nay, there are still some who object to a classical curriculum for students destined for the Christian ministry, who have a rooted suspicion of that classical learning, of which, as they know nothing themselves, so also they think it would be well that their teachers should know nothing. Those who entertain this prejudice are commonly great sticklers for apostolic models and primitive observances ; and, therefore, it may be well to ask them to consider the example of St. Paul. Here, if he quotes from a Hebrew prophet, he also quotes from a Greek poet ; and it would be hard to deny

* " It is observable, That the Holy Ghost, which accounteth Natural Death as a Sleep, yet calleth the Life of a Sinner by the name of Death. To be truly Dead, is, to be Dead in Trespasses and Sins : And therefore St. Paul, not making mention of the Great Resurrection, bids his *Corinthians awake to Righteousness, and sin not* ; For, a Righteous man hath more hope in his Death, than a Sinner in his Life ; and no man can be Dead to Nature, that is alive to God."—GREGORIE, in *A Sermon on the Resurrection*.

that the same Spirit which moved him to cite Isaiah also moved him to cite Menander. Nor is this the only instance in which he makes use of the classical authors. Other instances are on record—instances enough to prove the habit of the man. To the Athenians * he quotes Aratus and Kleanthes : “ As certain also of your own poets have said, ‘ For we also are His offspring.’ ” Of the Cretans, † he quotes a saying from Epimenides, whom he does not scruple to acknowledge as a prophet : “ One of themselves, their own prophet, said, ‘ The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.’ ” Here, then, are at least four Greek authors, and these not the greatest nor the most commonly read, with whom the inspired Apostle was familiar ; and the probability is, that he had studied the Greek poets only less earnestly than the Hebrew prophets. His use of them sanctions

* Acts xvii. 28. The exact words, in the order in which the Apostle gives them, occur in the opening lines of the *Phænomena* of Aratus (B.C. 270) ; with a slight variation they also occur in a *Hymn* of Kleanthes (B.C. 300). By the plural, “ certain also of your own poets,” the Apostle seems to have had both Aratus and Kleanthes in his mind.

† Titus i. 12. The verse is also found, or part of it, in the “ Hymn to Zeus ” by Callimachus ; and one of the Fathers (Theodoret) maintains that St. Paul takes it from him. But the accepted opinion is that he quotes Epimenides (B.C. 600). This Epimenides was held in veneration throughout the antique world, not only as a poet, but as possessing the gift of divination, as marked out by Heaven for priestly offices. Clement of Alexandria reckoned him among “ the Seven Sages.” (*The Stromata*, Book I. Chap. xiv.)

our use of them. Those who object to a learned ministry, or to the illustration of sacred by secular literature, are at least bound to reconcile their objection with the practice and example of St. Paul. It would be easy to add weight to the argument : for there is abundant proof that the Apostle was as familiar with the Greek philosophy as with Greek poetry : we cannot so much as gather his meaning in many parts of his Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, &c., except as we acquaint ourselves with the themes and terms of Hellenic speculation. But the argument is surely strong enough for candid men ; and who would waste proofs on the uncandid ? That one Apostle, inspired by the Holy Ghost, was moved to quote the Greek poets, is a sufficient proof that secular learning is lawful and desirable in those who handle "the things of the Spirit ;" that this, like all other gifts or accomplishments, may be and ought to be devoted to the service of God and of his Christ.

VII.

THE ANALOGIES OF NATURE.

I COR. XV. 35—43.

THE holy Apostle enters, at this point, on the second part of his great argument. He has completed his series of proofs—historical, moral, occasional—for the Resurrection of the Dead. To those who affirmed that dead men do not rise, he has shown that at least one man did rise, the man Christ Jesus; and one clear indisputable instance was as good as many. It was of no use to say that dead men did not rise, if it could be proved that even one dead man had risen. One instance to the contrary is enough to disprove an universal negative. And such an instance St. Paul had brought forward. For the resurrection of the Lord Jesus he had adduced a weight and variety of historic testimony such as few of the facts most surely believed can show. Not content with disproof, nor with proof of the resurrection of the One, he has also argued that all

men, or at the lowest all who sleep in Christ, will rise from the dead. He proves this general affirmative by the monstrous absurdities involved in the denial of it—employing *argumenta ad absurdum*. If the dead rise not, then the only Perfect Life ended in darkness and defeat, the one Faith which is of a force to redeem men is a lie, the best men the world has seen lived a life the most miserable, only to perish when their life was over and gone. If it is incredible that these monstrous defeats of virtue should take place under the rule of a good and just God, we must believe in the resurrection unto life.

To these broad arguments, which are for all time and all men, St. Paul has added *argumenta ad hominem*, arguments of a more special and personal force. He has said: "Some of you Corinthians are baptized in place of your dead friends and for their benefit; but, if the dead rise not, what account can you give of this baptism for the dead?" Because the Corinthians regarded him as among the wisest and best of men, he has virtually said: "But how can I be what you conceive me, if there be no resurrection? I live only to preach Christ as the Resurrection and the Life. For this I die daily, I am in hourly jeopardy. And if this truth be a lie, I am no sage, but a fool, to suffer for it as I do."

Incidentally, moreover, he has shown *why* he believes that all men will rise ; it is because as in the Adam all die, so also in the Christ all are made alive : and *when* he expects them to rise ; it is at the coming of Christ, and, again, when, having subdued all things unto Himself, Christ will deliver his kingdom to the Father that God may be all in all.

But now from *the fact*, he passes to *the mode* of the Resurrection. Now that he has shown by many infallible proofs that the dead will rise, and having answered the questions *Why* and *When* ? the Apostle starts a new question,—*How* ?—“ *how* are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come ? ” This was a question sure to be raised, some man was sure to ask it, as we may infer from our own experience : for it is a question which *we* ask in many forms. “ Is, and how is, personal identity preserved ? ” “ Shall we recognise one another in the bodies of our resurrection ? ” “ Is it credible that from the ashes of bodies which have rotted in earth or sea, which have been burned with fire or devoured by wild beasts, there should spring a new glorious body, one with the old and yet transformed ? ” The question has even been raised : “ With *which* of our bodies shall we come ? If a man of seventy has had at least ten distinct and complete bodies, with which of the series is

he to reappear?" It is easy to multiply questions of this kind, and no doubt some of them have often engaged our thoughts.

To the question which lies at the root of all these and similar doubtful inquiries, the Apostle makes reply. If his reply does not slake our curiosity, it may at least confirm our faith. In considering it, however, we must bear in mind that he does not pretend to adduce new *proofs* of the Resurrection. All he attempts is to shew from analogy that the resurrection is not impossible, not incredible; that change of form is compatible with identity of substance.* But to prove that a thing is not

* It will be profitable, I think, before entering on St. Paul's argument from the analogies of Nature, to glance at the handling of that argument by the early fathers of the Church. Most of them use it, with a certain ingenuity and force; but they also use it with a supersubtle adroitness, or a tediousness long drawn out, or they embarrass it with mythical additions, which render St. Paul's large swift handling of it the more impressive. It would be easy to multiply quotations, but, not to weary the reader, I select only two, and these from the earlier and nobler expositors of the Faith.

Writing to his friend Autolytus, Theophilus of Antioch (A.D. 160—90) deals with the argument simply and briefly. "Consider, if you please, the dying of seasons, and days, and nights,—how these also die and rise again. And what? Is there not a resurrection going on of seeds and fruits, and this too for the use of man? A seed of wheat, for example, or of the other grains, when it is cast into the earth, first dies and rots away, then is raised and becomes a stalk of corn. And the nature of trees and fruit trees—is it not that, according to the appointment of God, they produce their fruits in their seasons out of what has been unseen and invisible? Moreover, sometimes also a sparrow, or some of the other birds, when in drinking it has swallowed a seed of apple, or fig, or something else, and has left the seed in its droppings, and the seed, which was once swallowed, and has passed through so great a heat,

incredible, and to prove that it will come to pass, are two very different forms of argument; and we must be careful not to confound them lest we miss the Apostle's

now striking root, a tree has grown up. And all these things does the wisdom of God effect, in order to manifest even by these that He is able to effect the general resurrection of all men. And if you would witness a more wonderful sight, which may prove a resurrection not only of earthly but of heavenly bodies, consider the resurrection of the moon, which occurs monthly; how it wanes, dies, and rises again. Hear further, O man, of the work of resurrection going on in yourself, even though you are unconscious of it. For, perchance, you have sometime fallen sick, and lost flesh, and strength, and beauty; but when you received from God mercy and healing, you picked up again in flesh and appearance, and recovered also your strength. And as you do not know where your flesh went and disappeared to, so neither do you know whence it came again. But you will say, 'From meats and drinks converted into blood.' True: but this also is the work of God, who thus operates, and not of any other." (*Theophilus to Autolytus*, Book I. Chap. 13.) It is not worth while to mark the false notes in this passage which jar with the true, and impair its harmony. Every reader will detect them for himself.

I quote another passage, which is still more curious. Clement of Rome, probably the companion of St. Paul mentioned in Phil. iv. 3, has left an Epistle than which it would be hard to find any writing more truly divine out of the Canonical Scriptures. Yet even this lovely and pathetic Epistle is marred by the introduction of a myth—the myth of the Phoenix—in a grave argument on the Resurrection. Happily the myth which mars the argument adds to our interest in the passage. Let the reader, however, peruse it for himself, and draw his own conclusions:—"Let us contemplate, beloved, the resurrection which is at all times taking place. Day and night declare to us a resurrection. The night sinks to sleep, and the day arises; the day departs, and the night comes up. Let us behold the fruits, how the sowing of grain takes place. The sower goes forth, and casts it into the ground; and the seed being thus scattered, though dry and naked when it fell upon the earth, is gradually dissolved. Then out of its dissolution the mighty power of the providence of the Lord raises it up again, and from one seed many arise and bring forth fruit.

"Let us consider that wonderful sign which takes place in Eastern lands, that is, in Arabia and the countries round about. There is a certain bird

meaning. In order to establish the distinction in our minds let us take a case in point from the words of the Lord Jesus.* Enforcing the necessity of his death in order to the life of men, He said: "Except the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." *That* was an

which is called a phoenix. This is the only one of its kind, and lives five hundred years. And when the time of its dissolution draws near, that it must die, it builds itself a nest of frankincense, and myrrh, and other spices, into which, when the time is fulfilled, it enters and dies. But, as the flesh decays, a certain kind of worm is produced, which, being nourished by the juices of the dead bird, brings forth feathers. Then, when it has acquired strength, it takes up the nest in which are the bones of its parent, and bearing them, it passes from the land of Arabia into Egypt, to the city called Heliopolis; and, in open day, flying in the sight of all men, it places them on the altar of the sun, and having done this, hastens back to its former abode. The priests then inspect the register of dates, and find that it has returned exactly as the five hundredth year was completed.

"Do we then deem it any great and wonderful thing for the Maker of all to raise up again those who have piously served Him in the assurance of a good faith, when even by a bird He shows us the mightiness of his power to fulfil his promise? For it is said in a certain place, 'Thou shalt raise me up, and I will confess unto Thee;' and again, 'I laid me down and slept; I awaked because Thou art with me;' and again, Job says, 'Thou shalt raise up this flesh of mine, which has suffered all these things.'"—(*The First Epistle of Clement*, Chaps. xxiv.—xxvi.) This Epistle was read "in very many Churches," so Eusebius testifies (Hist. Eccl. iii. 16), as on a level, or nearly on a level, with the inspired Scriptures. Despite its simple and noble moral tone, however, we may be thankful that it is not a Scripture. We have only to compare its treatment of the argument for the Resurrection to be drawn from the Analogies of Nature, with St. Paul's treatment of that argument, to see how wide an interval there is between the Scriptures of the New Testament, and the most elevated and devout of uninspired writings. St. Paul endorses no myth, nor does he misunderstand and misquote Old Testament texts.

* John xii. 24.

argument from analogy: but, in the strict sense, it *proved* nothing. The mere fact that grains of wheat must die before they yield fruit did not prove that Christ must die before He could give life to the world. The blessings of the Atonement were not predicted by every grain of wheat cast into the earth. We do not believe in the life-giving virtue of the death of Christ on that ground, but on its own proper evidence. All that the analogy of the wheat-field does for us is to make it conceivable and credible that death may be a condition of life.

In like manner St. Paul's argument from the analogies of Nature is not intended as a *proof* that men will rise; he has proved that already; but as an illustration of how, if there be a resurrection, the resurrection may take place—an illustration which makes it credible to us and conceivable. The fact of the redemption of the body from the power of the grave was so new and strange to many minds, so alien to their habits of thought, so unexampled in their experience, that its very strangeness made it dubious to them. St. Paul sets himself to take off this strangeness by adducing natural facts and processes with which they were familiar and which were analogous to the resurrection. His aim was to make it more easy for them to apprehend and believe the truth, not to offer any new arguments in its support.

The natural analogies he selects turn on these two points: first, that death is often a condition of new and higher life; and, second, that the same substance may take many and various forms. Let us examine these natural resemblances, and mark how they help us to apprehend the Resurrection.

First of all the Apostle brings forward a very familiar but pregnant analogy: he teaches us the parable of the Seed (verses 37, 38.)* He says: "You sow grain of

* *Gregorie* has a very curious note on St. Paul's illustration. He says: "This admirable instance of the Corn is one of those things which *St. Paul* was taught at *Gamatiel's* feet. In a Discourse concerning the Resurrection, read before *Julius Casar* the Emperor (and at which *Rabban Gamatiel* was present), *Cleopatra the Queen* asked *Rabban Meir*, and said, *We know that they that lye down (the dead) shall live, because it is written, And they shall spring up out of the City like the herb of the ground, but when they stand up (from the Dead) shall they rise up naked, or in their Cloaths? He said unto her, Kal Vechomer from the Wheat. What of the wheat which is buried naked, and yet riseth up very well clad, how much more the Just men who are buried in their Cloaths? Casar* said unto *Rabban Gamatiel*" &c. *Gregorie* gives the Hebrew of this dubious looking story, explains that *Kal Vechomer* is equivalent to or Rabbinical for *Argumentum à minori ad majus*, and quotes as his authority *Talmud in Sanhedrin*, C. II. fol. 90 b.

He has another note, part of which I give, taken from an Author whom he cites thus: *Mathaus Blastares Hieromonachis. Gr. M.S. in Arch. Barrociæ, Bib. Bod.* "The Earth only receiveth but the bare Corn, and restoreth it again by corrupting it, and delivereth it up in a much better fashion than it took it in, habited anew as to all respects of appointment in the parts. And can we receive a more forcible impression of argument for our own restauration, than from this example? . . . And how should all these-stalks grow up from one grain of Corn, and that as good as dead? The wonder of this is far above that of the Resurrection of our Bodies, for then the Earth giveth up her

various kinds, you who find it so difficult to understand how death may be a condition of life, or how identity of substance may underlie changes of form. What happens when the grain is in the ground? The grain dies that it may live. It ferments, and rots; the cohesion of its particles is relaxed. Unless it dies, it cannot live. Here, then, is *death in order to life*. Is that which thou sowest the body that will be? No: you sow bare grain; and there comes up a green blade—stalk, leaves, ear, a waving wealth of corn. A new body springs from the corruption of the old—a body more complex and beautiful, a body adapted to the higher region in which it has its life. But though the form of the grain be changed, is its identity lost? No: to each of the seeds God gives its own body. If you sow wheat, you reap wheat; if you sow barley, you reap barley; if you sow oats, you reap oats. What you reap is the same with that you sowed, although it is different. *The form is changed, but the identity is preserved.*"

dead but one for one, but in the case of the Corn she giveth up many living ones for one dead one. O the intolerable madness of unbelieving men! They see that the Earth giveth up to the Husbandman that which it received not, and should it be accounted among the impossible things that the same Earth should surrender up (to the Creator too) that which she hath received in pawn?" Gregorie seems surprised at the comparative excellence of the good monk's Greek in this passage and admits he has expressed himself "with more elegancy than I lookt for." See *Works* of the Reverend and Learned Mr. John Gregorie (A.D. 1684). Vol. i. pp. 128—30.

Thus the Apostle makes the Resurrection, otherwise so unfamiliar, familiar to us. We do not say: "Because the seed sown in the ground springs up again, therefore the body laid in the earth must rise." We draw no proof from the analogy: but we feel that it is not so difficult for us to conceive the resurrection of the body now that this natural resurrection of the seed is brought home to our thoughts. The analogy helps us—helps us in many ways, of which let us once more emphasize two.

(1.) We see for instance, that *Dissolution does not inevitably imply Destruction*; nay, that it affords no clear presumption of it even. Nothing sown is quickened except it die. Death, at least to seeds, is a condition of larger and more fruitful life, a condition of progress, of becoming more, more comely, and more serviceable. And, therefore, *it may be* that the dissolution of the body is not the destruction of the body. The body sown in the earth may die only to be quickened. To it death may be only the condition of advance: it may pass through death to a form more comely and perfect, to a more fruitful service, to more life and fuller.

(2.) We see how *when Form is changed Identity may be preserved*. The grain rots and dies that the vital germ may be quickened and fed. Yet it does not therefore lose its identity. It remains the same. Each of the

grains takes its own new body: wheat remains wheat, and rice, rice. And as we consider this natural change, other difficulties of thought are lightened. If we ask, "How are the scattered and vapourised particles of which our bodies are composed to be recovered and compacted into a new organism?" Nature replies, "That may not be necessary. Much may die, and yet the vital germ may live: much must die in order that it may live." If we say, "We do not care simply to live, but to be ourselves. To be absorbed into another, even a higher, nature; to lose our personal identity and have our friends lose theirs, so that we know neither ourselves nor them—this is repugnant to us, intolerable, incredible!" Nature replies, "To each of the seeds God giveth its own body, not another's. Under all changes or developments of form, it remains the same, it holds to the type which He willed it to have from the beginning. And therefore, though *your* new form may differ from the old, though corruption will put on incorruption and the mortal immortality, it may be that you will remain the same, and find the same friends about you, each in his own likeness, each holding to his own type, though now the type be enlarged and glorified. You may have exchanged the winter of seed-time for the golden splendours of an eternal summer; but neverthe-

less you may still be what you were, though better and happier than you were, all that is essential and peculiar to you revealing itself in higher forms."

Still to illustrate this point—identity of substance under variety of form, St. Paul passes to a new cluster of analogies, which we may range in three divisions.

(1.) *Earthly bodies differ from each other* (ver. 39). "All flesh is not the same flesh," yet it is the same. Men, beasts, fish,* birds are all composed of flesh and blood. In all the same chemical substances are held together by the same vital forces.† Yet this one flesh—

* It would be perhaps too curiously to inquire, were we to ask, how those who fast on fish evade the Apostolic affirmation, physiologically accurate beyond a doubt, that fish is flesh?

† That eminent physiologist, George Henry Lewes, in a remarkable Essay, which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* of November, 1868, gives St. Paul's assertion of the one flesh which takes many forms its most modern scientific expression. For the benefit of those who are familiar even with the elements of physiology, I give an abstract of some of his remarks on "the resemblances and diversities observable in all organisms," for the most part in his own words:—"All," i.e. all organisms, "have a common basis, all being constructed out of the same fundamental elements: carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen; these (the *organogens*, as they are called), with varying additions of some few other elements, make up all we know of organic matter, vegetable and animal." To community of substance we must add community of history. "All organisms grow and multiply by the same process; all pass through metamorphic stages ending in death; all, except the very simplest, differentiate parts of their substance for special uses, and these parts (cilia, membranes, tubes, glands, muscles, nerves), have similar characters in whatever organisms they appear, and their development is always similar, so that the muscles or nerves of an intestinal worm, a lobster, or a man, are in structure and history exactly

how infinite the variety of forms it assumes! Each of the creatures, like each of the seeds, has its own body; their bodies, however, being so diversified that in each order of creatures the varieties are numbered by the hundred and the thousand. If then of one flesh God can weave these infinite varieties of animal life, each exquisitely adapted to its peculiar element and conditions, can we suppose that his power is exhausted by the forms now visible to us? Is it incredible that the flesh which has taken so many forms in man and beast, in fish and bird, should change and rise into one form more? Is it not in accordance with all the teachings of Nature that, if at

alike." But "if there is an unmistakable uniformity, *there is also a diversity no less unmistakable.* The chemical composition of organic substances is various. . . . With the four organogens, which are constant, there are elements present in some organisms which are absent in others, and, when present, variable in quantity. Albumen is somewhat different in blood, muscle, and white of egg; it differs in the muscle of different animals; and all other organic substances will differ as much as one per cent. in each of their constituents. The chemical composition of muscle differs greatly in the crustaceæ and the vertebrata—the crustacean muscle contains no appreciable quantity of phosphate of potass, or oleophosphoric acid, and mere traces of creatin or creatinin. . . . Chitine is peculiar to the Articulata, cellulose to Molluscoida, carbonates of lime to Mollusca and Crustacea, and phosphates to Vertebrata." Professor Huxley in his lecture on "The Protoplasm," or the physical basis of life, with singular simplicity of language and splendour of illustration, maintains that the "structural unit" of all vegetable and animal life is a minute particle of Protein, with a spherical nucleus round which its currents pulsate; and that man and beast and fowl, reptile and fish, mollusk, worm, and polype, "are all composed of structural units of the same character, namely, masses of protoplasm with a nucleus."

death men pass into a new element and new conditions of life, God should adapt their organism, their body, to its new conditions, that he should develop in it new faculties and powers? All creatures take form here, and change form, as their circumstances require or alter; and therefore we may well believe that the same law will hold in the hereafter, that then as now the quality of the life will determine its form, and every man be clothed in a new body answering to his new needs.

(2.) But if earthly bodies differ from each other, much more do *heavenly bodies differ from earthly*. "The glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another" (ver. 40). There is one *matter* as there is one flesh. Of this one matter all things are made, whether they be things in heaven or things on earth. Compare sun, moon, stars, planets, comets with the various orders of beasts, fish, birds, or with mountains, streams, trees, flowers; and how wide, how immeasurable, is the diversity between the celestial and the terrestrial! Yet God made them all, and made them of the same substance. And in this infinite variety of material forms we see the proof that all matter is pliant to his touch; that there is no limit to his power; that, if it please Him, He can mould the identical substance of which all physical nature is composed into new forms. Nay, more; the matter of the

heavenly bodies, which is one with that of earthly bodies, and is subject to the same laws—chemical, mechanical, astronomical—is in each case adapted to its conditions, and varies as these vary. And therefore the presumption is strong that if death should greatly change our conditions, our physical organism will change with them, and be adapted to them. If death should lift us to heaven, we may well believe that, as we were here adapted to an earthly lot, so there we shall be adapted for a heavenly lot ; that as we have worn the glory of an earthly body, so also we shall wear the glory of a heavenly body.

(3.) But not only do *heavenly bodies* differ from earthly, they also *differ from each other*. All are in heaven, all are heavenly bodies, “but there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars ; nay, even star differeth from star in glory” (ver. 41). It is not simply that each of the heavenly bodies has its own light : it has its own *glory*, its special features, its peculiar characteristics, its proper excellence, that which differentiates and distinguishes it from the rest. We know so little of the celestial worlds, that we can hardly hope to know what their several glories are while the earth holds us and the flesh limits our powers : almost all we know, or expect to know, of them, is what their varying volumes of light can be made to tell us of their

weight, their magnitude, their composition, their relations the one to the other. But even the light they shed tells a tale of identity in diversity. They all shine down upon us with one light; but there is, evidently and notoriously, one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and yet another of the stars.* Nay, from the earliest ages, when men tilled the fertile plains of Chaldæa, they have distinguished differences of light even in the planets—the blue ray of Mercury, the golden lustre of Venus, the red and bloody portent of Mars, the deep orange gleam of Jupiter, the sickly leaden hue of Saturn.† And these differences

* St. Paul notes with special admiration that “even star differeth from star in glory.” Had he written in these days he might have added, with a keener emphasis of wonder, “Nay, even *sun* differeth from *sun* in glory;” since “the blazing Sirius,” “the ruddy Aldeboran,” Vega, Capella, and Arcturus, each shines with a glory peculiar and unique. For though he uses the word “star,” and the *fixed* stars (as we call “those rolling orbs of light”) are suns, there is no doubt, I believe, that by the stars he meant the planets.

† The tower of Birs-Nimrud at Borsippa, which was rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar, may be taken as a type of the astronomical edifices erected by the Chaldeans so far back as B.C. 2000. The ground plan of these structures is an exact square, with the angles, not the faces, turned to the four cardinal points. From the base the building rises in successive stages, each smaller than the one below. Used as observatories, their very structure and ornamentation embody the results of astronomical science. At Birs-Nimrud, for instance, the oblique pyramidal tower consists of seven stories, corresponding to the sun, the moon, and the five planets then discovered. Each of these stories is distinguished by colours answering to the lustre of the several celestial bodies. The tower is so defaced, and its colours so obscured by time, that it is difficult to identify them; but there can be little doubt that they run thus. Beginning from the summit of the tower, they represented the solar series in its supposed order—the Moon, silver; Mercury, blue; Venus yellow; the Sun, gold; Mars, red; Jupiter, orange; and Saturn, black.

of light speak of differences of place, magnitude, structure. The one glory of the heavens is a multitudinous glory; it is a complex of many different glories. And if of one substance God has woven the infinite and differing globes of light which shine upon us from the depths of space, how incommensurate our thought of Him, did we suppose that He could not out of the one substance of this mortal body weave many different bodies, each perfect in its kind and for its purpose, each answering to its conditions, and rising as they rise!* Our difficulties of thought do not impose limits on the creative energy of God. If we cannot conceive "*how* the dead are raised up, and with what body they come," that is no reason why they should not be raised, no reason why the Resurrection should be incredible to us.

* Tatian (*circa* A.D. 160-170), the Assyrian pupil of Justin Martyr, found this contemplation of the infinite majesty and power of God a strong ground for comfort in the prospect of death. He expresses the thought in his "Address to the Greeks" (Chap. vi.), where it lies embedded in a curious yet effective argument for the Resurrection:—"Just as, before I was born, I knew not who I was, and only existed in the potentiality of matter, but being born, after a former state of nothingness, I have obtained through my birth a sure knowledge of my existence; so, in the same way, having been born, and through death existing no longer, and seen no longer, I shall exist again—just as before I was not, but was afterwards born. Even though fires destroy all traces of my flesh, the world receives the vapourised matter; and though dispersed through rivers and seas, or torn by wild beasts, *I am laid up in the storehouses of a wealthy Lord . . .* who, when He pleases, will restore the substance that is visible to Him alone."

We cannot understand how the worlds were made, or how they are held together by forces which we call "gravitation" and "attraction," but of which we know little beyond the names. We cannot tell what "the vital force" is, or how it assimilates matter and builds it up into a living organism. Yet we believe that the world is, and that we are. Why then should we hold it to be a thing incredible that God should raise the dead, because we cannot tell how He will raise them or what body He will give them? If we do hold it to be incredible, Heaven and Earth—sun, moon, and stars; beasts, birds, fishes—rebuke us with: "Thou fool! look on us, and hold thy peace." They say: "Learn of us. Mark how we differ, how, though one in substance, we are manifold in form; and learn that He who made us can change the body of your humiliation into a glorious body, that He who made it the glory of the earth can also make it the glory of the heavens. Look on us, and from our changes learn that death is a condition of life, that change and dissolution are means of progress and advance. Go forth into the fields, and as that which thou sowest dies that it may be quickened—disappears, dissolves that it may come again in another body, another and yet its own, learn that your body, sown in corruption, will be raised in incorruption; sown in shame,

will be raised in glory; sown in weakness, will be raised in strength. Learn it, and be glad, and give praise to Him who alone worketh wonders."

Let us learn this parable of the field and of all the fields, of the world and all the worlds. For in the life we now live in the flesh there is so much shame, so much weakness, so much that is corrupt, that, unless we believe God to be preparing us for honour, strength, and incorruption, we may well lose heart, and despair of ourselves, if not of humanity. Let us consider the corn that springeth up we cannot tell how, save that it dies to live; and the stars which differ yet agree, which have one glory and yet many glories, that we may thus confirm our faith in the life which we must pass through death to reach, and in the glory yet to be revealed in and upon all those who love life and seek it.

VIII.

THE NATURAL BODY AND THE SPIRITUAL BODY.

1 COR. XV. 44.



T. PAUL, as an author, has two excellencies which are in some sense defects; *i.e.*, his very excellencies make it the more difficult for us to reach and grasp his meaning. A fine scholar, even when using the simplest forms of speech, leaves on them the tincture of his erudition. He may not quote many and recondite authorities, he may not directly advert to foreign and ancient schemes of thought, nor strew "the rich results of science" along his page; he may studiously confine himself to expressing in his mother-tongue thoughts within the scope of home-grown wits: but, nevertheless, his very choice of words, the senses in which he uses them, the order in which he arranges them, will infallibly betray him. In proportion as we ourselves have any scholarship, we

shall detect subtle allusions, indirect references, underlying meanings, accuracies and curious felicities of speech, which are concealed from the unlettered, but which give his style its special force and attraction. Now this is one of the excellencies of St. Paul. An accomplished and profound scholar, learned in Greek and Hebrew lore, his simplest words contain far-reaching suggestions and allusions. They are weighty with meanings; they convey hints which it is difficult for us to catch, clues which it is difficult for us to follow. Thus, for instance, in the verses which now come before us (vers. 44—49), there are at least three passages which betray his familiarity with Greek and Hebrew authors. The distinction he draws between "the natural" and "the spiritual" in man is based, in some measure, on the philosophy of Aristotle;*

* In his *De Anima* (iii. 5), Aristotle draws a distinction between the active, impassive, eternal reason (the spirit), and the passive susceptible reason (the soul) of man. He says: "The rational part of man is necessarily twofold. On the one side is 'the reason' which is to be so called in virtue of its *becoming* everything; on the other that which takes its name from *making* everything, in the manner in which, to take an example, light does: for in a certain sense light makes colours existing potentially to be colours actually. And this latter reason—that is, the active reason which has an absolute existence—is separable, and impassive, and unmixed in essence." It is not dependent in any way on the present organism, nor affected by its changes, nor modified by its conditions. "And this alone, this impersonal and unchangeable reason—is immortal and eternal." On the other hand, there is "the passive and susceptible reason," the seat of personal feeling, emotion, impression; and this is "corruptible, and, apart from the eternal reason, is incapable of thought or consciousness." Coleridge, though in different

his designation of the Lord Jesus Christ as "the Last Adam" and "the Second Man" is taken from the Jewish rabbis, who expressly affirmed* that "the Last Adam is the Messiah," while the contrast between "the living soul" and "the life-giving Spirit" is based on the writings of Moses. There is no one of these authors—law-giver, rabbi, philosopher—whose system of thought is not illuminated by St. Paul's allusion to it; probably there is no one of them whose system and terminology did not give shape to St. Paul's conceptions and influence his choice of words. If we have not skill to trace out these connections and interdependences of thought, we may, nevertheless, suffer the mere fact of their existence to remind us how wonderful a book the Bible is, what depths are in it. We can never exhaust

terminology, drew a similar distinction in the rational nature of man. Retaining Aristotle's name for the active absolute "reason," he prefers to call "the passive and susceptible reason," "the understanding." According to him, we have *the understanding* in common with the beasts. It is the organ of the soul. "It may be defined as the conception of the sensuous, or the faculty by which we generalise and arrange the phenomenon of perception." But *reason* is peculiar to man. It differentiates him. It is "conscious self-knowledge." It is of the spirit, and may be "safely defined as the organ of the supersensuous." With him, as with Aristotle and St. Paul, man is a trinity; his one nature has a threefold operation. "The sense,—*vis sensitiva vel intuitiva*—perceives: *vis regulatrix*—the understanding, in its own peculiar operation, conceives: *vis rationalis*—the reason or rationalised understanding, comprehends." (Essay V. "First Landing Place" in *The Friend*.)

* *Neve Shalom*, ix.; 9. Schüttgen *ad loco*.

it. The oldest of books, it is always new; the most familiar of books, it is always fresh, and reveals new meanings to us as we are able to receive them.

Another excellency in any author, and a supreme excellency, is the power of generalization—the habit of rising from particular instances to the broad general law under which they range. This is, perhaps, the crowning glory of our national poet. Shakespeare is always great, always new. And if we seek to discern why, we find, I think, that it is very much because he is for ever rising, without strain or effort, from the special topic or incident he has in hand to a perception of wide or universal laws of life and thought. St. Paul has this excellency also. He is habitually large and broad in his conceptions. If he is asked for a maxim—a rule about eating and drinking, for instance, or about celibacy, or about sabbaths—he cannot give his maxim without adding a general principle which covers the whole life. He is impatient of pettinesses and formalities. He deals in universals. Of this largemindedness, this “largeness of heart,” as the Hebrews called it, we have many examples in this Chapter; and few of these are more striking than one on which we must soon touch. He is simply stating that, on the scale of human story, Adam was *before* Christ, and that we are in the image of the

earthly *before* we bear the image of the heavenly. But he cannot be content with stating these facts. He instinctively reaches out after a general law which will cover these and many facts besides. He finds his law, and expresses it in the words: "*first* that which is natural, *afterward* that which is spiritual." It is the law of progress, of ascent from the lower to the higher, which covers not the facts of the resurrection only, but all the facts of universal life. That Adam should be before Christ, and the earthly before the heavenly in Man, is in the order of Nature: it is but one illustration of a law wide as the universe.

These, then, are two of St. Paul's chief excellencies; the learning in which thought and language are steeped even when he is most simple, and the largemindedness which compels him to bring all facts, all thoughts, under the great general laws that control them. It is these very excellencies which are in some sense defects; for, on the one hand, they make it hard, if not impossible, for the unlettered and small of mind to follow his line of argument, to comprehend the full sweep of his logic; and, on the other hand, if we have a little learning and love large thoughts, we are apt to be so occupied with his erudite suggestions, or his noble generalizations, as to let the main line of his argument slip from our minds.

That we may escape these dangers, let us take up from this passage, at least for the present, only so much as we may hope to carry. Leaving its side glances into Greek and Rabbinical literature alone, simply admitting that they are there, let us be content to trace its main stream of thought.

The first point we have to mark and emphasize is the affirmation : *That as there is a natural, so also there is a spiritual, body.* At first, and while we are unprepared for it, the phrase "a *spiritual body*" seems a contradiction in terms. "Body" and "spirit" are not only distinct in our thoughts, but different, opposite, incompatible. But we ought not to be altogether unprepared for the phrase. St. Paul has in part already prepared us to understand it, by his argument from the analogies of Nature. He has taught us that one life, one flesh, one glory may take many forms. The seed has one life, but it has two bodies—the body that rots in the earth, and the body that waves in the air. Nay, as there are many seeds, each of which has at least two bodies, and each its own bodies, there must be very many bodies, an innumerable diversity of forms, which seed is capable of assuming, each of which is in harmony with the qualities of the vital germ and adapted to the conditions in which it exists. So, again, there is one flesh ; but all flesh is not

the same flesh : it clothes itself in many forms in man, in beasts, in fishes, in birds—each of these forms being the product of the vital germ contained in all flesh as modified by the external conditions in which it is placed. So, also, there is one glory of light ; but it takes many and diverse forms in the suns, the moons, the stars. These are the natural analogies to which St. Paul appeals. For what purpose does he adduce them? He adduces them first of all (as we saw in the previous Essay), in reply to the “fool” who asks of the risen dead —“With what body do they come?” who, because he can conceive of no body but his own present body, and because he knows that that will rot in the grave, doubts whether there can be any resurrection of the dead. To him St. Paul shows that there are bodies innumerable besides that he wears ; and that one life often assumes different bodies, one substance many forms, passing *through death* from form to form, from body to body.

This was St. Paul's first and most obvious meaning ; but while giving us this, he was preparing us to find another meaning in his words. The other meaning is, that bodies, external forms, answer to the quality of the inward life, and are adapted to it and to the conditions in which it has to act. This is a law that pervades the universe. It holds good of sun, moon, and stars ; of

beasts, fish, birds, seeds. But let us select only two illustrations of it, one of which will help us by-and-by.

Take, first, the Parable of the Seed, the grain of wheat. While still a seed, it has a germ of life, which only needs certain conditions for its development. The seed is cast into the ground; the sun sends warmth, the clouds moisture, and these filter through the earth to the buried corn. Fermentation sets in, which the hard encircling husk renders effective and hinders from running to waste. In the husk are gluten, starch, &c., whatever the vital germ needs for its sustenance; and these, by the process of fermentation, are reduced to the very state in which the germ can most easily assimilate them. The seed-body of the wheat, then, has in itself all that it requires, whatever adapts it to the conditions in which it is placed. Its roots strike downwards, its stem springs upward, both piercing the husk at the points where it most easily yields; and soon we get the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear. And this new body, no less than the old, has all that it needs for the nourishment of its life, and is no less exactly adapted to its conditions. It has, and it has power to assimilate, warmth, moisture, and the nutriment of the earth. But how vast the change! From an earthly, it has become an aërial body; instead of rotting in the ground, confined by its narrow husk, it

waves freely in the free air ; it has clothed itself with beauty : the sun shines upon it, the dew cleanses and nourishes it : a heavenly body, it draws vigour and comeliness from the bountiful heavens.

Take, secondly, the Parable of the Butterfly,* a parable so plain that he who runs may read it, so plain that the pagan Greeks read it, and called the soul and the butterfly by one name. To them *psyche* meant either a butterfly or the soul of man : you had to find out which from the other words of the sentence. *Psyche*, the butterfly, has two bodies. First, it is a worm, creeping slowly on the earth, so ugly to our eyes that we dislike to touch it ; liable to be crushed by every passing foot, destroying the leaves on which it feeds, and the fruit which they should shelter. "Finding itself grow sick with age, it straightway falls to spinning its own shroud, coffin, grave, all in one—to prepare for its resurrection. Patiently it spins its strength, but not its life, away, folds itself up decently, that it may rest in quiet till the new body be formed within." At length, when the appointed time has come, out of the body of the

* I take this description of the metamorphosis of the caterpillar into the fly, or most of it, from "The Seaboard Parish." I owe my friend Mr. MacDonald an apology for venturing to substitute in part my own for his more perfect words. My excuse must be that I had to adapt his general illustration to the particular theme in hand.

crawling worm there breaks "the winged splendour of the butterfly"—not the same body, but a new one, with all the old imperfections taken away; not an earthly, but an aërial body. Instead of creeping on the earth, it wings in rapid variable flight through the air; for ugliness, it is clothed in beauty; instead of polluting and destroying that on which it feeds, it now feeds on the delicate fragrant flowers, and fertilizes them by carrying pollen from plant to plant: "the lovely flowers paying a willing tribute to the yet higher loveliness of the flower-angel."

Is not this a resurrection? The earth is full of resurrections such as this; they are to be seen in every field, by every stream. So, too, is the mighty sea: and as this fact is less familiar to us, I may be pardoned for introducing a personal reminiscence in illustration of it. Some years since I kept a marine aquarium. As I stood looking at it one hot summer day, I saw on the surface of the water a tiny creature—half fish, half snake—not an inch long, writhing as in a mortal agony. With convulsive efforts it bent head to tail now on this side, now on that, springing its circles with a force simply wonderful in a creature so small. I was stretching out my hand to remove it, lest it should sink and die and pollute the clear waters; when lo, in a moment, in the twinkling of

an eye, its skin *split* from end to end, and there sprang out a delicate fly, with slender black legs and pale lavender wings. Balancing itself for an instant on its discarded skin, it preened its gossamer wings, and then flew out of an open window. The impression produced by this slight incident was one at which perhaps naturalists, familiar with such metamorphoses, would smile, it was so deep and overpowering. I felt as though the secret veil of Nature had been momentarily withdrawn, and I had been permitted to witness the execution of a creative fiat. My eyes grew dim with awe and surprise. But afterward, I saw the marvel repeated again and again, and thus I learned that on sea as on land God bears perpetual varied witness to the mystery of the Resurrection.

But let us go back to our butterfly.* Just as the seed's two bodies are each adapted to the stage of de-

* The frog, though not on the whole so suitable an illustration as the butterfly, passes through a still more remarkable series of reconstructions or re-formations. According to Professor Agassiz, the frog, when first hatched, is simply an oblong body, without any appendages, and tapering slightly towards its posterior end. In its next stage, that of the tadpole, the extremity elongates into a tail, the gills are fairly developed, and it has one pair of rudimentary and imperfect legs. In its succeeding stages, it has two pairs of legs and a fin round its tail. Then the gills are suppressed, the animal breathes through lungs, and the tail still remains. Last of all, to end this strange eventful history, the tail shrinks till it disappears, and the frog is complete.—AGASSIZ, *Journey in Brazil*, Chap. i. p. 22.

velopment which the vital germ has attained, and to the conditions around it, so also are the two bodies of the butterfly. As caterpillar and as fly it is in harmony with itself, and with its lot: a worm while it needs to creep and feed on leaves, it becomes a fly that it may flit through the air and feed on the fragrant flowers. It is this side of the analogy which St. Paul now brings forward. He argues that there must be a spiritual body, just as there is a natural body for man, on the ground that his nature is capable of a spiritual no less than a natural manifestation and development. Reduced to its simplest expression, his argument is, that the quality of our life determines the form it assumes; that so long as we remain natural men we require a natural body: but that so soon as we become spiritual men, we require a spiritual body, and shall have it. Just as the seed has its earthly and its aërial body, just as the butterfly has its earthly and its aërial body, so also man has his earthly and his heavenly body. Throughout the universe life manifests itself in forms answering to its capacities and conditions, the form rising as the capacities rise, and modifying itself to meet all novel conditions: and, therefore, we may fairly assume that this universal law holds good of man, that he too will pass into a new form, a form more heavenly and spiritual, as his capacities are

spiritualized and he rises into more heavenly conditions.

True, the argument is implied rather than openly urged ; but no one, I submit, can study verses 44 and 45 without feeling that it is in the Apostle's mind, and gives force to his words. Taking these verses as yet only in their most general and obvious sense, St. Paul affirms that man is capable of becoming—nay, that he has actually been, both “a living soul” and “a life-giving spirit:” and that therefore just as he has “a natural body” through which the living soul acts and expresses itself, so also he will have “a spiritual body” such as the life-giving spirit demands.

Interpreted even in this loose general way, St. Paul's words imply an argument which we can see to be of force. But if we look a little more closely into them, and especially into the word translated “a *natural* body,” his meaning will grow upon us, and the argument become more cogent. The italicised word is also used* by the Apostle in the familiar phrases—“A *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit . . . nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned ; but the *spiritual* man discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of none.” The mere English helps us ; for

* 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

we at once see that just as there St. Paul speaks of "a natural man" and "a spiritual man," so here he speaks of "a natural body" and "a spiritual body;" and it is quite in accordance with the analogies of the universe, quite in accordance with all we have learned of life and form, that a natural man should have a natural body, and a spiritual man a spiritual body; for bodies, forms, always correspond to the life that is in them.

But the Greek helps us far more than the English. We have seen that the Greeks called the soul *psyche*, as well as the butterfly. And as *psyche* ($\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$) stood for soul, of course, *psychical* ($\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}s$) stood for soulish,* or of the soul. This is the word St. Paul uses here. He speaks of "a *soulish* body" and of "a spiritual body," just as elsewhere he speaks of "a *soulish* man" and "a spiritual man." What he means by these terms is

* One shrinks from using a word of so barbarous a sound as *soulish*, and indeed I will use it as seldom as I can. But clearness is more than euphony, and where the word is indispensable, it must be used. It will not be necessary often, however, if the reader will be good enough to mark once for all that, instead of translating, we may transfer St. Paul's word. "*Psychical*" is scholastic, if not pedantic, English for "soulish;" and as we must choose between them, it may be better to seem pedantic than to constantly employ a barbarism. Indeed it is possible, and perhaps desirable, to give the exact Greek words St. Paul employs in the two phrases we have to master, in English of a sort. The phrase, *a natural man* and *a spiritual man*, would then read *a psychical man* and *a pneumatical man*; while the phrase, *a natural body* and *a spiritual body* would read *a psychical body* and *a pneumatical body*.

clear enough, although it is impossible to translate them satisfactorily. St. Paul held, as Aristotle held before him, and as the ablest metaphysicians still hold, that man is composed of body, soul, and spirit. By *the soul*, he meant what we sometimes call "the wits"—all of intelligence which we possess in common with other animals, though in higher degree; our powers of perception and understanding, our passions of love and hatred, desire and fear. By *the spirit*, he meant what we call "our moral nature;" the higher reason and conscience; that in us which sees or believes the unseen, in which faith, hope, charity inhere. With him *the psychical man* is the man in whom the *psyche*, or soul, rules; the man who is intelligent, but uses his intelligence for ends bounded by time and space; whose passions may be under the control of social or legal laws, but are not under law to God, save as God's will may be expressed in the legal or social enactments to which he submits: in fine, the man who does not "walk after the spirit," to whom the future is a haze, immortality a peradventure, God a dubious or unrealized existence; the man who, if he does not deny, does not heartily accept moral, spiritual, and eternal truths. On the other hand, *the spiritual man* is the man in whom the spirit rules; who subordinates intelligence, thrift, desire, passion, to the

divine law; to whom God is even more real than man, eternity than time, heaven than home; in whom conscience, faith, love, are supreme. St. Paul holds that it is possible and open to us to become either psychical men or spiritual men, and that God is always helping us to rise into the higher and more spiritual region of our life. He holds that so long as we remain psychical or soulish men, we have, in the present body, the very body adapted to our present stage of life and to the conditions of our life. It is a *soulish* body, that is, a body responsive to all the faculties, needs, desires of the soul capable of serving our intelligence and our passions, capable of pursuing all we desire to gain and of doing all we wish to do. But he also holds that if we live in the spirit and walk in the spirit, if we cultivate reason, conscience, faith, hope, love, we thus develop capacities and graces to which the present body gives neither full scope nor adequate expression; that we shall never be at home in the body till we have a *spiritual* body answering to our spiritual nature as exactly as the soulish body answers to all the powers and passions of the soul. Therefore it is that, like the seed which has the life of wheat in it, our bodies must be sown in the earth that they may spring up heavenly bodies; sown in corruption, that they may be raised in incorruption. Therefore it is

that, as the caterpillar, which has in it the germ of a nobler life, lies down in death that its life may pass into a new aërial body, so we must lie down in the grave that, shedding these earthly husks, putting off "this muddy vesture of decay," we may be clothed upon with a spiritual body—a body incorrupt, immortal, strong with the vigours of an eternal youth, bright with the splendours of a heavenly glory.

This is the Apostle's argument,—that as from "living-souls" we become partakers of Him who is "the Life-giving Spirit," we must assume a spiritual body which will respond to the requirements of our spiritual life, and give full scope to its powers. And surely the argument is fully sustained by the laws of life and form which we discover in the universe around us. As we contemplate Nature we see everywhere that the quality of the life determines the form it assumes, the form changing as the life changes, and rising as the life rises. Nor is this mortal body less exquisitely adapted to the life, and to the conditions of the life, we now live in the flesh. Through this body the intelligent soul looks out and reads natural and social laws; the passions find their appropriate organs; we can do our work with it and pursue our gains. And therefore we have every reason to believe that the same law holds good of those provinces of the

universe which lie beyond our ken, and will hold good of us when we leave this mortal scene. We have reason to believe that the spiritual in us, when once it has become our supreme mode of life, will fashion for itself a suitable form, organs through which it can freely exert its energies, a spiritual body answering to its capacities and conditions and needs.*

That our present body only imperfectly expresses our spiritual life, that it veils from us many of "the things of the Spirit," that it impedes, and often thwarts us in the exercise of spiritual graces and the pursuit of spiritual excellence—these are among the most common, as they are also the most bitter, facts of our experience. When the spirit is willing, how often is the flesh weak! When by much study and meditation we have risen to a perception of heavenly truths, and some great mystery of the Faith seems at the very door, how often is the vision darkened by the mists that rise from a weary brain and a

* "There is a kind of advance in man, so that from being first a soulish being, and not understanding what belongs to the Spirit of God, by instruction he reaches a higher stage and becomes a spiritual being, and judges all things, while he himself is judged by no one. So also, with respect to the state of the body, we are to hold that this very body which now, on account of its service to the soul, is styled a soulish body, will, by means of a certain progress, when the soul, united to God, shall have been made one spirit with Him, attain to a spiritual condition and quality; especially since bodily nature was so formed by the Creator as to pass easily into whatsoever condition He should wish, or the nature of the case should demand."—ORIGEN, *De Principiis*, Book III. Chap. vi.

saddened heart, or let go through the infirmity of an outworn or flagging will !* When by dint of thought and prayer we have risen into happy communion with God, and all heaven seems at the point to break upon our eyes, how often are we dragged down to earth by the weaknesses or the necessities of the body, and compelled to leave the heaven to which it is so hard to rise ! Or when with much labour we have braced ourselves for difficult duty, when we are strung up to endure the sacrifices involved in serving God and helping our neighbour, how soon do we weary in welldoing ! How often does some infirmity of the flesh, some heat of temper, or even some awkwardness of expression, betray the spirit and defeat us of our aim ! The more spiritual we are, so much the more do we feel that we are in bondage to the flesh, and crave that spiritual body which, instead of veiling and clogging, will further and express all that is highest in us and best.

When weary with many conflicts or sickening in defeat, how bright and animating is the hope that one day we too shall have a body as quick and responsive to *the spirit* in us as the mortal body to the soul, a body whose organs will minister as delicately and perfectly to our spiritual capacities, energies, virtues, graces as the senses

* "For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle weighteth down the mind that museth upon many things."—*Wisdom of Solomon*, Chap. ix. ver. 15.

now minister to the energies and passions of the soul! Think of it, and rejoice in hope of this glory of God. Remember with what instant and faultless precision the senses act when exercised by use. Remember how, as we walk in happy mood through any large fair scene, the eye discerns its varied loveliness, and wakes in us an ecstasy of delight; how, as we listen to sweet music, the ear faithfully reports its delicious melodies and rich complex harmonies, giving every separate tone, yet blending them into a concord which moves the soul through all its depths. And then conceive what it must be to have a spiritual body, a body with organs which are as delicately attuned to spiritual harmonies and the visions of heavenly beauty, which accurately report all the complexities of eternal truth, which respond to every breath of reason and conscience, which enable us to look on God and live through the beatific vision, which are as pliant to all the perceptions and energies of faith, hope, charity as the eye to beauty or the ear to music, and which never grow weary when engaged on heavenly studies or occupied in errands of mercy! Give imagination free rein, for the sacred blessed reality cannot be surpassed, nay, can never be reached while we are prisoned in the flesh.

*"Harmony is in immortal souls,
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."*

All powers and delights of sense are but dim types of the energies and raptures of that spiritual body which is to clothe us in incorruption and immortality, in strength and glory, when we rise to our full stature as spiritual men and breathe the air of heaven.

“ If there is an earthly body, there is also a spiritual ;” and therefore we who are in this tabernacle do groan, earnestly desiring our heavenly garment, that spiritual body which is the only perfect vesture for the spirit which Christ, the Life-giving Spirit, has quickened in us.

IX.

THE FIRST ADAM AND THE LAST ADAM.

I COR. XV. 45.



T. PAUL bases his assertion that "if there is a psychical body, there is also a spiritual," first, on the analogies of Nature, and, second, on the nature of Man as revealed in Holy Writ.

The analogies of Nature teach that the quality of life and its conditions determine the form it assumes. One substance may take many forms, one kind or type of life many different bodies. The one seed, for instance, takes two bodies, the body that rots in the earth, and the body that waves in the air ; and each of these corresponds to the life in the seed and the conditions in which that life is placed. There is one flesh ; but it takes many forms in man, in beast, in birds, in fish, although in its earliest embryonic stages it is similar in them all, and often indistinguishable. There is one glory of light ; but this glory again, though one in essence, is manifold in form ; the

glory of the sun differing from that of the moon, that of the moon from that of the stars, star differing even from star in glory. In short, throughout the universe, as in the seed and the butterfly, we see life determining form : the form rising as the life rises and changing with its changed conditions. Why then should man, and man alone, be exempt from the operation of this universal law? The presumption is that he is not exempt. The presumption is that, as *his* life rises in quality and power, as it shifts into new and more heavenly conditions, it will clothe itself in a new organism answering to its new conditions and capable of expressing its newly developed powers. We may rationally conclude that, as the earthly man has an earthly body, so the heavenly man will have a heavenly body ; that, if the psychical man has a psychical body, the spiritual man will have a spiritual body.

This conclusion, drawn from the analogies of Nature, is confirmed and defined by the Scripture revelation of the nature of Man. Man, according to St. Paul, is a trinity ; that is, he consists of body, soul, and spirit. Under the term "soul," the Apostle includes the intelligence and passions which man possesses in common with creatures lower than himself. Under the term "spirit" he includes the higher reason, conscience, faith, hope, charity—the moral qualities which raise man above other

creatures. The mortal body we now wear is a *soulish body*—a body exquisitely adapted to serve and express *the soul*, to feel and use the world of sense. But it is not a quick and adequate minister of *the spirit*. It veils the spiritual world from us ; it clogs and thwarts the action of our spiritual energies : it restrains devotion, and faints into weakness under the pressure of the willing spirit. Before the spirit can be at home in the body, it must clothe itself with a *spiritual body*—an organism as responsive to the impact of spiritual truths and virtues, as quick and serviceable to faith, love, devotion, as the eye is to beauty, the ear to music, or the hand to the busy uses of the contriving soul. When the spirit reigns over the soul, when it is supreme in us, we may hope that, according to the analogies of the natural world, it will weave for itself a body like itself, an incorrupt and immortal body, a spiritual and heavenly body corresponding to its spiritual character and heavenly conditions.

All this is included, as we have seen, in St. Paul's assertion that, "if there is a psychical body, there is also a spiritual."

We may now advance to the second point of his argument, viz., *the historical basis* on which his assertion rests. Thus far we grant the force of his logic. We admit that, throughout the universe, form is determined

by the quality of the life that dwells in it as modified by the conditions which surround it: and that, therefore, the quality of life in man and the conditions in which it is placed will determine the character of his body or form. We admit that if the psychical man requires and obtains a psychical body, so also the spiritual man requires a spiritual body, and may hope to obtain it. But we may reasonably demur to St. Paul's metaphysics. We may reasonably ask: "Is his distinction between the soul and the spirit in man a true distinction? Are there in us both a psychical and a spiritual nature?" And to this question St. Paul gives a singular but profound reply. Instead of at once throwing us back on our own experience or plunging into the subtleties of Hellenist metaphysics—both of which would have supplied the answer he wanted—he appeals to historical facts which at first may seem to have very little to do with the question, but which we shall nevertheless find to contain the truest and deepest answer it could receive. The historical facts to which he appeals are the nature of Adam and the nature of Christ as revealed in the Sacred Records. "Thus it is written, 'The "first man," Adam, became a living soul,' the last Adam a life-giving spirit."

Before looking for the meaning and argumentative force of these words, it may be well to clear them of one or two

collateral questions and connections of thought. The opening clause, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul," is, with the exception of the words "first" and "man," an exact quotation from the Hebrew of Moses,* who says: "The Adam became a living soul." That the second clause, "the last Adam became a Life-giving Spirit," refers to the Lord Jesus Christ is proved by these two facts: that with the rabbis,† at whose feet Paul sat, "the last Adam" was a common name for "the Messiah;" and that St. Paul never uses the designations "the second Man," or "the last Adam," of any one but the Lord Jesus.

Another point of interest in these words is this:—What is the exact force of the verb "became"? or has it any special force at all? The rabbis † have no doubt that it has, and it is probable that St. Paul shared their conviction. They bid us note that Moses says, not "man *was made*," but, "man *became* a living soul." They hold that when God breathed the breath of life into Adam, He conferred on him the higher spiritual nature of man; but that, when Adam sinned, he fell from that high posi-

* Gen. ii. 7.

† "Adamus postremus est Messias." This and other instances are given by Schöttgen *in loco*.

‡ I take the following quotations from Stanley *in loco*, who takes them from Schöttgen on 1 Cor. ii. 13, 14.

tion, and, by his own act, *became* a living soul, *i.e.*, a man in whom the soul ruled rather than the spirit. They say : God gave man "a holy spirit that He might give him the life of the world to come ; but he, by his sins, turned himself to the animal soul of brutes." They say : "Man of himself turned to the life of creatures taken from the earth, and left the life . . . which gave life to its possessor." And therefore Rabbi Tarchum exhorts : "Let us return to that, which at first dwelt in us," *i.e.*, the higher life of the spirit. Nor can we well doubt that the rabbis have the Bible on their side. The conclusion they draw, somewhat too curiously, from the use of a solitary verb is in harmony with the general drift of Scripture. For the Scriptures teach that man was created a spiritual being, or, at the lowest, a being capable of the higher life of the spirit, and that he degraded from his first estate. What was "the fall," but a fall from this higher life into the lower life of the soul, into a life of mere intelligence and passion as distinguished from a life of righteousness, faith, love, joy, peace ? Why was he straitly debarred from "the tree of life" ? why prevented from eating of the fruit eating of which he had "lived for ever" ? What does that denote if not that, now that he had sunk from the life of the spirit to the life of the soul, it was no longer meet that his body

should put on incorruption and immortality? St. Paul's words, then, may mean that Adam *became* a living soul in the sense, that he fell from the lofty spiritual plane on which God created him, and by his own act became subject to death and vanity.

But if the verb *became* has this force in the first clause of the sentence, it must in all fairness have the same force in the second clause. We must read "the last Adam *became*," not "the last Adam *was*," "a Life-giving Spirit." And to this reading it may be objected: "Christ was a Spirit, and a Life-giving Spirit, before, of his own will, He took flesh, and dwelt among us." True: and yet the Scriptures, which affirm his eternity, also affirm that in order to give life to men He *must* assume our nature, live our life, die our death. What that divine necessity was, why He could only give us life by humbling Himself to manhood and death, is a question which would carry us far from our present theme. We must not enter on it. It is enough to know that the Scriptures affirm such a necessity; for, remembering that, we can at least understand what St. Paul means when he says that, as the first Adam *became* a living soul, so also the last Adam *became* a quickening Spirit.

But now, having noted these collateral points of interest, let us return to the main argument. In order to

show that there must be *in rerum natura* a psychical and a spiritual body, the Apostle affirms that both a psychical and a spiritual man have actually appeared in human history. Adam was, or became, a psychical man ; Christ was, or became, a spiritual man. The psychical life demands a psychical body, the spiritual life a spiritual body. This is the bare argument. But, let us mark what light the introduction of Christ and Adam into the argument sheds upon it.

The psychical, or soulish, man is, as we have seen, a man in whom the soul is supreme. Intelligent and susceptible of passion, he uses his intelligence on temporal things, his passions are excited by that which is sensuous, transient, earthly. He does not live in the spirit, nor walk in the spirit. Conscience, righteousness, faith, hope, love, heaven, eternity, God, do not stand first with him ; but man, time, earth, the gratifications of sense and intellect. Was not Adam, the living soul, a man of this type? Endowed with a rare intelligence, he could distinguish the characteristics and differences of all the creatures God had made, and name them after their several natures ; what he called them, that they were.* He could love and fear, desire and hate ; he could use and enjoy whatever ministered to sense and passion,

* Gen. ii. 19.

whatever was good for food, or pleasant to the eye, or able to make one wise. He could even aspire to be as God in knowledge and in rule. But all this was living after the soul, not after the spirit. When *the spiritual* crisis came, his faith failed him, his hope in God, his gratitude to his Benefactor; the sense of right yielded to the stings of desire; his love of the creature conquered his love for the Creator; the craving for knowledge subdued the dictates of conscience; the pleasures of a season overmastered the prospect of immortality. God was not first with him, nor God's will.

A soulish man, he had, or came to have, *a soulish body*. What the physical change was that passed on him through Sin, we cannot determine with precision: but that there was a change, a disastrous change, is beyond a doubt. The newborn shame of his own nakedness was one indication of it. The sudden heat and violence of passion which made Cain a murderer and a vagabond was another. The infirmities, the special forms of death and corruption, to which he and his children became liable—these, too, indicate a change as sweeping as it was disastrous. Nevertheless, as our own experience proves, the body, even when thus changed and depraved, was a most quick, subtle, and delicate minister of the soul. It might limit spiritual insight, and impede the

energies of spiritual life. But for all the purposes of the soul—as the servant of intelligence and passion, as conversant with earthly and temporal objects, nothing could well be more exquisitely adapted to its work than the eye with which Adam looked out on heaven and earth, or the ear which gathered all the sweet sounds of Nature. Flowers were still fragrant to him, food still pleasant to the taste; Eve could still thrill him with her touch: and the inventive soul, which ruled the senses, soon taught him to *create* beauty, to *make* music, to store up food and so to dress it as to enhance its rich savours; it soon learned at least the simpler secrets of social order and domestic peace. If he had only a soulish body, it was nevertheless perfect in its adaptation to the faculties, functions, cravings, needs of the soul. Not capable of immortality so long as it was informed by the soul alone, it was a perfect instrument of all mortal uses and delights.

But if the first Adam was a living soul, Christ, the last Adam, was a Life-giving Spirit,* He was *the* true

* Theophylact, in his comment on this verse, writes: "The first Adam indeed was a psychical man, that is, he had a body inhabited by psychical powers: but the last Adam, the Lord, is a life-giving Spirit. He (Paul) does not say a *living* Spirit, but a *life-giving*, which is saying much more. For the Lord had the consubstantial Holy Spirit in Him, by whom He both quickened his own flesh and gave us incorruption. Wherefore we have the pledges of this corruptible life in the first Adam, but of the life to come in Christ."

spiritual Man : for in Him all faculties and passions of the soul were in subjection to the spirit. Man, time, earth, social and intellectual pleasures, the wisdom and wealth, the political splendours and æsthetic marvels, of the world did not stand first with Him : but God, eternity, heaven, worship, conscience ; faith, hope, charity ; righteousness, joy, peace. We cannot so much as conceive of Him as craving a splendid mansion, sumptuous fare, robes of state ; as making a fortune, inventing manufactures, collecting works of art ; as seeking the suffrages of men or discovering laws of nature, as wearing the poet's crown or ascending an imperial throne. All these, though they may be in themselves innocent or even commendable aims and avocations of the soul, we instinctively feel to be utterly alien to Him, incongruous even with our poor thoughts of Him. But why ? Simply because He was a spiritual Man. To Him, living and walking in the spirit, all that is of earth and time and soul was as nothing when compared with the eternal realities ; all that was good only as it served to exercise and cultivate spiritual graces, to bring heaven to earth, to lead men to God and prepare them to meet Him. And therefore He could refuse all the kingdoms of this world. Therefore He could nevertheless hasten to help any man, however lowly, however earthly, and seek

to quicken in him, by help to the body, the life of the spirit. Of a charity so intense that He loved every man better than Himself, of a faith so clear and strong that He looked through all the shows of time to the eternal substance from which they rise and over which they float, of a hope so lively that He despaired of no man, of a righteousness so pure that even the keen practised eyes of incarnate Evil could find nothing in Him, of a peace so perfect that even his unparalleled agony of labour and conflict could not impair it; in heaven even while He was on earth; carrying an eternal life through the changeful hours of time; making his Father's will his daily food, He stands before us *the Man*, the one true spiritual Man, bearing all the marks and tokens of life in the spirit, not in the soul, in their most exquisite and consummate perfection.

So also, if the last Adam teaches us what the spiritual man is, He also teaches us what *the spiritual body* is. He who had no appetite but for his Father's will, no ambition but to finish the work his Father had given Him to do; He who, in the strength of the spirit, gave up all that men love and dared all that they fear; He who poured out his soul unto death that by his spirit He might give life to the world, had a body like to ours, yet not altogether the same as ours. Conceived of a

Virgin by the Holy Ghost, whatever else that profound and awful mystery of the Immaculate Conception may mean, it surely means this: that in taking our flesh, Christ took it, as Adam took it, from the hands of God, undepraved, untainted, *immaculate*; receiving a physical body which might change and rise into "a spiritual body" without passing, as our bodies must, through the purifications of corruption. *We* die perforce. We see corruption. We are held in Hades till, at the sound of the trumpet, its walls are shattered, and we are summoned to meet the Lord. But *He* "lay down" his life. He saw no corruption. It was not possible that He should be holden of death, even though of his own will He "descended into Hades" to preach liberty "to the spirits that were held in ward."* And, therefore, we may with reason look for some signs of the spiritual body even in the body of his humiliation. Do we not find them? Virtue went out of Him. He lived not by bread alone. He walked on the storm-tost waves. His benison multiplied the loaves. On the mountain He was transfigured into an excellent glory; the face more marred than that of any man shone like the sun in its strength. As He talked with the spirits of just men made perfect of the "exodus" He was about to

* 1 Peter iii. 19.

accomplish at Jerusalem—that triumphant close to his work of redemption, the spiritual glory burning within the veil of his flesh peered through, *broke* through, and suffused it with a divine intolerable radiance. He stood before the eyes of his amazed and dazzled disciples *a Spiritual Man in a Spiritual Body*: corruption put on incorruption, the mortal immortality; *weakness* was clothed in strength, shame with honour.

But, observe, all these signs of the spiritual in the physical region of his life were prompted by that which is of the spirit, not by that which is of the soul. It was not when He sat with Martha and Mary and Lazarus, nor when John leaned on his bosom, that He manifested forth his glory; though love, even such love as we bear to friends, often raises and imperfectly transfigures the body through which it shines: nor was it when He uttered thoughts too large and high for human reach, though high thoughts do refine and elevate the face and bearing of those who habitually pursue them. It was not at the prompting of intellect or passion, or aught else that holds of the soul, that the body of Jesus proved itself a spiritual body or capable of becoming a spiritual body. It was at the touch of faith, of spiritual need and desire and trust, that virtue went out of Him. It was that He might feed the hungry, succour the dis-

tressed, or deliver the imperilled, that He exerted a supernatural control over natural laws: and He fed, succoured, delivered men that they might come to know Him, and God in Him, and thus possess themselves of eternal life. When the weak physical frame was transfigured with an immortal strength and splendour, it was because his spirit was rapt in the extasies of redeeming love as He talked with Moses and Elias, because He saw that the work of his redemption would be triumphantly accomplished.

After his death and resurrection, the signs that He inhabits a spiritual body grow more apparent, yet more mysterious. Though He can still eat and drink, though He still bears the stigmata of his wounds, and may be seen and touched, He glides through closed doors, passes as in an instant from place to place, vanishes from their sight as the disciples recognise Him. As we read the story of his life, during the interval between the Resurrection and the Ascension, we receive the impression that, though for the most part invisible, He is always with his disciples—with them all, even when they are in different places; that at any moment “the sightless air” may seem to take form, and He be seen in their midst: that, so often as He needs to quicken and assure their faith, to revive their hopes, to inspire them with an

unconquerable ardour for his service, He manifests Himself unto them by a mere effort of will. In brief, at his will, He is visible or invisible: He is here, He is there; He is gone, He returns: the spiritual body being now as perfect a servant of the spirit in Him as the psychical body of the soul. He can eat, but He does not need to eat. He can utter audible words, but words are no longer indispensable to his communion with his friends. He can show himself in visible form; but He may be present, yet not seen. *If* his body be subject to the laws of time and space, it is not subject to them as our bodies are, or even as his body was before. It is raised into higher conditions, endowed with loftier powers. It is heavenly, not earthly; it is ghostly and spiritual rather than physical or psychical.

Do any ask: "But what is all this to us? Adam and Christ were both exceptional men. If the first Adam was a psychical man and the last Adam a spiritual man, how does that bear on St. Paul's argument, that, as *we* have a psychical body, so also we are to have a spiritual body; or, on his exhortation, 'As we bear the image of the earthy, let us also bear the image of the heavenly?'" It is much—nay, it is everything—to us; and that precisely because both Adam and Christ were exceptional men, men who stand in an exceptional relation to the

human race. For, as we learned when we studied verse 22, St. Paul maintains that *both the Adam and the Christ are in us, and in all men*; that they contend together in us for the mastery; that it is at our own option to side either with the one or with the other; and that, according as we espouse the first Adam or the last, we become earthly or heavenly, psychical or spiritual men. From Adam, the living soul, we and all men derive the intellectual and passionate qualities which we name collectively the soul. From Christ, the Life-giving Spirit, the Creative and Redeeming Word, we and all men derive that higher better nature which believes, loves, hopes, which lays hold on spiritual truth, and follows after righteousness. In every man there are two men, and these are contrary the one to the other; the one draws us toward God, eternity, heaven—the other draws us toward earth, time, man. While we are “little children,” we are in the kingdom of heaven; “heaven lies about us in our infancy;” the better nature is strong, and strongest, in us. When we are men, even though we have suffered the lower nature to usurp dominion over us and deprave us, the better nature still asserts itself, and so asserts itself that we know it to be the better. It speaks with an authority which the base self never claims. And it is because these two natures, these two men, are in us,

that, "as in the Adam all die, so in the Christ all are made alive." *These* are the Adam and the Christ in us, the psychical and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly. It is as we yield to the one or the other of these that we become men of the soul or men of the spirit. If we permit the Christ to reign in us, in our mortal members, our mortality will put on immortality—as his did, and be swallowed up of life—as his was. Like his, our spiritual manhood will demand and receive a spiritual body. And, therefore, St. Paul may fairly exhort us that, "as we bear the image of the earthly (man), so also we should bear the image of the heavenly."

Let us take the exhortation: for obedience to it involves an exceeding great reward. When the spirit rules the soul in us, and Christ the spirit, when "our citizenship is in heaven" from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, then "*He will change the body of our humiliation, that it be fashioned like unto His glorious body:*" virtue will go out of us: we shall be redeemed from our bondage to the temporal and the visible: we shall be transfigured, rising from glory to glory till we stand before Him reflecting his eternal splendours, seeing Him as He is, satisfied with his likeness, our very bodies spiritualized and wearing his heavenly image.

X.

THE LAW OF THE PSYCHICAL AND THE SPIRITUAL.

I COR. xv. 46.



ST. PAUL was of too large and inquisitive a heart to be content with isolated facts however numerous or important. Before he could rest in them, he must group and classify them, and discover the laws to which they might be referred, by which they were covered.

In our study of his great argument on the Resurrection, we have had occasion to notice this philosophic habit of his mind. To one illustration of it, and that the last we considered, we must now recur. In order to show that the objection, "With what body do the risen dead come?" had no force in it, he has traversed the universe in search of analogies, in search of the facts that throw light on the laws of life and form. In heaven and on earth he has found innumerable proofs that one substance may take many forms, one life many bodies. He cites

the seed with its earthly and aërial body. He cites the one flesh which takes an infinite diversity of forms in men, in animals, in fish, in birds. He cites the one glory which streams with various ray from sun, moon, and stars. In all these instances form is determined by the life which inhabits it and modified by the several conditions in which it is placed. This is the law, the law of vital forms—that they correspond to the life within them, changing as that changes, rising as that rises. *Man* is not and cannot be exempt from this law. Two vital powers, two supra-sensual powers, dwell in his mortal frame—the soul and the spirit, the *psyche* and the *pneuma*. So long as the *psyche* or soul, *i.e.*, the intellectual and passionate nature, with such rudiments of conscience as we often find in animals, is supreme within him, man has, and by the law of the universe must have, a psychical or soulish body; a body capable of expressing the energies and passions of the soul. So soon as the *pneuma* or spirit—the higher moral nature, with its diviner affections and energies—becomes supreme in him, man requires, and will receive, a pneumatical or spiritual body; a body corresponding to and capable of expressing his spiritual faculties and emotions. Then as now the ruling vital power will determine the outward form. The universal law demands and predicts that as the soulish man has a

soulish body, so also the spiritual man will have a spiritual body.

This is St. Paul's argument from analogy; this the natural law on which he founds his hope that the mortal body will one day put on immortality, and the corrupt body incorruption. He confirms this analogical argument by an argument from history. There have been two men, Adam and Christ, the one of whom was a soulish man in a soulish body, the other of whom was a spiritual man in a spiritual body. The first Adam was a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving Spirit. These two men occupied a relation to all men which is peculiar to them and unique. Adam was the common father of the race; Christ the common Maker of the race. From Adam we and all men derive the living soul which was in him; from Christ we and all men derive the life-giving Spirit that was in Him. In other words, our soulish nature is from Adam, our spiritual nature from Christ. The Adam and the Christ are in each of us; in each of us they contend for the mastery. If the Adam conquers, if the soul overmasters the spirit, in the Adam—the Adam in us—we all die. If the Christ conquers, if the spirit subdues the soul, in the Christ—the Christ in us—we all are made alive. And according as the Adam or the Christ, the soul or the spirit, gains the victory, we have or shall have

a soulish or a spiritual body. Adam's body was a psychical body, a body exquisitely attuned to the faculties and passions of the *psyche* or soul, a body capable of ministering to intelligence and desire ; but still a body which in much veiled from him the truths and realities of the spiritual world, which impeded and thwarted the development of his spiritual energies : and therefore a mortal body, a body to be put off. The body of Christ was a spiritual body ; it was, at the lowest, capable of becoming a spiritual body without being put off, without seeing corruption. It was like our mortal body, yet different from it. Immaculately conceived, it was free from all taints of corruption and death. Indefatigable in the service of the spirit, immortal, not living by bread alone, virtue went out of it at the touch of faith. It was the appropriate vehicle of miraculous powers. It was capable of converse with the spirits of just men made perfect. At the mere prospect of achieving the work his Father had given Him to do, the body of Christ's humiliation was transfigured : it became a glorious body, radiant with a heavenly and intolerable lustre. And when the work was achieved, and his body rose from the grave in which it could not be holden, it was more manifestly a spiritual body ; a body redeemed from the ordinary limitations of time and space ; a body which became visible or invisible,

which passed hither or thither, at the mere prompting of his will ; a body capable of rising above the clouds, and of being received up into heaven. As Adam's body is the type of our soulish body, so the body of Christ is the type of our spiritual body. As we have borne the image of the earthly, so also we are to bear the image of the heavenly. This Adamic body of our humiliation is to be changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body.

These are the new facts which St. Paul has imported into his argument. And now once more he asks : What law do they reveal ? Under what broad general principle do they fall ? He is not content to repeat the old law—the law of life and form. He looks round for another law. He has already stated the law which substantially governs these facts : and now he states the law which determines their order, their sequence. “Howbeit that is not *first* which is spiritual, but that which is psychical ; and *afterward* that which is spiritual.” In the order of nature, according to a general law, that which is lower comes before that which is higher, that which is of the soul before that which is of the spirit. This is St. Paul's new law—the law of progress, the law of advance from less to more, from lower to higher.

And it was well, it was necessary even, that he should state it. With so glorious a prospect before them as the

possession of a new organism exquisite in its adaptation to the spirit as the present organism to the soul, his readers might naturally be impatient for its fulfilment. In their impatience they might complain : "Though we live in the spirit and walk in the spirit, we see as yet no signs of this new spiritual body. The body of our flesh still hampers, still thwarts us, still interposes its impenetrable veil between our spirits and the eternal world, still betrays us by its often infirmities. That spiritual body of which you speak—where is it? Why does it not come and clothe us with its energies and splendours?"* "*That,*" replies the Apostle, "is not the law by which your case is governed. *That* is not the divine order. The divine order is, first the psychical, afterwards the spiritual. You must be content to endure the psychical body till its office is fulfilled, till the soul in it is subdued and trained to its work, till the spirit by its victorious conflicts with the soul has grown pure and strong. Everywhere around you, you may see that the law of the divine action is gradual progress, advance step by step, every step made

* Rückert, *in Loco*, gives the same question a more general form. "If now there is a spiritual life, and that so much higher and nobler than the present earthly one, why do not we, men, immediately enter on that life? Why do we first pass through this natural life, with all its troubles and sorrows, with the necessity also of entering upon that other life by the bitter separating process of death?"

sure before the next is taken, that there may be no degradation, no failure, no decline from more to less, from the higher to the lower. This is the law of your life, as of all life. God is making his work a sure work with you. Slowly, gradually, with an infinite patience, with an infallible certainty, He is raising you to the heavenly places where you are to sit with Christ in bliss and glory everlasting. Without haste and without rest, He is lifting you from one stage to the next above it, constraining you before every advance to exhaust all that is good in the previous stage, to prepare yourselves at all points for the higher stage to which He is conducting you." *

Now the force of this law, its power to persuade and comfort, depends on our recognition of its universality. There is no comfort in a mere rule applicable only within narrow limits or to special cases. But if St. Paul is here giving us a general principle wide as the universe and

* Calvin, *in loco*, puts a similar reply into the Apostle's mouth. "It is necessary," he says, "that, before we can be renewed in Christ, we should derive our origin from Adam, and be like him. Wherefore it is not to be wondered at if we begin with a living soul; for as the order is to be born before we are regenerated, so also it is to live before we are raised up (*sicut enim ordine prius est nasci quam renasci, ita vivere quam resurgere*)." So also Theophylact. "Lest any one should ask, Why have we the psychical and inferior body now, and the spiritual hereafter? he (Paul) says that thus also were the origins of each of them arranged. For the Adam was first, the Christ last; so that our interests are always advancing toward what is better, and it is to be believed that what in thee is now corruptible and inferior shall be radically changed into what is better and incorruptible."

deep as life, then all the beneficial results which flow from its operation on the large scale of the universe will speak hopefully to us ; we shall augur nothing but good from being brought under a law which brings good to the whole creation. Let us therefore take one or two illustrations which may at least suggest the universality of this law : and for the sake of clearness and simplicity, let us select the most familiar illustrations we can find.

Take, first, then, *the story of the creation* of the world. Whatever our cosmogony may be, whatever the contradictions we suppose to obtain between the discoveries of modern Science and the revelations of Scripture, we must all admit, Science herself affirms, the progressive character of the creation. However they may differ on other points, Moses and the geologists agree in this, that, in its formation, the world rose from its simpler to its more complex, from its lower to its higher forms. To this law of progress and advance the order of the several strata which compose the crust of the globe bears witness, as does the character of the organic remains successively deposited in them. That was not first in them which is highest, but that which is lowest. First the formless earth, then the grass and green herb growing on the sides of the upraised mountains, then the simpler forms of animal life, then its loftier and more complicated forms ; last of all,

man, the noblest and most perfect of them all, the ruler and interpreter of them all—

“ Through the mollusc, through the worm,
Life reveals her gradual plan ;
Form developing to form,
Till the cycle stays with man.”

The same law holds in *human history*. It would take too long and carry us too far to show at length, in the history of nations, how, as the generations passed, the simpler modes of life developed into the more complex, the inferior races yielded to the superior. It will suffice for our present purpose if we recall how the family—each family dwelling apart—grew into the tribe, each tribe holding the neighbouring tribes as enemies; how the tribe grew into the nation—nation making war upon nation; how the nation grew into the empire, in which, while some nations were reconciled and united, other empires were still regarded as public and natural foes: till now, at last, we are beginning to believe that God made of one flesh all races of men, to hold that nothing human can be alien to us, to sigh for universal good-will and peace.

Nor does the law of progress fail us if, from the outward world, we turn to *the inward world of the heart*. Mark how thoughts rise and grow up in the human mind—how imperfect they are in their inception, how

much they have to contend with and subdue before they can take possession of a single spirit; how, after one man is possessed by them, he has to struggle for years with the ineptitude, the indifference, the pre-occupation of his neighbours before he can teach them what he has learned; how gradually and imperceptibly the thought spreads, filtering down through the intellectual strata till it saturates even the lowest, slowly widening on this side and that; until at last, after endless checks and apparent defeats, it conquers a nation, a race, a continent, and establishes itself as a truism in the general mouth, if not in the general heart.

Free-trade would be a good political illustration of this law; but, as a more suitable illustration, take the history of the human conception of Messiah. The patriarchs had learned to look for Him as the seed of the woman, and as the seed of Abraham—mere general conceptions devoid of distinctive features. Then came Moses with the law, and now men gained at least one distinctive feature—the Christ is to be *a better Moses*, the Mediator of a new and better code. Then a kingdom is established in Israel, and with it a new conception of Messiah: He is to be *a great King*, and give unity and peace to the world. The kingdom is broken up, the Jews are carried away captive: and in the miseries of their

captivity they learn to conceive of the Christ as *the Son of Man*, who will not only rule over men, but sympathise with them in their miseries and griefs. It took two thousand years to define and establish the conception of Messiah in the mind of one nation. And though thus slowly and progressively taught, they did not learn their lesson. When the Law-giver, the King, the Man came, they knew Him not. Most of them set themselves in deadly opposition to Him. Only a few of the wiser and the better of them received Him, followed Him, proclaimed Him among all nations. In about three centuries, as we often boast, they converted the world. But what world? and to what was it converted? to any genuine conception of Christ as the Friend and Saviour of the race? Let the heathenism and the superstitions of the succeeding centuries reply, the war of race on race, class on class, the unbridled corruption, injustice, violence of the Church itself. The divine tradition has indeed been kept alive in faithful hearts. But it is now nearly two thousand years since Christ came. Does the world, does the Church, know Him even yet? All Christendom does not embrace more than a third of the human race: and three-fourths of Christendom conceive of Him as an austere implacable Judge, to be propitiated only by the intercession of his mother and the

saints : while of the remaining one-fourth probably a large majority regard Him either as holding aloof from the common affairs of life, or as a capricious despot who, so that He saves a few, is careless of the world.* Four thousand years have but taught a few poor millions to accept Him as the Son of Man, the Friend of Humanity, the Saviour of the World !

Even *that*, slow and poor result as it seems, is an immense advance. Yet what a rebuke to our impatience ! If God is content to work thus slowly and gradually through the centuries, cannot we be content to wait for the consummation of his good-will toward us—to wait at least for the near ministry of death before we demand the spiritual body ? First not that which is highest, but that which is lowest : not the spiritual first, but the psychical, and afterwards that which is spiritual.

But it is in *the history of the individual man* that we

* There is so much wild and exaggerative talk about the population of the world and its religious distribution, that some of my readers may be glad of the note on which the above calculation is based. In a carefully written essay which appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (October 15, 1868), and which certainly does not err by exaggeration, the total population of the world is computed to be seven hundred and thirty-seven millions. Of these four hundred and seventy-seven millions are non-Christian ; only two hundred and sixty millions Christian. The Christian millions are thus distributed : Roman Church 139 millions ; Greek Church 62 millions ; Protestant Church (including all sects) only 59 millions. How many of these Protestant millions are Christian in any true or high sense of the word, one is afraid so much as to guess.

find our best illustration of St. Paul's law, in the sequences of our personal life. As babes and sucklings, our life is animal and instinctive. We are a mere complex of appetites—appetite for food, appetite for warmth, appetite for sleep : the mind is dormant. Soon however we begin to take notice, and to respond to notice ; to imitate sounds ; to pry into the nature of the things around us and their relation to us. Then we learn to name them, to speak about them, to like and dislike them. Intellect awakens ; we master our first abstractions ; we learn to put words for things. Our schooling commences ; perception, imagination, memory, understanding are developed : all the intellectual facets of the soul are polished : and still we carry into this new stage of our life many of the animal and instinctive qualities of the earlier stage. After, and in much blended with, the intellectual comes the passionate era. We rise into that fine frenzy in which we live in another heart, in which we prefer, or fancy we prefer, another's good to our own. With love comes the long train—desire, envy, jealousy, hatred of rivals, indifference to former affections, ambition to shine and to please. It is the passionate stage of our existence. In and through all these earlier stages there may be the rudiments of spiritual life. We may have formed some conception of God, of his goodness ;

we may have felt some love, some trust in Him. But, as a rule, the proper life of the spirit is kindled within us, or becomes regnant within us, only after we have passed through the intellectual and passionate stages of our course. The spiritual is not first in us, but the psychical, and afterwards the spiritual. Nay, however early we may begin to think of God and to love Him, it is obvious that we must have learned to think before we can think of God, that we must have learned to love before we can love God. In us, in all men, the law holds good—that which is of the soul first, and then that which is of the spirit.

So that our law *is* an universal law. It governs the creative acts of God. It governs the sequences of human history. It governs the development of human thought. It governs the growth and order of the individual life. Everywhere there is progress from the lower to the higher, advance from less to more, an ascent from the physical, through the psychical, to the spiritual. That the *first* Adam should be a living soul and the *last* Adam a life-giving Spirit ; that we should wear the soulish body, the Adamic vesture, *before* we put on the spiritual body, the seamless and immortal robe of Christ,—these are not divine caprices, not the chances and accidents of arbitrary fate ; they are determined by, they are in accord-

ance with, a law which governs the whole life of man, the whole action of God. They are only new illustrations of that law of progress which rules the entire universe.

But why does St. Paul adduce and insist on this law? Why, on whatever ground of argument he stands, does he dig down to the eternal laws which underlie it, and seem ill at ease until he has found them? It is simply because, as modern science is abundantly teaching us, we have no firm basis for knowledge, for hope, for prediction, until we reach it in ascertained and established laws. There are, I suppose, persons of untrained mind to whom a special promise of special favour would be more acceptable than the assurance that the laws of the realm or the laws of nature were on their side. The very faintest exercise of reason would convince them of their mistake. If, for instance, a father were to say to his son: "Whatever becomes of my other children, I will leave you when I die such and such an estate," the son might be grateful for his father's kind intention and for the affection which prompted it: but would he be so certain of the estate as if it were entailed upon him by the law of the land? His father's intention might change, but the law of real property is by no means likely to change. In like manner, if we may suppose God to say to us, or our

imagining Him to say to us : “ You are of the elect, and of my sovereign grace I confer on you life eternal—on you and a few more :”—should we be very sure of life ? If we were men of a noble spirit we should hardly care to have life on such terms as these ; for the noblest of our race, as Moses and Paul, have been those who were ready to devote themselves to death, and even to eternal death, so that they might save others. But if we did care for it, could we be sure of it ? Though we might not suspect God of change, we might suspect ourselves of misunderstanding Him, and be haunted by doubts fatal to our peace. We might suppose that his grant of life was conditional, and torture ourselves with misgivings that we had failed to meet some indispensable condition of his grant. But if God say to us, as He does say : “ It is the law of my kingdom that all who receive my Spirit through Jesus Christ shall enter into life ;” then, if indeed we welcome that spirit of justice and love, and walk in it, we are secure. The *law* guarantees us. Foolish as we are, we cannot suspect God of violating the law by which He governs all intelligent creatures. It is no special and capricious favour that is offered us, but a blessing common to all, a blessing whose ground and root are in an eternal universal law.

So, again, if God say to us, as again He does say :

“The law of my kingdom is progress, gradual advance from less to more, from lower to higher, from the psychical to the spiritual ; and in virtue of that law you, if you rise into the life of the spirit, shall in due time be clothed upon with a spiritual body :”—is not this revelation of a divine eternal law infinitely better and more assuring than any special and capricious promise of grace? Does not *the law* guarantee us? Do we not feel that we can trust it, and be sure of it? that, whatever else may change, *this* cannot change?

Let us then take the full comfort of the law,—*first* the psychical, *then* the spiritual. Like some of the Corinthians, we may find in ourselves no signs, or few signs, of an utter redemption from evil in body, soul, and spirit. The heavenly spiritual body, which St. Paul promises us if we let the spirit rule in us, may seem distant, improbable, incredible. And, therefore, when we are tempted to ask doubtfully, “Will it ever be ours?” or, “Why are we left to be thwarted and crossed in our most spiritual affections and endeavours by flagging brain and failing strength? Why do we not now possess that perfect spiritual body?” *we* need to hear his reply: “*That* is not the true order, the divine order. You must first wear, and wear out, the psychical body ; and then, by a divine law, the spiritual body will be yours.” There is comfort

in that. As throughout the universe we see the creatures preparing themselves slowly and painfully, often by death or what looks like death, in one stage of their existence for that which is higher, we may comfort ourselves into patience with the hope, with the conviction, that we also while on earth are being prepared for heaven, that the very conflict with the flesh and its lusts is enduing us with spiritual vigour and qualifying us for the loftier services of the heavenly life. As throughout the history of men, we see God leading them by slow but unreturning steps to larger thoughts, purer manners, wiser laws, and note how patient He is with them, and how long they take over every lesson He sets them, we may well learn to have "long patience," and not to lose hope because to us He delayeth his coming. As soon as we are ready for it, He will come and clothe us with our body from heaven; and who would wish Him to come before we are ready? Let us wait his time in the fulness of patience and of hope.

XI.
THE SONG OF TRIUMPH AND
THANKSGIVING.

1 COR. xv. 50—57.

FROM his dissertation on the psychical and spiritual bodies, St. Paul passes to a somewhat personal and limited application of it, which expands, however, as we consider it, until it includes all men within its ample range.

I. But, first, as his manner is, he lays down a general law. The law is, that corruption cannot inherit incorruption (ver. 50). Stated thus, his law carries with it its own proof: for, obviously, darkness might as well become light, or death change into life, as that which is corrupt rise into the incorruptible. But if we ask: "What is it that the Apostle here includes under the term 'corruption,' and what under the term 'incorruption'?" the answer is: Under the first term he includes "flesh and blood," and under the second term "the kingdom of

God," the heavenly realm. And now the law, before so obvious, becomes obscure: in this statement of it, it suggests many problems hard to be solved. St. Paul recognises the difficulty, the obscurity, of the law. He introduces it with the phrase, "Now this I say" (ver. 50), a phrase which he habitually used when calling attention to things hard to be understood and on which he lay great emphasis; and he follows it with* the phrase (ver. 51), "Behold, I show you a mystery!"—mystery being his word for difficult truths long hidden from men, but now at last revealed. We only bring out the sense of his words if we paraphrase them thus:—"Whatever your speculations concerning the resurrection, or mine, this at least is certain, that corruption cannot inherit incorruption; and therefore the human body, if it is to rise into the incorruptible heavens, must pass through a purifying spiritualizing change. Behold, look my words full in the face; they contain a truth which we are slow to recognise, which we find it hard to comprehend, but which nevertheless is not only true but of the gravest moment."

What is this mystery, then? It is that flesh and blood,

* It is a disputed point whether this phrase is to be connected with that which precedes or with that which follows it. I accept Dean Stanley's conclusion, "That in similar expressions used elsewhere, the Apostle refers rather to his preceding than to his succeeding words."—STANLEY ON CORINTHIANS, *in loco*.

in so far as they are corrupt or corruptible, cannot inherit the incorrupt kingdom of God ; that they must pass through some ennobling change before they can rise into the pure spiritual heavens. This is a law, an universal law. There is, and can be, no exception to it. On this point St. Paul is earnest and absolute. And therefore he proceeds to consider the one apparent exception to it which occurs to his mind, and would be sure to occur to the minds of his readers.

They believed that they should live to see the second advent of the Lord. St. Paul, in all probability, shared that belief.* He here gives expression to it: "*We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*" *i.e.*, "I who write and you who read, though we shall not all die before the trumpet announces the second coming of the Lord, shall nevertheless pass through a physical change which will fit us to enter his heavenly kingdom." It is the same thought which he expresses in the words: † "We who are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (*i.e.*, get before) those who are asleep." They will rise when the Lord descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and we who are alive, we

* Meyer, Winer, Stanley, Alford, with most modern scholars, are clear that St. Paul did expect the Second Advent in that generation.

† 1 Thess. iv. 15—17.

shall be caught up together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. So here, after saying, "*We* shall not all sleep," the Apostle continues (ver. 52), "for the trumpet shall sound, and *the dead* shall rise incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed." The same thought takes a new form in a memorable and familiar passage from his Second Epistle to the Corinthians.* He there affirms that he is content to endure the toils and afflictions beneath which his outward man perishes, because he is sure that another and a higher organism awaits him. He knows that if the tent in which he now sojourns were dissolved, he has a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. And therefore he longs to be clothed upon with his heavenly habitation—not to die and sleep, but to be *changed*, changed into the likeness, at the coming, of the Lord.

We need not pause to discuss the question, how an inspired Apostle could look for the immediate advent of Christ. Those who remember that even the Lord Jesus "grew in wisdom," will not be surprised that the servant was as his Master, and increased in heavenly knowledge as the years passed. Those who remember that even the Lord Jesus, though full of the Holy Ghost, said: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, nor the

* 2 Cor. v. 1-4.

angels who are in heaven, *nor the Son*, but only the Father," will not be disturbed to find that an inspired Apostle did not know the day and the hour when the Son of Man should come in the clouds.

What we have to note in all these passages is the affirmation, that even those who are alive when Christ comes, although they will not sleep in death, will nevertheless be changed. If the dead rise incorruptible, and bring with them a heavenly and eternal nature, those who are alive and remain—suddenly, in an indivisible point of time, in the twinkling of an eye, apart from the slow processes of dissolution—will have their corruption clothed upon with incorruption, their mortal with immortality. So that there is absolutely no exception to the law that corruption cannot inherit incorruption, nor flesh and blood enter into the heavenly kingdom. Whether by a swift flashing change, or by the tardy hand of death, all who enter heaven will be purged from the mortal and corruptible elements of their nature; the body of their humiliation will be transformed into a glorious body, the natural into a spiritual body.

The universality of the law established, we may inquire into its significance. What, for instance, does the Apostle mean by the phrase "flesh and blood?" Flesh and blood is a Scripture term for the lusts and passions

of our lower nature, of our physical and psychical nature. Jewish readers would instantly apprehend its force. Their national institutions had prepared them to discern it. To them "the blood was the life;" and therefore it was shed on the altar of sacrifice. It was the seat of passion and desire, of all that is lawless and irregular; and therefore they were not permitted to eat of flesh with the blood in it. Their conception, not without good physiological grounds, exists among us to this day, and finds utterance in vernacular phrases such as, "His blood is up," or, "A hot-blooded fellow." To us, as to the Jews, the blood is the seat or symbol of anger, of concupiscence, of all hurtful and fleshly lusts, and indeed of the whole animal life. St. Paul uses it here as the symbol of this life, these lusts, these corruptions; and declares that, unless this be purged from us by death, we must lose it in the mysterious change which will pass on all who are alive when the Lord comes. Under no circumstances, in no exceptional instance, can this corruption inherit incorruption.

Quaint as the thought may seem at first, it is instructive to mark the different use of the phrases "flesh and blood" and "flesh and bones" in the New Testament: the contrast not only confirms the Apostle's law, which it seems to contradict, but it also suggests that it is only

because of the blood in it that he condemns the flesh as corruptible. "Flesh and blood" cannot inherit the incorrupt and heavenly kingdom, but "flesh and bones" may and do. Thus, for example, when the Lord Jesus was risen from the dead and appeared in his spiritual body to the Twelve,* they were "affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit," a ghost. To reassure them, Jesus said: "Why are ye troubled? and why do questionings arise in your hearts? Behold my hands, and the feet,† that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see that I have." So, again, when writing to the Ephesians,‡ St. Paul discourses on the sacred unity which obtains between Christ and the Church, he affirms: "We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." Nowhere do we read of "blood" in the spiritual body of the risen Lord; nowhere are we told that the Church shares his "blood." As the symbol of life, it has been shed for the redemption of the world: as the symbol of mortality and corruption, it is poured out, exhausted; He is free from it, and all who are one with Him. "Flesh and bones"—the exterior familiar form—both He and they may still

* Luke xxiv. 37—39.

† The definite article in "the feet" indicates that He pointed to them as He spake.

‡ Eph. v. 30.

retain even when the natural becomes a spiritual body ; but the life that pulses through it is that of a higher than mortal existence. The old corruption cannot inherit the incorruption which conditions their heavenly state.

II. Thus far we have had to deal with the niceties and curiosities of Exposition rather than with the large truths and hopes which underlie them. Let us now turn to these.

(1.) Observe that the truth for which St. Paul argues and contends is not the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the body, or, rather, the redemption and restoration of the whole man. The Corinthians were Greeks : and, centuries before Christ came, the Greeks had believed that the souls of the departed survived the pangs of death. But these souls were not *themselves* ; they were but their shades or ghosts : they themselves were left to be torn by dogs or vultures, or to rot in the darkness of the grave, or to be burned on the funeral pyre. The world, the Elysium, into which the shades of heroes and virtuous men passed at death, was as thin and unsubstantial in its avocations, its joys, its rewards as the poor ghosts that tenanted it. Shadowy kings and heroes were heard to bemoan their hard fate, to prefer life on earth even in the form of a slave to the mockery of their former state and

pleasures which now hung round them.* We can easily imagine how little there was in such a conception of the future to disarm death of its terrors. Nature shrinks from disembodiment. Even though we believe the body to have been the source of all the evil and pain we have suffered on earth, the thought of leaving it, of going forth naked into an unknown world, is repugnant and terrible to us. How repugnant we can hardly conceive now that life and immortality have been brought to light in their true forms. The grotesque yet most pathetic stories and customs of the ancient Greeks are perhaps our best key to the repugnance nature feels at such a thought. When we read how they offered rich garments on the tombs of

* Thus, for instance, Homer "represents Achilles, among the Shades, as declaring that the life of the meanest drudges on earth is preferable to the very highest of the unsubstantial glories of Elysium.

Βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος εἶὼν θητευέμεν ἄλλω
 Ἄνδρι παρ' ἀκλήρῳ ᾧ μὴ βίσιος πολὺς εἴη,
 Ἢ πᾶσιν νεκέσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.

It is remarkable too that the same poet seems plainly to regard the *body*, not the *soul*, as being properly 'the man,' after death has separated them. We should be apt to say that such a one's body is here, and that *he*, properly the person himself, is departed to the other world; but Homer uses the very opposite language in speaking of the heroes slain before Troy; viz. that their souls were despatched to the shades, and that *they* themselves were left a prey to dogs and birds.

Πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ΨΥΧΑΣ αἶδι προτάψεν
 Ἡρώων, ΑΥΤΟΥΣ δὲ ἐλώρια τεύχε κύνεσσιν."—

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY'S *Essays on the Christian Religion*, p. 18.

heroes,* if so be that, being *thus* clothed, they might not be found naked: when we read of a Corinthian queen† “who appeared to her husband after death, intreating him to burn dresses for her as a covering for her disembodied spirit,” we may smile at the credulous simplicity of an age which supposed that to bury garments would be to clothe the spirits of buried men, or that to burn garments would be to clothe the ghost of a queen whose body had been reduced to ashes on the pyre: but, none the less, we are moved and touched even by this *naïve* childish testimony to the universal dread of disembodiment, the universal desire to be clothed upon with some vesture whether of earth or heaven.

To men gazing sadly into the future, with no brighter prospect than that of becoming shadows in a world of shadows, St. Paul’s strong hearty words must have been as wine to the weary, as health to the sick. So then, they were not to become naked disembodied spirits, but to drop this mortal vesture only to be clothed upon with a body more exquisitely attuned to the faculties and energies of their spiritual life! They were not to break with the past, nor to lose their personal identity; all the higher and happier results of the past were to go with them into the new world on which they entered at death:

* Thucydides, iii. 58.

† Herodotus v., 92. Stanley, *in loco*.

they were to be the same though different, the difference being that they would have shed off all the mortal and corruptible elements of their life in order to put on incorruption and immortality !

If "flesh and blood" cannot, "flesh and bones" may, inherit the kingdom of God. Not as thin shades fleeting through thin air, longing for earthly vestments, and wasting eternity in vain repetitions of mortal conflicts and toils and joys, but as living spirits clothed in organisms adapted to our new loftier conditions, are we to enter on the world of realities which lies beyond the shifting phenomena of time.

(2.) In our Lord's risen body, as we have seen, we have the express type of the spiritual bodies we are to wear. It is as we study this type that we learn what the Apostle means by this corruption *putting on* incorruption, and this mortal being *clothed upon* with immortality. The Gospels observe a certain reticence in speaking of Christ's manifestation of Himself to his disciples after He came from the grave ; and where they fear to tread, it does not become us to rush boldly in. But whatever is concealed from us, this is plain : that the body which his disciples recognised was essentially the same body they had previously known, although it had undergone a mysterious change. What that change was St. Paul hints

in the phrase, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The absence of the "blood" from the risen body would, as we have marked, be intelligible to the Jews. They would understand that all which was mortal and corruptible was excluded from the spiritual body, that it was transfigured from an earthly into a heavenly organism. The consequences of this change—the changes it bred in the Lord's manifestation of Himself to his disciples and in the terms of their intercourse with Him, are in part revealed for our instruction. We find that they did not instantly recognise Him when He came to them. "However firm their conviction was afterwards that they had 'seen the Lord,' they knew Him first when He was pleased to make Himself known. Human sense alone was not capable of discerning who He was. It could not be otherwise if his body was glorified, for our senses can only apprehend that which is of kindred nature with themselves."* At one time it was by a word of general or personal tenderness that Christ made Himself known to them, as when † He met his disciples on their way from the sepulchre, saying "All hail!" and they came and held him by the feet and worshipped Him: or as when ‡ He stood suddenly in their

* Westcott's *Gospel of the Resurrection*, Chap. ii. † 17.

† Matt. xxviii. 9.

‡ John xx. 19, 20.

midst, saying, "Peace be with you!" and they were glad because they saw the Lord: or as when* to the Magdalen, who had talked with Him supposing Him to be the man in charge of the garden in which He had been buried, He said, "Mary!" and she turned herself and cried, "My Master!" At other times He roused his disciples to recognition by keeping with them the feast He had instituted before his death, as when † He broke bread with Cleopas and his companion at Emmaus, and "their eyes were opened, and they knew Him;" or by a miraculous exercise of his power, as when, ‡ at the miraculous draught, John cried, "It is the Lord!"

And as Christ's body was no longer necessarily to be recognised, so also it was not bound by the material laws to which its action was generally conformed. He is found present, no one knows from whence. He passes away, no one knows whither. He stands in the midst of the little group of the Apostles "when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews." § "He vanished out of the sight" of those whose eyes were opened so that they knew Him. || And at last "while they beheld, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight." ¶ "It is impos-

* John xx. 16.

‡ John xxi. 4-7.

|| Luke xxiv. 31.

† Luke xxiv. 30, 31.

‡ John xx. 19.

¶ Acts i. 9.

sible not to feel in reading these narratives that we are regarding a form of existence human indeed, yet indefinitely ennobled by the removal of needs and limitations to which we are at present subject. It is vain for us to speculate on the exact nature of that transformed human body. We can form no clear positive conception which is not shaped by the present laws of thought;”* and these are inadequate to comprehend spiritual facts and realities. All we can say is, that the body of Christ was not bound by those laws of space and time which necessarily enter into all that we think and do. The life revealed to us in Him, and which we are to share with Him, is not simply a continuation of the present life, but a life which takes up into itself all the elements of our present life and transfigures them by a glorious change, which we can as yet only in part conceive.

Yet even this partial conception is enough to sustain our faith and to flood our souls with hope. In the person of Christ we see the whole man—body, soul, and spirit—raised from the grave. We see all the intelligent and passionate faculties of the soul held in perfect subjection to the higher claims of the spirit. The whole nature is raised and glorified. The spirit sweeps in wider circles of influence. The soul acts with an intense

* Westcott's *Gospel of the Resurrection*, Chap. ii. § 18.

and unwearable energy. The body is not simply restored to its pristine vigour and purity, but lifted to a higher and more spiritual pitch. It is *not unclothed, but clothed upon*. "Nothing is taken away; but something is added by which all that was before present is transfigured." There has been a mysterious glorious change: "the corruptible has *put on* incorruption, the mortal has *put on* immortality" (ver. 53).*

And this is the change that is to pass on us, and must pass on us, if indeed "Christ be in us, the hope of glory." Like Him, we are to put on immortality and incorruption: not to break with the past, nor to lose our identity; not to be changed beyond our own recognition or that of our friends; but to be purged from the corruptible and baser elements of our nature, to be redeemed from our bondage to sense, and to time and space, the laws of sense; to be transfigured, that the spirit which Christ has quickened in us may dwell in a quick spiritual body—a body that shall not check, nor thwart, nor dull, but perfectly second and express, the untiring energies of our higher and renewed nature. As John, awaking for a

* *Gregorie* has a deliciously simple and quaint conceit on the use of this expression. He says that over night we put off "the Weed of Mortality;" but when the morning comes, we shall "put on Incorruption," *i.e.* he explains, we shall *put on our best clothes* because we are to go and see God.—*GREGORIE'S Works*. Vol. II. p. 61.

moment from his mortal trance,* so we may wake from the sleep of death, and say :

“The soul retreated from the perished brain
Whence it was wont to feel and use the world
Through these dull members, done with long ago. !
Yet *I myself* remain : I feel myself :
And there is nothing lost”

—nothing lost, but, ah, how much gained !

(3.) Inspired by this large bright hope, the Apostle kindles into poetic fervours, and breaks forth into singing (verses 54—57).† When this hope shall be fulfilled,

* Browning's *A Death in the Desert*.

† “The discussion is concluded. The Apostle has arrived at the point when his spirit, standing at the portals of eternity, can think of nothing else than that for it finiteness and mortality have ceased. His soul is now full of the elevation and glory of his subject ; and, as a fine conclusion, there flows from his pen a brief but striking triumphal song.”—RÜCKERT *in loco*.

It is very striking and instructive to compare St. Paul's prose-hymn on the Victory over Death with the prose-hymn in which Sir Walter Raleigh celebrates the triumph and praise of Death. There is perhaps no finer passage in English Literature than the concluding sentences of Sir Walter's History of the World, and especially the sublime apostrophe to which they rise. “They (kings and princes) neglect the advice of God while they enjoy life or hope it : but they follow the counsell of Death upon his first approach. It is he that puts into man all the wisdom of the world, without speaking a word ; which God with all the words of his Law, promises, or threats, doth not infuse. Death, which hateth and destroyed man, is beleevd. God, which hath made him and loves him, is always deferred. I have considered, saith Solomon, all the workes that are done under the sunne, and, behold, all is vanitie and vexation of spirit. But who beleeves it, till Death tell it us ? . . . It is therefore Death alone that can make any man suddenly know himselfe. He tells the proud and insolent, that they are but objects, and humbles them at the instant ; makes them crie, complaine, and repent ; yea, even to hate their forepassed happinesse. He takes the account of the rich, and proves him a

when the last vestige of death and corruption shall have been swept out from the last survivors of the human race, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality, then death itself will die—nay, be swallowed up of life and victory. Citing and adapting the words of ancient Hebrew prophets, taking a verse from Isaiah,* and a verse from Hosea,† St. Paul breaks into the song of triumph and thanksgiving :

“ Where, O Death, is thy victory?
Where, O Death, is thy sting?
Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory,
Through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The conflict has been fierce and long. The trumpet has sounded in every age. In every age the hosts of Death and of Life have set themselves in array. Many, nay, all the tribes and generations of men seem to have fallen before the power of Death with his allies of Sin and Law.

beggar,—a naked beggar,—which hath interest in nothing, but in the gravell that files his mouth. He holds a glasse before the eyes of the most beautifull, and makes them see therein their deformitie and rottennesse; and they acknowledge it.

“ O eloquent, just, and mightie Death ! whom none could advise, thou hast perrowaded ; what none hath dared, thou hast done ; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou onely hast cast out of the world and despised. Thou hast drawne together all the farre stretched greatness, all the pride, crueltie, and ambition of man ; and covered it all over with these two narrow words : HIC JACET.”—*History of the World.* Book V. Chap. vi. § 12.

* Isaiah xxv. 8.

† Hosea xiii. 14.

But the living God, the Lord of Hosts, has turned apparent defeat into real and lasting victory. In the Lord's Christ a champion was found who, falling on the field, through death broke the power of death, conquering when He fell. From Him, the Life indeed, influences of life have streamed through the whole body of humanity. The Life-giving Spirit has given life to the world. That life has passed through the ages, counterworking and opposing the law of sin and death. It has transformed the spirits of men. It will transform their bodies; even the mortal in them will put on immortality, and the corruptible incorruption. It will pass through and beyond men to the whole universe: the entire creation, which now groans and travails in its bondage to vanity and corruption, will be enfranchised into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, sharing their triumph as it has shared their thralldom and defeat. The final victory is not to be with death, but with life. And when the end has come, and the last enemy is destroyed; when troop after troop the generations of men defile before the Lord who has redeemed them from their captivity and satisfied them with his likeness, they will pass into a restored and heavenly world, singing as they pass: "Now thanks be unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and wast,

and art to come, because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned, and dost reward Thy servants, and them that fear Thy name, both small and great." "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ."

III. We have had occasion more than once to advert to St. Paul's remarkable power of generalization. Whatever the special theme he has in hand, he is impatient until he has brought it under the sweep of general laws, until he has fitted and compacted it into its place in his large scheme of thought. It is in this habit of mind that much of his greatness as a thinker and teacher consists. How instinctive and inveterate this habit had become we may judge from the generalization of the fifty-sixth verse. It furnishes an illustration of the necessity he was under of thinking largely and massively than which I know none more striking in the whole range of his writings. Mark how the case stands. We have in this Chapter one of the longest and most elaborate connected pieces of reasoning he has left us. In the course of his argument he has adduced every kind of proof of which the Resurrection is susceptible,—historical, philosophical, moral, Scriptural. He has swept the whole circle from the creation of Adam, the living soul, to "the

end" in which, all enemies being subdued, all evils destroyed, Christ, the quickening Spirit, will deliver his kingdom to the Father, and God be all in all. He has thrown light on the profoundest speculations of the human mind, on the profoundest mysteries of life, of revelation, of the future. As his sublime argument rises to its close, his mind, heated with rapid motion through themes so vast, breaks into a lyrical rapture. With poetic fervour and audacity he challenges death: "Where, O Death, is thy victory? Where, O Death, is thy sting?" Nay, assured that "the last enemy" is under his feet, he chants a pæan of triumph: "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" It is nothing short of wonderful that, at such a moment, in the very climax of an ecstasy so rapturous and victorious, he should pause to generalize and explain: "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law."

When we first consider it, the effect of this interjected sentence upon us is as though we were listening to two voices rather than to one—to a poet singing in a rapture, and to a sage compressing the wisdom of a lifetime into a gnome. But if we still consider it, so soon as we enter into the sense and connection of his words, we discover that the wise pithy saying is part of the song, and St. Paul shapes himself to us as governing with a sage's wise

cool brain the tide and fiery impulses of a poet's heart. It is to this sagacious generalization thrown in between the verses of the Apostle's hymn of conquest, yet part and parcel of the hymn and serving to swell its large strain of triumph, that we must now direct our thoughts.

In the rapture of prophecy St. Paul finds himself already clothed upon with incorruption and immortality, and demands of the enemy whom once he feared, "Where is thy sting?" The words are familiar to us, or we should at once be sensible of their admirable and almost unparalleled audacity: for which of us dare take that tone to Death? who, save in thoughtless lip-deep bravado dare to defy death, to exult and triumph over it as a conquered impotent foe? St. Paul's defiance is no bravado. He knows, better even than we do, how terrible death is, how venomous, how strong. He can tell us what its venom is, and where lies its strength. "*The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.*"*

(1.) *The sting of death is sin.* It is the sense of guilt which makes it hard to die. Sin indeed is not the only bitterness of death, but it is the chief bitterness: it is the

* For the substance, figures, and often words, of the succeeding paragraphs of this Essay, and especially of the first and third, I am indebted mainly to Robertson's fine discourse, entitled "*Victory over Death,*" than which no more perfect exposition of the Apostle's words can be given. See *Robertson's Sermons*. Third Series. Sermon xvii.

sting ; it contains the venom which makes death a torture and a horror.* We cleave to life. Merely to part with it is agony. Our first and strongest desire is to be. All else—happiness, enjoyment, wisdom, progress—is involved in that. Not to be, this is the darkness from which our spirits instinctively recoil. All else may be borne, but not this. We can endure to toil, and to suffer, if only we may exist. The main work of the world is done by men who are impelled, not by ambition to be great or happy, but by the bare struggle for existence. If you would learn how native, how unquenchable, is the desire for mere life, go to the aged pauper ; read back his history of seventy years—the strange sad history in which scarcely on a single day could he be sure of subsistence for the morrow, and see what he has done to hold fast against all odds a life whose only charm is, that it is life. It is this ingrained and inveterate longing of our nature against which the thought of death clashes. We may talk as we will of our immortality ; but underneath our hope of eternal life there lies an obstinate fear, which we cannot master, that Death will put an end to us—a fear which, as we know to our cost, may co-exist with the strongest belief in the Resurrection. Faith says, “You

* “Were there no sin, Death would have no power over mankind ; it would be harmless as an insect without a sting.”—RUCKERT

die only to live a larger happier life:" but Sense says, "You die and there's an end of you." For in very truth when we die, we break with all which we have hitherto associated with life—with a definite place in the universe, with a visible form, with the organs by which we have felt and used the world. And as all these melt from us, the stoutest heart may well quail with the fear lest now at length it should cease to be. The struggle for existence is over at last, and it seems to have ended in defeat. This is one, and a great, bitterness of death.

And another is, That it parts us from all whom we love. If some men pass through life without feeling an intense and passionate affection, most of us meet those who become dear as or dearer than ourselves. Nor does love grow cold, as young persons often think, when the body grows infirm and age brings death near. As the years pass we learn to master our features, to control the signs and expressions of emotion ; but the simpler and larger affections, the affections of which home is the centre and symbol, become deeper and stronger. "Young men are prodigal of life." It is an adventure with them, rather than a misfortune, to go out into the world, to leave home and fatherland. But when men grow grey it rends their very heart-strings to break with the familiar round of habit and the faces which have grown dear to them. They become wedded

to the accustomed sights and sounds of this lovely world, to the tasks to which they have long put their hands, to the friends to whom they have clung through life. When death approaches, when they feel that they must soon go hence, they linger with a pathetic fondness over all that they will soon have lost for ever—over sunrise and sunset, over the flowers that call up old associations, and over familiar music whose strains grow sweet with mute but remembered voices, over the friends who are still left to them and the children springing up around their feet. Every time they look or listen, they feel it may be for the last time ; that soon, very soon now, they will have to part with all and go forth into a world that will be new and strange. It is this *parting* which makes death bitter. It is this going out, solitary and alone, into a dark and unknown region which we fear. Could we take those whom we love with us, the bitterness of death would be relieved : we should neither be racked with fears for those we leave behind us, nor should we feel so forlorn. But we die alone. We must go on our journey unaccompanied, with no kind hand to grasp our hand, no tender face to break the gloom with its sympathy and love.

And yet, with all these bitternesses no doubt vividly before his mind, St. Paul selects none of these as the crowning bitterness of death. The sting of death is not

that when we die we cease to be, nor that we have to part with all we love, nor that we pass solitary and un-comforted into an unknown world. The sting of death is *sin*; this is its concentrated and malignant venom. Not *sins*, but *sin*. Beyond a question the memory of separate and flagrant acts of guilt, of sins against God and man which have left ineffaceable traces on the soul, must and will make death appalling to us. We may not think much of them now; but if we have been unfaithful or unchaste, if we have injured a neighbour, if in our haste to be rich we have resorted to dubious expedients; if we have stifled repentance; if we have neglected distinct acts of religious duty, or postponed them till it was too late,—all these offences have left traces on our hearts which at the approach of death will spring out, as the handwriting of doom blazed upon the palace-wall of Babylon when the invaders were at hand, and fill our hearts with terrible forebodings. But commonly it is not thus that sin proves itself the sting of death. It has tortures which, if more indefinite, are more dreadful to us; because, as we suffer them, we are more hopeless of healing and relief. The keenest pangs of death come not so much from the guilty actions we recall as from the sense of guilt that pervades our hearts and lives. What is our life? Take yesterday as a specimen. What

was it to most of us? Not a day on which we committed glaring sins that we shall remember for years to come; but a day on which we were petulant, frivolous, unkind; a day on which we were over eager for trifling pleasures and momentary gains. Wasted time, lost opportunities, energies unemployed, frivolity and earthliness of spirit—in these lay our guilt. And when all our days come to be added up into a life, when at last, with the eternal realities close before us, we look back on a whole lifetime thus frittered away, ah! then we shall feel that sin has abounded in us, and that in this customary guilt diffused through the whole circle of our days lies the true sting of death. It is this sense of a sinful nature, of a wasted life, which unmans men when they die. It is the feeling, “Though man cannot say much against me, my heart has not been right with God: it is not so much what I have done that I fear, but what I am: who shall save me from myself?”

Nor dare we suppose that if this venom does not now work in our veins, it never will. It is only now and then that any man feels it—how else could he live? But the day will come when, bereaved of one who was part of our life, or bent with failing health, we shall be only too sensible that this mortal poison is in our veins. Even the best of us cannot escape it. The thought *will* come

that we too have let time, and life, and opportunity slip by unused, that our life has been a failure, that we have done much evil in the world and little good, and that therefore our nature must be all tainted with sin. It is this sense of an inward uncleanness, of native weakness and defect, which makes the misery of death.

(2.) But if sin is the sting of death, *the strength of sin is the law*. And here we come upon a thought to which St. Paul gives frequent expression. The contrast between being under the law and free from the law is habitual to him. The man who is under the law sees and approves that which is good, but cannot perform it. The man who is free from the law has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, and obeys, not of constraint, but freely. The one says: "The law is good; but how to keep it I find not." The other says: "I will walk at large; for I seek Thy commandments." Only as we obey in love are we free. Restraint and law cannot check guilt: they only bring it out and aggravate it. "The *strength* of sin is the law;" that is, the very law which attempts to hold the sinner back only urges him on. Where no law is, there is no imputation of sin; but no sooner does the law come in than sin revives, and men die. Men may sin where there is no law; for they may transgress laws—sanitary and social laws, for instance

—of which they are unconscious. And even when they sin in ignorance, they are punished for and by their sin. Filthy personal habits or bad social customs destroy savage races or weaken them, although they have never been taught good customs and pure habits. But so long as no law is revealed to them, not only is not their sin imputed to them, but the worst consequences of their sin do not fall upon them. *They* do not respond to God's "Thou shalt not" with "I will, then." They are not in conscious opposition and rebellion against the divine authority, and therefore they do not harden and deprave as those do who commit conscious and wilful sins. Sin is not yet *strong* in them: it has not laid its cruel grasp on conscience and heart. But now, if a law should be given them, if they should be convinced that their bad habits and customs are contrary to the will of God, and should still persist in them, their sin becomes conscious, wilful, strong. It derives new strength from the very law designed to subdue it. For now they can no longer sin without setting themselves in deliberate opposition to the divine authority, and hardening in it, and degrading from bad to worse.

It is the law which makes sin strong. It draws out into action the latent mutinies of the heart. So long as the Divine will wears the form of mere law, so long as we con-

ceive of it as an external command imposed upon us by superior force, we cannot love it. Till we love it and appropriate it, we cannot keep it : it is simply a foreign and unwelcome restraint. We resent the restraint. It grows more hateful to us : till at last the rising tide of passion swells, rises, and plunges over its barriers. That is the law giving strength to sin—penning it in for a while only to make its outbreak more furious and destructive. And therefore if we conceive of God simply as a law-giver, if all we know of Him is that He has given commandments, and that He will punish us if we break them, *we* are under the law ; no Gospel has yet reached us : we are under a law which will rivet the chain of our sins upon us. Death cannot but be terrible to us ; for it will lead us, as slaves to the lash, to receive the due rewards of our deeds.*

(3.) Is there, then, no hope for us? We *are* under law ; for we know God's will. We *are* under sin ; for we

* Rückert supposes a personal feeling to have inspired this sentence—"the strength of sin is the law." He asks : "Why are these words subjoined?" And replies : "No logical necessity for them exists. They are rather dictated by the personal feelings of the Apostle. What difficulty had the law occasioned him during his life! First, in an inward sense, when he himself was in subjection to it ; then, outwardly, when he met with opponents of his free salvation. Hence he cannot think of happiness without an entire absence of the law : and thus he concludes, 'If death shall be abolished, then sin must be destroyed ; and if sin is to be destroyed, then there can be no more law.'"

have violated his will. Nor can we escape his minister, Death. *Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*, there is hope for us and for all. Victory through Jesus Christ, the Conqueror of Death, is the only true victory over death. There are, indeed, other partial, or apparent, victories. There have been men who have hardened themselves in iniquity till they have lost all fear of judgment. Courage, too, has conquered the dread of death. "We have steel and nerve enough in our hearts to dare anything." Felons have died calmly on the scaffold. Soldiers may be hired by the thousand who, for a few pence a day, will face death as men take part in a game. Most of us, in some sense, conquer death when once we find it inevitable; that is, we can lie down and die decently, as most people do. But there is no real victory in all this. To deny a future judgment, or shut one's eyes to it—to run deadly imminent risks in sport—to submit to the inevitable—this is not to conquer death. Only Christ, only faith in Christ, can give us the true victory.

For to believe in Christ is to conquer *Doubt*. "There are men who have never believed enough to doubt." The spiritual world has never so laid hold upon them as to make it the supreme question for them whether that

world be real or unreal. But those who know what faith is, also know what doubt is. We pray, and pray, till we ask, "Is there a God who hears?" As the coffin sinks into the grave, we listen to the comfortable words which promise a resurrection unto life eternal, and the thought comes, "Can this be true? Can it be real? Are creatures so mean and weak as we really partakers of the divine nature and heirs of life everlasting? Or is all this prospect of a future glory the mirage which springs up on the infinite wastes of life?"

Now Christ gives us the victory over doubt in two ways: first, by his own resurrection from the dead; and second, by making us present partakers of his life. Here stands the fact, approved by testimony it is impossible to doubt, that Jesus, a Man such as we are, Himself rose from the grave. When we are dubious and perplexed, when that strange haze of doubt creeps over the soul which makes life look like a dream, we fall back on this fact which in happier times we have examined for ourselves. The grave has once, and more than once, at the Redeemer's bidding, given up its dead. And this indubitable fact assures us that we too shall rise—that we shall not cease to be, that we shall not even lose this life to which we cling; but we, the very men who die, shall in our own proper identity live again. In propor-

tion as we receive Christ, *the Resurrection*, we gain the victory over doubt.

But to make our victory complete, we must also receive Christ, *the Life*. The doubts which trouble and perplex us spring from our living out of Christ, that is, out of habits of love to God and man. Through indolence, through neglect of prayer, and worship, and duty, we lose our power of realizing things unseen. If we are fitful, inconstant, inconsistent, if we do not keep the Christian ideal steadily before us, we cannot be free from doubts. We must make up our minds to lead a clouded and troubled life. We can only master doubt as we live in Christ, as our endeavours to follow Him are constant and strenuous. In this we conquer. For if we are in true fellowship with Christ, that is no strange world into which we go at death, nor shall we journey to it alone. Led by the kindest and strongest hand in the universe, we go to see clearly and in their perfection the august realities on which we set our hearts even when we darkly caught their pale reflections in the glass of the Word.

Again, Christ gives us the victory over *Fear*. It is not every man nor every Christian who passes from earth in a rapture of conquest. Nor is the victory over death necessarily or commonly a rapture. That depends very

much on personal temperament. Good men have risen into such an ecstasy of triumph that their physicians have had to warn them that they could not die till their transport was abated. But most good men are not strung up to that intense excitement. Nevertheless they are victorious over fear. They die calmly, quietly, not because they shut their eyes to the future, nor because they do not look with solemn awe to the things about to be revealed, but because they know in whom they have believed, and can commit themselves and all they love into his wise faithful hands. True courage does not boast and vapour. True fearlessness makes no parade. And there are myriads of Christ's servants who die modestly, with no song of victory on their lips, but with his deep peace and triumph in their hearts. They pass gently away, unalarmed by the progress of decay, thinking not of themselves but of those they leave behind them, and planning to the last how they may do them good. They die greatly, but they know not how greatly they die. They come, armed and trained by a life of service, to the last battle-field; and, lo, there is no foe anywhere to be seen, but only the Friend who conducts them home!

Last and best of all, Christ gives us the victory over death *by raising us from the dead.* It is when this

corruption has put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality, that "death is swallowed up in victory." And, indeed, all other victories save this, though they be true victories, are hardly victories *over death*. We may conquer doubt and fear when we are dying, and that is a great conquest ; but it is not to conquer death. So far we are like a gallant knight borne down by his antagonist, refusing to yield though the lance be at his throat, and returning defiance with defiance to the very last. He may be of an unconquerable spirit, but he is not the conqueror. And when the body sickens, and the pulse faints, and the eyes grow dim, and the heart stops, we may meet Death with an unquailing fortitude, but we do not conquer him. The victory is with him, not with us, unless we rise again, unless our very bodies are rescued from his power.

If we would enter into the triumphant gladness of St. Paul's song of victory, we must remember what the world would be without the hope of a resurrection. Misery, and shame, and guilt are to be found on every side ; and, if we could not look beyond the present act, what would the world be but an intolerable scene of defeat, and failure, and sadness ? What should we see in human life but the sons of men mounting for a few brief moments to sport out a clouded existence, and one after another fall-

ing back into darkness and nothingness—ephemera swept away by the stream from which they rose? What should we be but desperate men attempting an impracticable breach, and falling back crushed and mangled before the keen thrust and rattling fire of an invincible foe? It is not till we remember this, and hate the sin which has brought death into the world to torture and defeat us as a personal enemy, nay, as the common enemy of the race, that we can conceive the deep intense rapture which kindled in the spirit of Paul as he foresaw the hour in which Sin and Death were to suffer an utter and final defeat, and men, so long their miserable thralls, were to gain an eternal victory.

Let us look for and await that day, the great day of realities, the day on which this sad human world will for ever put off its changefulness and misery, and the grave will be plundered of its hoarded spoils, and the dead come forth, calmed and purified by their long sleep, to enter into the changeless and happy life of heaven. That will be the victory of victories. One battle has already been fought and won by Christ the Lord; but the great battle remains, the battle in which Death will be overcome by his own captives, in which, not worsted by a sinless and perfect King, but driven in ignominious defeat before weak sinful men, Death itself will be

destroyed, and we shall lay down our victorious arms before the Captain of our Salvation, acknowledging that arms, and victory, and glory, all are his. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law ; but, thanks be unto God, through Christ Jesus the Lord, we may victoriously encounter Death, even though it be armed with a sting envenomed by our guilt and mighty with a strength drawn from our transgressions.

XII.

THE EXHORTATION.

1 COR. xv. 58.

THE "sudden subsidence of so impassioned a strain of triumph" as that to which St. Paul had risen "into so sober a conclusion" as an exhortation to steadfast and diligent labour in the Lord, is, we are told,* "a remarkable instance of the practical character of the New Testament teaching." It is, however, only one illustration out of many which might be collected from his Epistles. For it is characteristic of St. Paul that, to whatever height he rises on the rising sequences of his logic, however wide the sweep of his impassioned rhetoric, he invariably comes back, with gathered force, to the simple duties of the Christian life. A philosopher handling with consummate ease the largest speculations of his time, an historian with an almost unrivalled faculty for discerning in the

* Dean Stanley, *in loco*.

issues of past ages the principles which govern present events, a prophet whose visions of future glory lift him at times high above the limitations of time and sense, he is above all things a moralist bent on teaching men the purer laws which came with Christ and winning them to a more constant obedience. And therefore we need feel no surprise at finding him descend from his rapturous pæan over Death to so sober a conclusion as an exhortation to faithful and assiduous labour in the Lord.

From *him* we should have expected a sober and practical conclusion ; but his conclusion is not quite what even those might have expected who are familiar with his habits of thought. The resurrection of humanity as guaranteed by the resurrection of Christ, our victory over death as assured by Christ's victory, has been his leading theme. And when we remember how novel his theme was to the men of his generation, with what a shock of surprise it struck athwart the hopes and fears in which they were bred, we might have expected that, instead of drawing from it an incentive to steadfast labour, he would rather have dwelt on its power to comfort and sustain men in the prospect of death. He does thus conclude the earlier and briefer argument on the Resurrection which he had addressed to the Christians

of Thessalonica.* After having taught them how the dead would rise and the living be changed when the Lord should descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, he adds: "*Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*" And therefore we might have supposed that, when closing the more elaborate argument on the Resurrection addressed to the Corinthians, he would gather up its lessons of consolation, and bid them take comfort both for themselves and for their dead. Instead, however, of soothing them with consolatory hopes, he urges them to a more constant fidelity and a more undaunted courage in the service of Christ. In short, in addressing himself to the Thessalonians and the Corinthians, he wears his logic "with a difference." Why? Obviously because he has to meet different needs. The Thessalonians were sorrowing without hope for brethren in Christ who had fallen asleep. They held that only those who were alive and remained to the coming of the Lord would behold and share his glory. *They* needed comfort therefore, and St. Paul meets their need. But the Corinthians were not mourning hopelessly over them that slept. They were busy with a multitude of speculations on the meaning, the possibility, the manner of the Resurrection. They were

* 1 Thess. iv. 13—18.

expending on these doubtful and unprofitable disputations time and energy which should have been given to the activities of the Christian life. *They* needed, when once their doubts were met, to be recalled from the barren arena of speculation to the fruitful fields of steadfast and patient service. And therefore, in place of saying to them as to the Thessalonians, "Brethren, be comforted for your dead; Christ will bring them with Him," St. Paul meets *their* need by saying: "Brethren, live out your life; be active, be steadfast, be immovable, abound in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye now know that labour in the Lord is not and cannot be in vain."

This, the more appropriate, is also the loftier lesson of the two, and therefore fitly closes the loftier argument. For to live an active faithful life is more and better than to have comfort in our death; it is also the way to secure not comfort only but triumph in our death. What we think or fear our future state will be when we are dying will not greatly affect our future, though it may trouble and oppress our hearts: but how we use our life—this will shape our future for us; for our future life is only an extension along endless and widening lines of the life we now live in the flesh. The more we abound in service the fitter we grow for service on an ampler scale.

The more steadfast and immovable we are in the work of the Lord, so much the more fully shall we share the glory of the Lord—for *his* glory is the glory of service—when we enter into more life and fuller.

I. But what is this “work of the Lord” in which St. Paul would have us abound? It is the work the Lord would have us do. It is the conduct of our whole life after his example, by his law, through his Spirit. Only they do the work of the Lord who are in the world as He was in the world, and who carry on his ministry to the world; who walk after the spirit, not after the soul and the flesh; who put God first, and heaven, and eternity, not time, and earth, and man. Now to do this work of the Lord involves pain, loss, shame for us as for the Lord. If we are his servants, we shall be not above, but as, our Master.* We shall bear about in us the dying of the Lord Jesus, that his life also may be manifest in us.† We shall fill up the remnant of his affliction, that we may reign in glory with Him. We shall patiently encounter the oppositions to a Christian life which assail us from without and from within. If He found it hard to say, “Thy will, not mine, be done,” we, who have so often done our own will, shall find it still harder. If He had to meet a world in arms, so

* Matt. x. 24, 25.

† 2 Cor. iv. 10.

also in our measure must we ; for, disguise it as we will, the whole spirit of the world is adverse to the Spirit of Christ, "the god of this world" still opposes "the God of heaven:" while the Spirit of Christ is ever striving to raise our spirits into the love and pursuit of that which is invisible and eternal, the world is ever seeking to engross us in the pursuit of its temporary gains and pleasures. Against both forms of opposition, the inward bias and the outward pressure, St. Paul guards us in his closing exhortation. *Be steadfast* in the work of the Lord, *i.e.*, be steadfast in yourselves ; do not yield to the cravings and lusts which tend to withdraw you from the service of Christ, or at least to make you inconstant in it. And *be immovable*, not yielding to the shock and onset of external influences and pressures, not suffering yourselves to be dominated by the spirit of the world, but presenting an unwavering front whether to its seductions or its threats.

Nay, even constancy in labour and an undaunted courage are not a full equipment for our work. To these we must add an eager promptitude to seize all occasions for new or varied service such as the changes of the time may require. We are *always to abound* in the work of the Lord, to be quick to detect opportunities as they rise and to avail ourselves of them, to multiply the

modes and forms of our service, to give ourselves with our might to whatsoever our hand findeth to do. We are to serve not as slaves, but as sons ; not from fear, but from love ; not for reward, but because the service is itself our best reward : not as those who labour at a task imposed upon them, and of which they will be glad to be quit, but as those who labour at a chosen and welcome task, who are bent on doing it thoroughly and bringing it to its most finished and exquisite perfection, who lament every moment which is lost to it, and who eagerly return to it the very instant they are free. This is the spirit which St. Paul would have us bring to the work of the Lord, in which he would have us labour both for our own growth in virtue and grace, and for the service and redemption of our fellow-men.

And this spirit is absolutely indispensable to us if we are to be "steadfast and immovable." For no mere sense of duty will always suffice to keep us at a task we do not love, or brace us to resist influences to which we are fain to yield. If we only want to do our duty, or so much of it as will save us from condemnation in the world to come, our condemnation is already written on our hearts. For we have not the Spirit of Christ ; we have not his eager and entire consecration to the good will of God and the service of man : and if we have

not his Spirit, we are none of his. Lacking his Spirit, we shall lack his constancy, his patient undaunted courage. Some insurrection of inward lust, some shock of outward circumstance, will shake us from our loyalty; the Adam in us will overcome the Christ in us; death will gain the victory over life. Only as we "abound" in the work of the Lord can we hope to be "steadfast" in it and "immovable."

As this point is of grave practical moment, let us glance at one or two illustrations of it. In the conduct of our personal Christian life, then, we soon learn how much its vigour and freshness depend on our growing acquaintance with the will of God. That will is revealed to us in certain Scriptures which we acknowledge to have been inspired by his Spirit and to contain his mind. These Scriptures were written in languages strange to us, at different ages, by men of divers character and culture. We can only master them, we can only arrive at the will of God as disclosed in them, as we study the men and history of past ages and acquaint ourselves with at least the results of Greek and Hebrew learning. At the present day we have such aids to this study as probably no previous generation has enjoyed. Every year we may acquire a considerable fund of Biblical knowledge; in the course of a few years we may acquire so much as will

make the whole Bible a new book to us: and thus we may get into our hands keys which will open chamber after chamber of the Sacred Treasury. Nothing is more indispensable to the vigour and completeness of the Christian life than that our faith in the Word of God should be steadfast and immovable. To doubt that Word, or the Revelation it contains, is to lay an axe to the very roots of our life. And there are many who seek to infuse doubts into our minds. An erudite and refined scepticism has of late been very busy on the Christian Documents, and some tincture of it reaches even those of us who do not read many books through our newspapers and magazines, through the pulpit even and the lecture-room, or in our talk with our neighbours. We need not fear it, if only we can meet it wisely. But we can only meet it, we can only retain a steadfast and immovable faith in the Christian verities, as we acquaint ourselves with the Scriptures, with their history, their contents, their true meaning. And, as has been said, we have in the Christian literature and teaching of the day many aids to a larger and more exact knowledge of the Scriptures and of the questions to which they have given rise.

Do we avail ourselves of these aids? And how do we avail ourselves of them? There are some who do not

touch them with one of their fingers. They read no books which would open up the Bible to them, or they read them as they read a tale or an essay, simply for the beauty of their style or to wile away an idle hour. They do not care to listen to thoughtful and connected expositions of Holy Writ, or do not attempt to master and appropriate them by subsequent thought and study. There are even those who *justify* their want of zeal in this work of the Lord. "We are plain unlettered men," they say, "weary with many toils. We have no leisure for study. And when we go to worship, we don't want to think and use our brains. We have had enough of that. What we want is a few plain words of counsel or a little comfort under the fag and worry of our life." Their plea will not stand a moment's examination. In these Scriptures, which they do not study in the week, and of which they do not wish to think on Sundays, they believe they have eternal life. Eternal life, with its ineffable energies and splendours, is, by their own confession, in these Writings: and yet they do not care to study them! They are too weary for that. Are they, then, too weary to study any science, any language, any concurrence of political facts, the knowledge of which would bring them worldly gain or advancement? If an apostle of manufacture and commerce were now and then to fill the pulpit, and they

believed he could give them valuable hints on cheaper methods of production, or teach them to find new and thriving markets for their respective wares ;—would he not have a very large and very attentive congregation? Would they be too fagged to listen to him? If he began to lead them into the profounder laws of economy or to open up the more abstruse secrets of manufacture and commerce, would they say, “Don’t do that. We are tired. We don’t want to think on new or difficult themes. Talk pleasantly to us about things we already understand?” No: it is not when worldly gain and the interests of this life are concerned that men decline the labour of thought, or plead weariness as an excuse for indolence ; but only when their eternal life is in question and heavenly gain ! The ledger and its secrets are always interesting to them, but not the Bible and its truths. If they really believed the Word to contain secrets of life, keys to enduring riches, they would be at least as earnest in their endeavour to master it as they are in their endeavour to acquire whatever will help them to worldly gains. And if they have not faith enough to kindle at least an equal earnestness in their study of the Word, how can they be steadfast and immovable in their faith? A faith so slight as theirs, and raised on the unstable foundations of their ignorance instead of on the solid piers of know-

ledge, may well go down before the first storm of doubt which blows upon it, or be floated away by the first flood of temptation that rises round it.

If we would be steadfast and immovable, we must *always abound* in the work : we must be eager to seize every opportunity of knowledge. If we can hear thoughtful expositions of Holy Writ, we shall not only hear them gladly, but, by after study, seek to appropriate their contents. If books which illustrate Holy Scripture do not come in our way, we shall eagerly seek them out, and read them as we read other volumes which we care to master. We shall rejoice as though we had taken spoil when any Scripture before dark shoots into light. We shall take pains to store up the knowledge we acquire. We shall keep it fresh and vivid by constant use. How much have we all lost for want of method and zeal and care ! How many a passage, which was once explained to us, has no message for us now ! We open our Bible here or there, and all is dark, or only hazy and broken and confused images pass before our minds, though once there was light enough, and the meaning was plain, and thought linked itself to thought. It is only by pains of thought and memory, only by patient and reiterated endeavour, that we can retain our knowledge of the Word. If we are to do this work of the Lord at all, we

must always abound in it. We must seize and make opportunities for study, and work at this study as we would at a foreign language or an unfamiliar science.

But if we thus "abound" in the work, is it not obvious that we shall be at least "steadfast and immovable?" Our study will have furnished us with answers to the doubts by which others are silenced or betrayed. Our constant and growing contact with the truth and life in the Word will have fortified us against those inward fluctuations of feeling in which many become faithless or weak in faith. Once really know the Word, or any part of it, and it exerts its marvellous fascination upon us, drawing us ever deeper into its folds, conforming us in mind and heart more closely to itself.

As in our study of the Scriptures, so also in the practical conduct of our life, we must always abound in the work of the Lord, or we shall not be steadfast and immovable in it. Experiment follows Science, and tests it. So soon as we have gained a little knowledge, we put it to the proof and try whether it will work. And as in study so in practice, St. Paul would have us *thorough*—not easily daunted, not leaping to hasty conclusions; but patient, assiduous, strenuous, indomitable.

His rule holds in all departments of life. Do you think you have learned a language? Go, try whether

you can speak it. You cannot! Do not be suddenly sure of that. You may have made your first trial where the language is not spoken in its purity, or you may only need a little familiarity with an accent which a few days will give you, or you may lack self-confidence rather than knowledge. In any case, your only chance lies in reiterated endeavour. Do you think you have discovered a chemical compound which will be useful to you in your business? Go, put it to the test. It fails! Look into the matter a little more thoroughly. It may be that the water was not soft enough or hard enough, or that one of your drugs was not quite pure, or that the temperature was not exactly at the right point, or that some trifling modification, such as a few experiments may suggest to you, will turn failure into success. At all events do not lose heart; you will gain nothing by that: whereas by patient continuance in endeavour, you must gain much, perhaps more than you now aim at. Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in your work. We all know that this rule is a good rule; that men become honourable and serviceable in proportion as they abide by it, in proportion as they are strong in hope, fertile in expedients, and patient in exhausting them. St. Paul exhorts us to extend this good rule to the duties of the Christian life. His "always abounding" means: "Strive to excel;

be fertile in expedients. If one fails, try another. Hope against hope. Never give in."

Of the many duties of the Christian life, it is not easy to select one for illustration ; but take this. The Lord Jesus used to say, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He Himself, who, when He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich ; He who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, has left us in his life the supreme example of obedience to that rule. When we have learned it, when, as we study his history, the conviction grows within us that the true blessedness of life lies in giving, not in receiving ; in serving, not in being served ; we naturally make an experiment ; we put our conviction to the proof, and try whether it will work. We give away a little money, or we go out of our way to serve a neighbour. And, perhaps, our money seems wasted, or our neighbour proves ungrateful. We are none the happier for what we have done ; we feel none the better ; we doubt whether we have done any good ; we are ready to cry out, "Our experiment has failed, the rule won't work." But if at this juncture we remember St. Paul's, "Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding," instead of yielding to our incipient despair, we may begin to reflect and to make discoveries. We may find

that we were not careful to examine claims before we gave, or that there was some lack of grace and kindness in our service. We may find that our motives were not pure, that a strain of selfishness ran through and adulterated them. Or we may even rise to the height of saying within ourselves: "Perhaps I am not happier that I may be better; perhaps I have failed that I may learn to do good hoping for nothing again. The Lord Jesus, at least for a long while, was but poorly requited for his gift and service; why then should I look for immediate reward? I will begin again. The experiment has not been fairly tried; I will try it fairly through. Out of this nettle failure, I may yet pluck the flower of success."

II. It is in this spirit that St. Paul would have us discharge all Christian duties, and test all the rules of the Christian life. And to encourage us in our endeavours, he virtually promises us with the ancient Sage:• "Work your work betimes, and in his time God will give you your reward." For obviously, if we are to rise into so true and fervent a devotion to the work of the Lord as he demands of us, we shall need the inspiration of lofty incentives and hopes. So fervent a devotion implies many labours and sacrifices which are repugnant to us,

• Ecclesiasticus li. 30.

which we can only encounter as we are persuaded that our toils will be requited, and that by sacrifice we shall secure some worthy end. The Apostle therefore places before us an end worthy of the utmost measures of self-sacrificing labour; he plies us with motives of a force to overcome our natural indolence and love of ease.

We are to abound in the work of the Lord *because labour in the Lord is not in vain*. And by "not in vain," he means, not simply that our labour will not be useless, but that it will be most profitable and full of reward both for ourselves and for others. Taken generally and in its simplest form, the motive by which he urges us to faithful and constant service is: "*Your work will live though you should die*. You may pass hence, but your labour will remain. The quick ready hand may be lifted from its task, and return to the dust from whence it was taken; but whatever it has accomplished will continue among men, and produce results by which they will be blessed so long as the world stands." This is the first and most obvious sense of St. Paul's words—that our labour, instead of a vanity that passeth away, when it is labour in the Lord, becomes a sacred and enduring reality. And in this broad simple sense, they appeal to a common and deep instinct of our nature. For we all desire to live in the kindly memories of our neighbours and

successors ; we wish to be of some use in the world even after we have left the world : we are willing to make some sacrifices and to endure some extremes of labour that we may win name and fame and use. It irks and depresses us to think that we shall be forgotten and unmissed, that we shall leave no memorial behind us, no influence that will tell for good after we are silent in the grave. St. Paul assures us that, if we abound in the work of the Lord, we shall not be forgotten, that our work will live and act for good when we are in that quiet realm whose stillness is broken by no sound of labour.

This assurance is confirmed by our own experience and by the history of past ages. All things perish, yet nothing perishes ; all things change, yet all things remain. Spring, summer, and autumn pass ; but the harvest they matured is gathered up in the garner of winter. Years have passed—childhood, youth, maturity ; but their fruits are with us : we are the wiser for them and the better if we used them to any good purpose. The generations of men have come and gone. All the fathers have gone before us into the land of silence : but, being dead, they still speak. Their labours did not end with their life, nor their life with their death. Not only are they now with God : they are still with us in the long results of their toil—in their science and songs, their arts and manufactures,

their laws and their conquests of the stubborn earth. *We* know the fathers, the prophets and psalmists and apostles, the great poets and law-givers and reformers, better than those knew them who saw their face. Their influence has grown as the years have elapsed : and not Moses and David and Paul only, but Alfred, and Shakespeare, and Luther, are absolutely doing a larger work in the world at this very time than in any previous age. So long as the world endures, they will be at work in the world, and exert a growing power on the thoughts of men. "A good life hath but few days ; but a good name endureth for ever."*

Do any say : "This may be a great comfort for great men ; but what comfort is it to us ? With our slender endowments and scanty opportunities, we cannot hope to speak words which the world will not willingly let die, or to achieve works which will speak for us when we are dumb." We reply, Every man who is steadfast, immovable, thorough, in the service of God and man contributes, according to his capacity, to the work of his generation, helps to make some little corner of the earth habitable or fruitful, reduces the sum of evil in the world, and adds to the sum of goodness. We owe much to the great men of past ages—to the statesmen who framed wise laws, to

* Ecclesiasticus xli. 13.

the patriots who stood for freedom ; to discoverers who enlarged the bounds of science or applied the science of their time to useful arts ; to the poets who, though they long since mouldered in their shrouds, nevertheless stand by us at our work, with their garlands and their singing-
robes about them, and help to make our days go lightly ; to the famous sages and reformers who brought things new and old out of the Divine storehouse and made hidden treasures the common property of man ; to the martyrs who counted not their lives dear unto them, and who have left us ensamples of devotion and patience. We owe much to these men of renown ; but we also owe much to the unknown myriads who redeemed now this now that plot of ground from briers and thorns to the uses of husbandry, who tilled the farms we till to-day, who built the towns in which we live, who made the roads on which we travel, who improved the arts and crafts and tools by which we earn our bread, who won the liberties which we enjoy, who founded and sustained the churches in which we worship. They are not all dead : they live in their works : their works bring forth fruit in our lives, and will continue to live in our works long after we too have passed away.

What they did for us, we may do for others. Every stroke of honest work we do will make our children's path

smoother ; every good deed we do, every deed in the Lord, will help to make their lives better and more Christian. Nor shall we be forgotten by those whom we loved and served. Our names may not live in the mouths of all men, nor be inscribed in unfading characters on the rolls of fame. But neither have we, if indeed we are of slender endowment, deserved that, nor do we desire it, if we are of a modest spirit. Nevertheless we may continue to live and serve here after we are in the better world, and have our memories kept green by our good works. Have we forgotten *our* dead ? Is not our memory of them keen and helpful in proportion as they served God and man ? And if we count up those who live in our memories and hearts, were not many, nay, most of them as poorly gifted and inconspicuous as we ourselves ? Can we not recall face after face, worn with many labours and much marred with ruth and grief, yet beautiful with a divine patience and content, and kindling at times with the raptures of a sacred devotion ? They have gone from us perchance for many years ; but we shall never forget them. Our holiest inspirations have come to us from them or through them, our keenest shame for the imperfections of our service, our most eager resolves, our most earnest attempts, to serve God with a better heart. If they are not forgotten, why should we be forgotten if we be followers of them in that which is

good? We shall not be forgotten by those in whose memories we care to live. And even when *they* follow us, and our memory perishes from the earth, our works will live to testify of us, if only our work has been work in the Lord.

But here again the question recurs, What is "work in the Lord"? All honest faithful work is, in a sense, work in the Lord; for it is work done in accordance with the Divine laws, and work that really serves the world which the Lord loves. Harken to holy George Herbert:—*

"Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see;
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for Thee.

"All may of Thee partake:
Nothing can be so mean,
Which with this tincture—for Thy sake—
Will not grow bright and clean.

"A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.

"This is the famous stone
Which turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told."

* The poem from which these verses are taken was entitled "*The Elixir*." "The Elixir was an imagined liquid sought by the old physical investigators, in order that by its means they might turn every metal into gold, a pursuit not quite so absurd as it has since appeared. They called this something, when regarded as a solid, *the Philosopher's Stone*. In the Poem it is also called a *tincture*."—GEORGE MACDONALD'S *England's Antiphon*, p. 175.

Who does not feel that this is the true secret of life? That to do the work, we must do somehow, willingly and cheerfully, to do it as to God, and therefore to take a pride in doing it well, is to make even drudgery divine, and to raise all our work into work in the Lord? Does not this throw dignity on the meanest task, and enable us to go to it with a religious and merry heart? And if to this motive and happy inspiration to diligent faithful toil, we add the comfort St. Paul offers us, that all work thus done in the Lord lives after we are dead, and helps the world which we have left; what further incentive to a cheerful diligence can we desire?

Even yet, however, there may be some who do not see how their work will live after them. They may see clearly that a man who, for instance, builds a house or a bridge well, or makes a good road, or writes a good book, does a work which will endure and add to the comfort of the world after he has risen out of it. But their work may be of a more transient kind. They may have—and let the reader pardon me, that, for the sake of simplicity, and in order to bring the thought home to the simple, I select the homeliest illustrations—to make boots which soon wear out, or to post up ledgers and make out bills which will be in use only for a little while; or, to resume Herbert's illustration, they may have to sweep a room

which will soon grow dusty again. And the question is: How they and all whose work is of the same transient character, may so do it as, in doing it, to do a work that shall live and be permanent? Their temptation will be not to devote thought and their best skill to their labour, on the ground that its materials and products are slight and transitory. The bootmaker may say: "It does not much matter whether my work be good, so long as it looks well and fetches its price; boots soon wear out." The clerk may say: "This bill will soon be on the file or in the fire; I need not write my best and make it out as neatly as I can." The servant may say: "The room will soon gather dust again; I need not spend much pains upon it: it will be enough to make it look clean." And thus they may lose the pride and dignity of their labour, the brightness and joy of their life. For mark a little in detail what it is that, working in this spirit, they have really done. First of all, *they have injured their neighbour*. He paid them for good work, and they have given him bad. Their inferior workmanship provokes him; he cannot wear his boots with comfort; he cannot read his bill easily and quickly; he cannot use his room without being irritated by signs of indolence and neglect. Instead of making the world happier and the affairs of life go more smoothly, they have added to the irritations and

angers that are in the world, and made life a little harder to some of their neighbours. Nay, they have fellow-workmen, fellow-clerks, fellow-servants about them, all of whom are sufficiently disposed to do their work negligently; and *these* also are injured; instead of being helped to overcome their temptations, another temptation has been thrown in their way; instead of being helped toward the happiness which springs from a resolute and cheerful discharge of duty, they have been urged toward the misery which comes of duty neglected or inefficiently done. And if those who have wrought all this harm make any profession of religion, the case is worse still; for they have virtually affirmed that there is nothing in religion, that it does not make men true and honest, diligent and faithful.

In injuring their neighbours, *they have also injured themselves*. For they have given new force to their natural repugnance to any labour which is not at the same time a pleasure. They have inserted new links and rivets in that chain of evil habits by which they are loaded and bound. The tasks they must do in some fashion, and might so do as to dignify that which is mean and sanctify that which is secular, have grown more irksome to them. The dark shadows which blot out the bright cheerfulness of life have been multiplied and enlarged. The

very capacity of service has been dulled and contracted in them; they are more than ever disqualified for any large or more enduring work to which they may be called.

And they have sinned against God. They have not seen Him in all things, nor have they done their work as for Him and in accordance with his laws. Little as we think it, every task is a test of character. However trivial it may be or seem, every work which comes fairly in our way, comes from God, and virtually says to us: "Here is another opportunity of service; how will you take it? Will you use it or misuse it?" If we feel that the task is from God and do it as for Him—and of course if we were only sweeping a room *for God*, we should sweep our very best—we seize the opportunity of service eagerly, gladly. But if we forget all about God, and go to our task grudgingly, reluctantly, indolently, we miss our chance of service, and show that, at least for that time, we do not care to make our work "work in the Lord." Every day brings us a series of such opportunities—a sequence of tasks which must be done well or ill. If we choose to do them ill, we sink day by day into bad servants and workmen, and prove that the life of God is not in us.

Now take the other side of the seam, the upper side.

Suppose those whose life has to be spent in poor and transient work are diligent, faithful, skilful in their work—suppose they do their best with it; will their labour be a passing vanity, or a sacred and enduring reality? Surely, it will endure. For just as by all bad inefficient work they sin against their neighbour, themselves, and God; so also by all good and faithful work they serve God, themselves, and their neighbour. *They serve God:* for they do their work as for Him rather than for men. They are faithful and diligent in it, not simply for the sake of wages, but because they love and honour Him. They do it well, because He doeth all things well, not touching even his minutest work with a careless hand, and because they are of one spirit with Him. *They serve themselves:* for they are confirming themselves in habits of industry, virtue, and godliness. They are bringing dignity into their lives—for to do what we do in everything as for God is to abide in the most August Company, and to invest the meanest actions with a divine worth and grace; and fearlessness—for who or what should he fear whose work will not only stand the tests which men apply to it, but the inquest of Omniscience? and peace—for why should his soul be perturbed who is always with God, and who abides in his service through all changes of lot and toil? *And they serve their neighbour.*

It is not only that he has the greater ease and comfort every time he draws on his boots, or refers to his bill, or enters his room, because their work has been well and faithfully done : though this is much, far more than we often think ; for to have added to the sum of comfort and kindly pleasant feeling in the world, rather than to the sum of petty discomfort and irritation, is a result by no means to be despised. But besides this, while they have been doing works which and the effects of which will soon pass away, they have also done a work which will remain. Their indirect and unconscious service of the world has been indefinitely greater than that which was conscious and direct. For the most precious thing any man can give us is himself. If he can show us a life wisely and happily ordered ; if, without speaking a word to us, without any such aim or intention, he can be always saying to us—saying it by his example, his face, his manner, his bright pleasant carriage of himself : “See how a man of few gifts, of small means, and whose work is of the lowliest, can live happily, can go to his petty monotonous round of labour with a resolute diligence, a constant cheerfulness, a divine dignity and patience !”—any man who can say that to us, and many a poor unlettered man has said it, is really doing us about the very greatest service that man can do us. Uncon-

sciously he is doing a work that will live and tell for good long after he can speak to us no more ; he is exerting the happiest influence, and building up an enduring memorial in many hearts. *His* labour fleeting ! *His* work in vain ! There is no work more enduring or more precious than his. He has made all his work "*work in the Lord,*" he has been steadfast, immovable, always abounding in that work ; and his labour cannot be in vain in the Lord.

"*In the Lord.*" For we must not omit to indicate the stress and emphasis St. Paul puts on this phrase. His exhortation, like his Creed, is very brief : but as in that he twice repeated the phrase "according to the Scriptures," so in this he twice repeats the phrase "in the Lord." He bids us abound *in the work of the Lord* ; he assures us that our labour is *not in vain in the Lord*. Now as we have just seen, all our work may become a work in the Lord. Nor can there be much doubt that our chief aim as Christian men should be, To bring our whole life, with all its occupations and engagements, under law to God ; to do all we do as for Him. For if Christian men of every trade and profession were scrupulously honest, diligent, faithful, if in all they say and do they breathed the Spirit of Christ—that is, the spirit of truth, fidelity, generosity, kindness—their whole secular life would become

sacred and spiritual, and would commend the Gospel of the grace of God to the world. It is because they so often fail to make their work *work in the Lord*, that religion is brought into suspicion and contempt.

Nevertheless we cannot suppose that by "work in the Lord" St. Paul meant only the daily round and common task. He also meant distinctively Christian work, *church work*; in short, all enterprises, undertaken from love to Christ, to ameliorate the evil conditions of men, and to carry on among them "the ministry of the Reconciliation."* This too, this eminently, is *work in the Lord*. And in this St. Paul would have us to be steadfast and immovable, to abound and excel.

There are men who say that it is enough for them to try to make their own lives Christian, to act out the law and Spirit of Christ in the home and the workshop; that they have no faculties for studying or teaching the Word, or for visiting the sick, or for ministering to the poor, or, in general, for managing church affairs and doing church work. Pure nonsense all of it! For to study the Word, so as to master at least much of its meaning, requires no other faculties than they often employ to advantage on other books: to do church work tasks no other faculties than those which they turn to good account in the work

* 2 Cor. v. 18-20.

of their craft or profession. If they have the Spirit of Christ, if they really care to acquaint themselves with the mind of God and to serve the Church of God, they may soon find, or make, ways of doing it. The fishermen and peasants who listened to Christ were not erudite scholars, or men of any special culture ; nor were they, so far as we can see, distinguished by remarkable gifts when they entered the service of Christ : yet they attained a considerable knowledge of Scripture, and won many to the obedience of the Faith. There are not many Christian men who have not faculties at least as large and bright, and minds at least as well informed as Peter and Andrew, James and John, Philip and Thomas, when they came to sit at the Master's feet and learn of Him. And therefore there are not many who can fairly refuse to take their part in the works of teaching and mercy which Christ has committed to all who are fain to love and serve Him. It is from the worship of the Church, from its services, and works, indeed, that we derive our best help and furtherance in making our daily life Christian : it is from these that we best learn how to find God in all things, and in everything we do, to do it as for Him.

Work in the Lord is to have *reward in the Lord*. We have seen that all faithful Christian labour has its reward *in the world*, in that it lives after we are dead and tells

for good when we have entered into rest. But it has another and a higher reward. "It is not in vain," it is a sacred enduring reality, "*in the Lord.*" And "in the Lord" is the Scriptural opposite to "in the world." It embraces the whole sphere of Christ's activity—the spiritual and eternal sphere. As St. Paul conceived our life, it lay in two hemispheres or provinces: in the physical, the visible, the temporary, on the one hand; and on the other, in the eternal, the unseen, the spiritual. As he conceived the Church, that also inhabited both these provinces: rites, dogmas, modes of service, tongues, prophecies were in the temporal, and would change and pass with time; but truth itself, communion with God, faith, hope, charity,—these were in the eternal, and would abide. This higher and eternal side of our individual and church life is summed up in the phrase,—*in the Lord.* Whatever is in the Lord abideth for ever, even as He Himself abideth ever. If our labour is in the Lord, it will abide, and its reward. Forms and methods of service may change to suit the changing wants of time; but the service, in its spiritual substance, will remain: its results are treasured up for ever in our greatened lives, and in the heart of Christ. The results and therefore the reward of our labour in this world, though they should last as long as the world lasts, must perish with the world.

But the heavenly result, the soul of our labour, the reward in the Lord, will never perish. If men forget us, though we have served them; Christ will not forget us or any act of service we have done to them. If none else are the better, we shall always be the better for work well and faithfully done: ransomed spirits, whom we served in time, will be the happier for it; God's house and table will be fuller or brighter, his glory more largely manifested.

And is there not motive enough here to keep us steadfast and immovable, to urge us to abound and excel, in the work of the Lord? If in return for anything that we can do in these fleeting hours of time, we are to live here on earth after we are dead, and help to make men happy and good; if our works are to follow us when we rise into the Lord, and to swell the volume of that better life of ours which is now hid with Christ in God; shall we not devote ourselves with impassioned energy to the Lord's service? Shall we not with redoubled earnestness, by endeavour as well by prayer, urge the request,—

“Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see;
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for Thee?”

III. We have now seen that St. Paul's exhortation

includes three main points : That we make all our work work in the Lord : That to be steadfast and immovable in this work we must abound and excel in it : That all work in the Lord, so far from being a passing vanity, is a sacred and enduring reality which both lives in this world after we are dead, and, in its effects and results, lives for ever in the eternal world. But even thus we are far from having exhausted the meaning of the Exhortation. Indeed it is impossible to exhaust it, so crowded is it with thought and suggestion. Nay, we must not attempt to exhaust the contents of even the first word in it. Seldom, even in Scripture, has a single word been laden with so heavy a burden as this "Wherefore." It carries the whole weight of St. Paul's sublime and elaborate argument. It sums up all the conclusions at which he has arrived, and urges them as motives for a more perfect devotion to the service of Christ. And thus it suggests an expansion of the motive expressed in the words, "your labour is not in vain in the Lord," so broad and profound that one shrinks from entering on it. For, obviously, we can only arrive at the full force of the Exhortation by retouching every point already touched in the Apostle's argument, and tracing out its manifold bearings on the duties of the Christian life,—a task which requires a volume to itself. Yet, that we may not alto-

gether pass by so capital a feature of the passage, I will briefly indicate the line of thought and reasoning it suggests—begging the reader to bear in mind how much of its force must of necessity be lost in any brief treatment of it.

“*Wherefore,*” argues the Apostle,—because all these great truths have been demonstrated ; because the doubts which hung round them have been dispelled, and their light now shines full into your souls—“ be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.” What, then, are the leading truths for which he has contended ?

(1.) In what we called “the Apostle’s Creed,” he laid down these two propositions : That Christ died for our sins according to the will of God ; and that He was raised from the dead by the power of God. Has he established these propositions on a sound basis of logic ? At the first glance, we might think that he has furnished us with no proofs of the death of Christ. But to prove the resurrection of Christ is to prove his death ; for, if the death were not real, there could have been no true resurrection. And on this point, the resurrection of Christ, St. Paul has alleged an overwhelming volume of testimony—his own testimony, that of Peter and James, that of the Twelve Apostles, and that of the Five Hundred

Brethren. But if Christ, if only this one Man, has risen from the dead, it is impossible to affirm any longer that there is no resurrection of the dead ; one instance to the contrary as effectually disposes of *that* allegation as a thousand or a million. Nay, if Christ be risen from the dead, then at least all who are in Christ will rise as He rose ; if the life which conquered death in Him be in them, it will also make them conquerors over death. To deny his resurrection and theirs is equivalent to denying the moral government of God : for it is to affirm that under his wise and just rule the best men are the most miserable, the noblest of men perish unrecompensed, and that the one Perfect Man went down into the darkness of annihilation. On these terms life would not be worth having, nor would God be God.

These are the Apostle's arguments : and if his logic be sound, if he has fairly proved that Christ died for our sins, that He rose again for our justification, and that we who believe on Him shall rise to share his glory : we have only to mark what weighty incentives these conclusions supply to zeal and devotion in the service of the Lord. They could not well be weightier. For if Christ died for our sins according to the will of God, if therefore his sacrifice was accepted in Heaven, sin has no more dominion over us, no more claim upon us. We no

longer feel that it is useless to redeem the time which remains to us because, do what we will in the present, past disobedience can never be atoned, but must still hang round us and fetter us with the oppressions of irremovable guilt. We no longer drag with us on the steep difficult path of duty a chain which lengthens and grows heavier at each remove. The chain is broken, and we are escaped. If Christ died for our sins, it is only reasonable that we, who live through Him, should henceforth live, not to ourselves, but to Him who died for us. If Christ died for our sins, it is not impossible for us to live to Him despite the imperfections of our new obedience : for the virtues of his sacrifice extend through all time and beyond the bounds of time ; his atonement avails for the present and the future no less than for the past. There is no more condemnation for us if only we remain in Him and grow up into Him, though growth implies imperfection until that which is perfect be come. We may give ourselves to his service with alacrity, and confidence, and joy. Nay, the sense of his love, as manifested in his death for our sins, constrains our choice. While we fix our eyes on the Cross we can only devote ourselves to his service. If He did so much for us, we must do something for Him ; we cannot be content to do anything short of our best and utmost

for Him. Because He has redeemed us from so great a death, and will yet redeem, we cannot but seek to abound and to excel in the work of the Lord.

So, again, his resurrection is a most constant and keen incentive to diligence and fidelity in his service. He is not dead, but liveth. It is no tender reverential love for the memory of One who was kind and good, and who made great sacrifices for us, when He was with us, which animates our ministry. Our inspiration is, that He who so loved us lives to be served by us, to take note of what we do, and to take pleasure in it. A dead Christ could not move us thus. It is because we are verily persuaded He lives that, like St. Paul, "we are eager" in all things "to be acceptable to Him," because we know, not only that "we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ," but that even now already we are made manifest before Him ;* that He reads the thoughts and intents of our hearts ; that He is aware when the will to do good is present in us, though the power to perform we find not ; and that He is filled with a divine satisfaction when will and power conspire for his service. Because Christ is gone up into heaven "we seek the things which are above." Our life is hid with Him in God, and thought and affection are there where our life is. We look not

* 2 Cor. v. 10, 11.

on the things which are seen and temporary, but on the things which are unseen and eternal; and from that unseen world, in which our true Life is hidden, and on whose realities we fix our eyes, we derive the strength of obedience and the pure fervours of devotion to his service. While the risen Lord is present to our faith, we are steadfast and immovable in the work of the Lord.

So, too, in the fact that He who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, and gave Him glory, will also raise us up by Him, we have another incentive to diligent and strenuous labour; nay, many incentives, for the fact is complex, and tells on us in many ways. That we ourselves shall have part in the Resurrection cannot fail to inflame our zeal. If we ceased to be at death, we might cry, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;" we might refuse to perplex and confuse ourselves with large thoughts and lofty aims, to deny ourselves for the good of our neighbour, to act out the inspirations of our higher nature. Why should we trouble and weary ourselves in a life so short, for ends beyond our reach, in order to serve men as perishable as ourselves? But if because Christ lives we are to live also, if because He rose we also are to rise, then our life, otherwise so brief and vain, stretches out before us in endless and

widening vistas of hope. It is worth our while to labour and deny ourselves that we may prepare ourselves for a life so durable and sublime. Our services may meet with no reward here ; the faculties on which we have expended much laborious training, may meet no fit occasion for use ; germinant and springing powers which we have cherished may not yield their proper fruit ; our whole course on earth, though marked by toils and sacrifices, may be as strongly marked by failure and disappointment : but the reward will come, though it tarry. Every duty faithfully discharged will serve at least to make us wiser and strong for ampler service. From failures we shall extract the secret of success. The depressions of disappointed hope will but throw us back on Him who is our strength. There is time, and plenty of time before us, in which to retrieve all our errors ; time, and plenty of time, for the successful use of the capacities and germs of power which are even now being developed in us by endeavours that seem fruitless, and by enterprises which we cannot carry through.

If Christ were not risen, and we did not rise, our faith would be vain, our preaching vain ; we should be of all men most miserable. But now that Christ is risen, and we shall rise, we are, or should be, the happiest of men ; our preaching is not vain, our faith is not vain, nor

any act of faith ; and, therefore, both in preaching the Faith and in the service of the Faith, we may well be steadfast, patient, and devoted. If Christ has not risen, then our friends who have fallen asleep perished. We shall never see them again. They cannot return to us, nor can we go to them. But if Christ be risen, and they are with Him, how can we fail to be moved and nerved to high endeavour by the hope of rejoining them ? All our love for them comes in to reinforce our love for Christ ; the human love and the Divine blend in constraint, and compel us to a more constant and ardent pursuit of spiritual excellence. And thus it continually happens that those who believe in the future life, who are verily persuaded that their dead have risen into bliss and glory everlasting, draw new motives for devotion from that happy persuasion ; out of weakness they are made strong ; death itself lends new vigour to their life ; the separations of death bind them more closely to Christ, "the Life indeed : " they find great gain in the very loss which they most deplore.

(2.) So far, then, our course is plain. While St. Paul deals with the fact of the Resurrection, we can see that he does and must ply us with motives and incentives to service. But how does the case stand when, from the fact, he passes to *the mode* of the Resurrection ? when

he enters on his sequence of abstruse hints and suggestions as to how the dead arise, and with what body they come? Have these any practical bearing on our life and duty? Yes, these too. They add incalculably to the effect of the Resurrection as an historic and revealed fact. For we need not only to be convinced of the truth, but to be reminded of it.

And by *the natural analogies*, by which St. Paul has sought to make the Resurrection credible to us, he has drawn the whole universe into the ministry of the truth. Wherever and so often as we see that life determines form, or that death is the condition of higher life, or that when form is changed identity is preserved, we are reminded that our dissolution does not necessarily involve death, that through death we may pass into more life and fuller; that though our outward form change, our personal identity may be untouched, and we may carry into the future all that makes the past dear to us or memorable. We are not permitted to forget the truth which the Apostle has proved and illustrated. All the changes of earth, all the splendours of heaven, put us in remembrance of it. When the winter changes into spring, and the water is unlocked from its icy fetters, and the bare brown boughs clothe themselves with living green, and the mute fields and woods break forth into singing, and

the grain sown in the earth rises through corruption into a waving wealth of corn ; as we watch the May-fly dancing out its brief day above the stream in which its husk has been swept away, or the winged splendour of the butterfly wavers by us ; as we study the embryonic mutations of the one flesh into man and beast, fish and bird ; as we gaze on the various glory of sun and moon and stars, and note how even the stars, those pendant lamps of heaven, differ in glory : by day, by night ; through the changes of earth and the lustres of heaven, the message comes, and comes home to us : “Thou too shalt change and die. Thou too shalt pass through the birth-pangs of death and the purifying corruptions of the grave into a life of happier conditions, ampler scope, more heavenly splendours. Thou too, if faithful to thy call and ministry, shalt shine as the stars in the firmament for ever.”

Nor is even St. Paul's revelation of *the spiritual body* with which we are to be clothed when that which is mortal in us shall be swallowed up of life, without its bearing on our practical duties or incentives to fidelity and devotion, abstruse as it is and apparently remote from the daily round and common task. By virtue of the indwelling of the last Adam, the Life-giving Spirit—so at least the Apostle teaches, and his teaching is confirmed by the natural law according to which life determines form and

shapes the body to itself—we who from natural have become spiritual men, when the spirit in us is released from the limitations of flesh and blood, are to enter into an organism as delicately attuned to the wants and energies of the spirit, as this mortal body is to the energies and wants of the soul. We are to put off this muddy vesture of decay, and to put on a garment woven of life and immortality. With eyes no longer veiled and seeing but in part, with powers no longer clogged and aspirations no longer dulled by the infirmities of the flesh, we are to possess organs as quick and sensitive to spiritual realities and glories as the eye now is to natural beauty, or the ear to the dulcet sounds of music, or the deft flexible fingers to the texture of surfaces; nay, more quick and sensitive, and yet unwearable by the labours of a perpetual ministry. And can we entertain so great a hope as this, and yet be unsteadfast and irresolute in the work which He, who has given us the hope, has allotted us upon the earth? Must not this splendour of hope be among our strongest incentives to diligent and strenuous exertion? If not building up the spiritual and heavenly body by our every act of dutiful service, we are at least qualifying ourselves to assume it. And can the acts be too many, or the toils too severe, by which we are prepared for a state so happy and lofty?

Let St. Paul himself answer* the question which he has suggested. To him this great hope was full of moral stimulus : it was a constant, an urgent incentive to fidelity and courage. Because he knew that when the frail physical tent in which he sojourned should be dissolved, he had a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens—a temple instead of a tent, and a temple in which the very glory of God would dwell—he groaned under the infirmities of his fleshly tabernacle, and longed to have the corruptible put on incorruption, the mortal immortality. Did then the bright prospect of life eternal only breed groans of impatience in him, and vague wistful yearnings for change? Nay, knowing that God had elaborately wrought him for this very change from mortal to immortal, and that in the indwelling of the Spirit he had already the earnest of that fair inheritance, he was patient and fearless in the labours of his ministry. The exhaustions of toil, the deadly imminent perils he daily affronted, death itself, had no terrors for him. Why should he fear them? The more the outward man was wasted, the more the inward man was renewed : the nearer death, the nearer heaven. And therefore, he affirms, we are always bold : for to be at home in the

* The answer is simply a paraphrase of part of 2 Corinthians v. 1—9.

body is to be absent from the Lord. We are bold and well-pleased to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord. Nay, whether at home or from home, we are always eager to be acceptable to Him,—always eager therefore to be steadfast and immovable, to abound and excel in His service.

Is it any wonder that such an one as Paul, with his clear vision of the spiritual glories about to be revealed in and upon him, soared into that keen rapturous song of triumph over death in which he exults as over a terrible but defeated foe? Had we a faith like his, could we take so calmly as we too commonly do the prospect of treading death under our feet in the vigour of an immortal life? Should not we also, our whole heart swelling into unwonted ecstasies, cry: "Where, O Death, is thy victory? Where, O Death, is thy sting? Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" Should we not, fired by the prospect of so great a triumph, throw ourselves with steadfast constancy, with dauntless courage, with redoubled energy into our present conflict with Death and Sin, into our endeavour to undo their works and to free their thralls?

O it is not because there is any lack of reasons for thanksgiving that we so seldom break into songs unto Him who has triumphed gloriously over all our enemies,

to the very last ! It is not because our victory is insecure, but because we have not faith to grasp the sure and certain hope of victory, that, when Death approaches us, we dread his strength and shudder at his sting. It is not because we are ill-provided with motives and incentives to devotion, but because we do not feel and yield to their force, that we constantly need to ponder the exhortation which speaketh to us as to servants of the best Lord that ever men had, as to friends who are to share his ministry that they may share his conquest and glory,—*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord.*





APPENDIX.



I.

FIFTEENTH CHAPTER OF FIRST EPISTLE TO
THE CORINTHIANS.

1. Moreover, brethren, I would have you *know* the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand ;

2. By which indeed ye are saved, if ye hold in mind with what word I preached unto you, unless ye believed in vain.

3. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received,—That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ;

4. And that He was buried, and that He has been raised the third day, according to the Scriptures ;

5. And that He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve :

Ver. 2. "By which ye are *being saved*," in course of salvation. "*With what word*," *i.e.* in what *manner or way* as distinguished from the subject-matter of his preaching ; how, for instance, he had, *first of all*, preached the death and the resurrection of Christ.

Ver. 5. The verb here, and subsequently, rendered "appeared," is commonly used to denote supernatural appearances.

6. After that, He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at once; of whom the major part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep :

7. After that, He appeared to James; then to all the Apostles :

8. And, last of all, He appeared to me also, as to the one born out of due time.

9. For *I* am the least of the Apostles, who am not fit to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10. But by the grace of God I am what I am. And His grace, which was toward me, was not in vain: for I toiled more abundantly than them all, yet not *I*, but the grace of God with me.

11. Therefore, whether I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

12. Now if Christ is preached that He is raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13. But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not raised :

14. And if Christ be not raised, then is our preaching vain, vain also is your faith.

15. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised up Christ,

Ver. 8. "As to the one born out of due time." Literally, "*as to the abortion,*" the immature and deformed member of the Apostolic family.

Ver. 15. The *Sinaitic* Codex reads "*His* Christ."

whom He did not raise up, if indeed the dead are not raised.

16. For if the dead are not raised, then is not Christ raised ;

17. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain ; ye are yet in your sins.

18. Then also those who fell asleep in Christ perished.

19. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

20. But now is Christ raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep.

21. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22. For as in the Adam all die, even so in the Christ shall all be made alive.

23. But every one in his own troop : Christ the first-fruits ; afterwards, they that are Christ's at His coming ;

24. Then the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God and the Father, when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power :

25. For He must reign till He hath put all His enemies under His feet.

26. The last enemy that shall be put under is Death.

27. For "He put all things under His feet." But

Ver. 25. The *Sinaitic* reads this verse, "For He hath put all things under His feet."

Ver. 27. The *Sinaitic* omits first clause; and begins with, "But when," &c.

when He saith that "all things are put under Him," obviously He is excepted who did put all things under Him.

28. And when all things shall be put under Him, then shall also the Son Himself be put under *Him* that did put all things under Him, in order that God may be all in all.

29. Else, what shall they do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?

30. Why also stand *we* in jeopardy every hour?

31. I protest by my boast of you, brethren, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

32. If, after the manner of men, I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what did I gain by that? If the dead are not raised,

"Let us eat and drink,
For to-morrow we die."

33. Be not deceived :

"Vile speeches honest customs do corrupt."

34. Awake to righteousness and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

35. But some one will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

36. Fool! that which *thou* sowest is not quickened except it die :

Ver. 34. "Some have not the knowledge of God." The Greek phrase is very strong: "Some have *an ignorance* of God."

37. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that will be, but bare grain, it may be of wheat or of some of the other kinds of grain :

38. But God giveth it a body as He willed ; and to each of the seeds a body of its own.

39. All flesh is not the same flesh ; but there is one of men, another flesh of beasts, another flesh of birds, and another of fishes.

40. There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies ; but the glory of the heavenly is one, and that of the earthly another.

41. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars : for star differeth from star in glory.

42. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption ;

43. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory ; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in strength :

44. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual.

45. And so it is written, "The" first "man," Adam, "became a living soul," the last Adam a life-giving spirit.

Ver. 37. The *Sinaitic* reads, "And that which thou sowest *is* not that body that will be," &c.

Ver. 38. "As He *willed*"—when He made it.

Ver. 41. "Another glory of the stars." "I say not *star*, but *stars* : for even in them there is a difference."—*Stanley*.

46. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and, afterward, that which is spiritual.

47. The first man is from the earth earthy; the Second Man is from heaven.

48. As is the earthy, such also are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such also are they that are heavenly.

49. And as we bare the image of the earthy, let us also bear the image of the heavenly.

50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither shall corruption inherit incorruption.

51. Behold, I tell you a mystery! We shall not all sleep: but we shall all be changed,

52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed,

53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Ver. 47. "From the earth, earthy." In the Greek the substantive and adjective are not from the same root. It is not easy to render the distinction in English. But such a phrase as, "The first man is *from the earth, dust-born,*" gives some notion of it.

Ver. 51. Two manuscripts of the gravest authority, the Sinaitic and the Alexandrine, read the second clause in the opposite sense: "We *shall* all sleep, but we *shall not* all be changed." Nevertheless the reading of the Received Text is, as Dean Stanley says, probably the best. Certainly it best accords with all that we know of St. Paul's views and convictions, as also with the final clause of ver. 52.

54. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the word that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

55. Where, O Death, is thy victory?

 Where, O Death, is thy sting?

56. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

57. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!

58. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH.

"*Corinthus, Achaia caput, Græcia decus, inter duo maria, Ionium et Ægeum, quasi spectaculo exposita.*"—FLORUS ii. 16.

'Αναλάβετε τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τοῦ μακαρίου Παύλου τοῦ ἀποστόλου* τὴν πρῶτον ὑμῖν ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἔγραψεν; Ἐπ' ἀληθείας πνευματικῶς ἐπέστειλεν ὑμῖν περὶ αὐτῶν τε καὶ Κηρᾶ τε καὶ Ἀπόλλω, δια τὸ καὶ τότε προσκλίσεις (*factiones*) ὑμᾶς πεποιήσθαι.—CLEMENS, Ep. i. 47.

I. CORINTH was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia,* and the residence of the Roman pro-consul. In the time of the Apostle it was, in fact, the metropolis of Greece, as Athens was its university. In bringing the Gospel to Corinth, St. Paul virtually brought it to Europe; *our* Christianity is one of the large results of his labours in that city. Hence the immense value of those labours; hence the close and intimate interest we have in his letters to the Corinthians.

* Achaia was a *senatorial* province; and a senatorial province was a more important sphere of action than an imperial province. The governors of the imperial provinces were simply the military lieutenants of the Emperor: they were seldom consulars, and were not called pro-consuls. But for the governors of the senatorial provinces the Senate generally selected its highest magistrates; and these assumed the title of pro-consul, received ampler salaries than those of the Emperor's appointing, and were distinguished by a retinue of twelve lictors, while their rivals were only allowed six.—Merivale's *History of the Romans*, vol. iv. chap. xxxii. p. 30.

We must be careful not to confound the Corinth in which St. Paul laboured with the ancient Corinth celebrated in classic story. That former city was destroyed, B.C. 146, by the consul Mummius. The destruction was thorough and complete, only a few temples and columns surviving the great conflagration in which its miracles of architecture and art were destroyed. It was in this conflagration that a mass of gold, silver, and bronze was melted, and ran together, accidentally forming the famous metallic compound—"Corinthian brass," which the ancients valued above pure gold. The city was pillaged as well as destroyed. For years afterwards the villas of the Roman nobles on the banks of the Tiber were enriched by the precious marbles, and statues, and paintings, carried off by the soldiers when the city was sacked. Polybius, the Roman historian, saw some of these soldiers playing at draughts on the backs of pictures by celebrated artists.* Müller tells us that the vases and statues taken from Corinth to Rome introduced a new art fashion into the metropolis of the world.†

But about a century after the destruction of the ancient Corinth and the dispersion of its surviving inhabitants, *circa* B.C. 50, a new Corinth‡ arose. Julius Cæsar, noting the importance of the site both as a commercial port and a military position, built a new town on the ruins of the old, and peopled it with Italians, most of

* Strabo, viii. 6.

† Müller's *Archæologie*, † 165.

‡ Called after its founder, "*Colonia Julia Corinthus*."

whom were freed-men—*i.e.*, men who had been, or whose parents had been, slaves. The city rapidly increased. The descendants of the Greek merchants and traders who, at the destruction of the ancient city, had fled to Delos and the neighbouring coasts, came back to their ancestral home : and many Jews flocked eagerly to a city where there was much business to be done, and from which Jerusalem was easily reached. Still the Italians were the strongest, the ruling class. From this fact arose one chief characteristic of the place.* It was Roman not Greek, democratic not aristocratic, in its habits, and held in itself the vices as well as the virtues of turbulent democracy.

This fact tells on St. Paul's letters. It was only in a democratic city such as Corinth that those meetings could have taken place in which every member of the Church exercised his gifts in a brawling unmannerly way, and without heeding rules of order and courtesy : it was only in such a community that *the parties* could have been formed which divided the Church—a community in which a crude sense of equality and independence led men first to jostle together confusedly, and then to combine in adverse factions. Thus, if in the Church at Corinth we find a certain freedom and largeness of thought, we also find in it self-assertion, turbulence, disorder—one after

* The fact that so large a number of the converts mentioned in Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians have Latin names is one of those undesigned coincidences of fact with fact which are more convincing than designed and elaborate proof.

the other springing up and shouting, "I am of Paul," "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas."

Another fact throws light on the Epistles. Corinth, the home of a fierce democracy, was also a commercial port. Its site was perhaps the finest in the ancient world. It stood on the Isthmus which connected North with South Greece, on the narrow tongue of land which divides the *Ægæan* and *Ionian* seas.* The most prominent feature of the Isthmus was the *Acrocorinthus*, or citadel of Corinth—a stern, jagged, abrupt cone of rock which suddenly sweeps up to some two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and throws its long shadow half way down the Isthmus. The ascent is steep and fatiguing, and its summit so spacious that it would hold a large town; while its sides are so abrupt and rugged that a handful of soldiers might defend it against a well-appointed army. Nor would a beleaguered garrison suffer from thirst, since the *Acrocorinthus* is to this day plentifully served by the fountain *Peirene*, which Strabo describes as "full of sweet and clear water." The city of Corinth stood on the northern base of this lofty formidable rock, on a small table-land of no great elevation, and spread downward and sideward, throwing out great roads which extended to the sea on either side of the Isthmus. These roads terminated each in a port—Cen-

* Corinth was called "the Bridge of the Sea" (Pind. *Nem.* vi. 44) and "the Gate of the Peloponnesus" (Xen. *Agæ.* 2). The poets call it "*bimaris Corinthus*," or "the city of the two seas" (Horace, *Od.* I. vii. 2, and Ovid, *Her.* xii. 27).

chreæ on the Ægæan Sea, and Lechæum on the Ionian Sea ; the latter for the Italian, and the former for the Oriental commerce. The Isthmus between these two ports was only about three miles broad, and the light small ships of antiquity were often drawn across this narrow sandy space, and so transported from sea to sea. In the Apostle's time, the Emperor Nero made an unsuccessful attempt to cut a canal across, and thus facilitate the passage.

In this happy situation, Corinth soon rose to be one of the richest and greatest emporiums of the Roman Empire ; all the traffic between North and South Greece passing *along* the Isthmus it commanded, and most of the sea-borne traffic between Europe and Asia passing *across* it. From this fact arose another peculiarity of Corinth. Its aristocracy, its leading men, were not men of birth, but men of wealth ; not manufacturers even, but merchants. They had not the settled dignity which ancient and honourable lineage ought to give, nor had they the trained intelligence and quick invention which fit the manufacturer for success. Mere commerce is apt to sink into routine. It produces nothing, but simply shifts productions from one place to another. Those who pursue this vocation often come to look at all things merely with an eye to their market price, to worship Mammon instead of God, to value profit above honour, and to account as of little worth the mental power, or moral virtue, or spiritual hope, which weighs nothing

when put into their scales. And such men were many of the Corinthian merchants.

Besides this worship of wealth, there were also the usual demoralizing influences of a seaport. Men of all lands, of all faiths, of all morals and of none, met and jostled on the quays and in the streets of Corinth. Withdrawn for the time even from the feeble restraints which the influences of home would set to them, they gave loose to their passions. Corinth became a synonym for vice.* Licentiousness was dignified into worship: the temples, no less than the streets, swarmed with courtezans, more than a thousand of whom served as priestesses in a single temple devoted to the goddess Aphrodite. The stately but unhappy city became a hotbed of evil, in which every noxious weed, indigenous or transplanted, grew and thrived; luxury and sensuality were stimulated by the gambling spirit of commerce, till Corinth became a proverb of corruption.

These were the common characteristics of the place; but to complete our view, we must glance at each of the three races which found a home in it.

First, there were *the Greeks*. Now Greece was tainted

* Aristophanes uses the word "Κορινθιάζουσαι" (to Corinthianize) in the sense of "to play the wanton;" and Horace adverts to the evil reputation of the place in Ep. i. 17, "*Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum.*" "*Gay Corinthians*" was an English name for the votaries of vice under the Georges. It was while at Corinth that Paul afterwards drew the terrible picture of the vices of heathenism contained in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.

to the core. Her ancient patriotism was gone; her valour was no more. Her orators had lost the golden bow of their eloquence, her poets their ancient inspiration. Foreign conquest, the incessant tyranny and pillage of alien rulers, had broken her spirit. Loss of liberty ended in loss of manhood. Amid this universal degeneracy, there were two classes of Greeks very distinctly marked. There were the uncultured and the poor, peasants and villagers* for the most part, to whom ancient and honourable memories were still dear; to whom the old heathen religion was still vital and true; who still saw in imagination the ancient gods sitting in solemn conclave on the summit of Mount Olympus, and still heard Pan and the Fauns, the Oreads and Dryads, making merry in wood and by stream. Such were the Galatians, and such were those rude men of Lystra who took Paul and Barnabas for Jupiter and Mercury, and would fain have worshipped them. These were men who clung to the paganism of their fathers, and set themselves in grim desperate opposition to the Christian faith.

That was by no means the habit of the Greek gentlemen and citizens who gave themselves to elegant æsthetic pursuits. *They* had lost their religion as well as their

* *Pagani* (Pagans) meant simply the dwellers in obscure hamlets and villages among whom the heathen superstitions lingered long after they had disappeared from the towns and cities of the Empire. Hence the modern meaning of the word "Pagan." In like manner the word "heathen" took its present meaning from the fact that the wild dwellers on the German "heaths" were the last to receive the faith of Christ.

freedom ; and their restless curious Greek intellects found vent in the search for wisdom—not Solomon’s wisdom, the fear of God, but wisdom in the base sense of incessant intellectual speculation. They refined and mysticized till their speculations resembled airy cobwebs hanging on to nothing, but blown hither and thither by every gust, and annihilated the moment they came into contact with the sharp practical realities of life. In place of eloquence they took to rhetoric, multiplying words without meaning, as if they supposed that even solid facts might be talked out of their natural shape if only you talked long enough and cleverly enough about them. They were sceptical and pugnacious, holding no view very long or very earnestly, but willing to go to a considerable expenditure of words on its behalf so long as they held it. And this class of men—these subtle, speculative, shifty Greeks, always crying out for “wisdom of words”—were a main cause of trouble in the Corinthian Church. St. Paul’s letters are very much taken up with them.

The Romans also were in force at Corinth. Gallio, the Roman pro-consul, resided there during the greater part of Paul’s visit. The Apostle had some dealings with him. This Gallio* was the brother of Seneca, the famous Latin philosopher and moralist. All that Seneca tells us of his brother corresponds with the impression left by Luke’s account of him in the Acts of the Apostles. Seneca speaks of him with singular affection, not only as a man

* Junius Annæus Gallio.

of integrity and honesty, but as one who gained universal regard by his amiable temper and popular manners.* Now the personal character of the pro-consul was a matter of the greatest importance to Corinth and the other cities of his province, inasmuch as it influenced the whole system of administration, the general trade and prosperity, and the relative position to be taken by the different races, and factions, and sects. The people were happy or miserable according as the pro-consul, who was absolute lord of life and property throughout his province, was a rapacious harpy like Verres, or a generous and kindly governor like Cicero. Gallio was a ruler of the better sort. He was there to administer the Roman laws, but not to interfere with the squabbles of obscure sects, or to help one faction to triumph at the expense of another. He was there to mete out justice, whatever the mob might say to it, and to keep the peace between the alien races who were so ready to take each other by the throat. It was this wise impartial rule which, as we shall soon see, once saved Paul from death. Meantime, it is a noteworthy element in the Roman society of Corinth that it took its tone from a man like Gallio,† clement and popular, yet dignified and just.

* Seneca's words are: "*Nemo mortalium mihi tam dulcis est, quam hic omnibus; Gallionem fratrem meum, quem nemo non parum amat, etiam qui amare plus non potest.*"

† The pro-consul contributed very largely to give the tone to the Roman society of the provinces, and that not simply by his personal influence, but by that of his train. He was "attended by a host of secretaries, notaries,

If to all this we add the fact that *the Jews* were in some strength at Corinth, we shall have a tolerably complete view of the case. Then, as now, the Jews worshipped Mammon, and yet were ready to die, or even to give up their gold, rather than confess they did worship him, or acknowledge that Jehovah was not their God. Then, as now, they held by ordinances of outward observance after all meaning and spirit had gone out of them. The Messiah must be a great King. He must come with signs and wonders; must strive, and cry, and make a noise in the streets. Hence they plagued Paul with a perpetual requirement for "a sign," just as the Greeks were always asking him for "wisdom"—*i.e.*, airy speculations tricked out in rhetorical words: hence, while Greek and Roman were running into excess of riot, the Jews were standing up for antiquated forms and modes of worship which had long since lapsed into death.

It was among this society, thus constituted, thus complex, thus manifold, that Paul laboured for eighteen months, and to which he wrote the letters known as the First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians.

II. In the course of his second missionary journey, St. Paul passed from Athens to Corinth, from a quiet

heralds, lictors, physicians, and augurs; his train or *cohort* was swelled by a number of young nobles, aspirants to place and favour, who were sent by their friends to receive under his auspices their first initiation in the mysteries of public service."—MERIVALE'S *History of the Romans*, vol. iv. chap. xxxii. p. 28.

provincial town to the busy metropolis of a province, and from the seclusion of an ancient university to the seat of government and trade. In the flourishing ages of the Greek Republics, Athens was greater than Corinth in arts, in arms, and in politics: *now* Athens had only the memory of its previous greatness, while Corinth rose from its former ashes a new and splendid city, whose streets swarmed with busy crowds—a multitude of Greeks and Jews having united themselves to the military colonists whom Julius Cæsar had transplanted from Italy.

To the wealthy and luxurious inhabitants of Corinth the visit of Paul must have seemed a matter of the slightest importance: a solitary Eastern traveller, he would be at once lost in the constant ebb and flow of strangers crossing each other at the Isthmus. But by the Apostle himself his visit was regarded as of supreme moment. It was, and he felt it to be, the climax of his second missionary journey. When he started from the Syrian Antioch, he had thought to confine himself to the city and villages of Asia Minor. Thrice God interposed to enlarge the scope of his travels and labours. When he arrived at Galatia, he was “forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word.”* any longer in Asia. From thence he “*essayed to go into Bithynia,*” another Asian province; “*but the Spirit of Jesus suffered him not.*”† Passing in silence to Troas, Paul has a vision: “*a man of*

* Acts xvi. 6.

† Acts xvi. 7.

Macedonia" stands before him in an attitude of supplication, entreating him to cross over into Europe, and help those who were perishing for lack of knowledge.* And Paul, "assuredly gathering that the Lord had called him" to carry the Gospel to a new continent, at last took the resolution, memorable for all time, of crossing over into Europe. He arrives at Philippi, passes through the chief cities of Macedonia to Athens, tarrying only a few days at each of the places he visits, resting nowhere till he reaches Corinth. Here he tarried for the space of one year and six months. It was the term and climax of his journey; his labours at Corinth may be taken as the first establishment of the Gospel on the European continent.

At the time of his arrival there was a larger number of Jews in the city than usual, many of those who had been lately banished from Rome, by the decree of Claudius,†

* Acts xvi. 9, 10.

† In Acts xviii. 2, St. Luke tells us "that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome." The sacred historian is confirmed by Suetonius, who, in a remarkable passage (*Claud. xxv.*), points to the disputes between Jews and Christians as at least the ostensible reason of the imperial edict. He says: *Judaos, impulsore Chresto, assidue tumultuantes Romā expulit.*" "the Jews who, instigated by Chrestus, were in constant commotion, he (Claudius) banished from Rome." The substitution of *Chrestus* (Good) for *Christus* (Anointed) is a common error in the ancient Latin authors; but it is singular that Suetonius should have fallen into it, since he elsewhere calls the followers of Jesus *Christiani*, "Christiani, genus hominum superstitiosis novæ ac maleficæ (See Suet. *Nero. xvi. 3, 11*). Probably however the religious dissensions of the Jews were only the ostensible reason of their expulsion from Rome. The real reason seems to be, that the Jews of Judea were now in all

having taken refuge at Corinth. Among these were Aquila and Priscilla. In their house, always hospitably open to strangers,* Paul found a home, attaching himself to them because they were of the same craft with him. He dwelt with them, and wrought with them at the tents which they manufactured from the "*cilicium*," or haircloth of the Cilician goats. His first thought in this new city was to earn his bread and secure his independence by honest toil.†

Once fairly settled, we may suppose that he began to look about him and take note of the various aspects of the city and its environs. From the summit of the Acrocorinthus he would look down on "the double sea" whose blue waters swept round the Isthmus, threading their way through innumerable islands, and dashing against jutting promontories of rock. On the narrow neck of land which stretched between the two seas he would mark the level plain and broken gullies clothed with the stunted pine, from whose branches of emerald green were woven the garlands for the conquerors in the Isthmian Games—garlands which, in his First Epistle,

but open revolt, that sanguinary conflicts had taken place between them and the imperial legions; and that it was not deemed safe to permit many thousands of a disaffected and hostile race to remain in the capital.

* Romans xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 19.

† It is a pathetic fact that, despite his toilsome labours "with these hands," St. Paul, while at Corinth, felt the pinch of want. In 2 Cor. xi. 9, he tells his friends at Corinth a secret he would be careful to guard from them while he was with them. "When I was present with you, *and wanted*, I was chargeable to no man."

he contrasts with the unfading "incorruptible crown" of the Christian combatant.* In its eastern declivities he would observe the "*stadium*," or course, along which the runners raced with a speed and energy which St. Paul bids his converts imitate in the Christian race,† reminding them that "they who run in a race, run all, though only one receives the prize," and urging them, "so to run as to obtain." On the outskirts of the city his eye would rest on the spacious amphitheatre, in which, after the cruel Roman fashion, victims were thrown to the wild beasts, or gladiators fought to the death; and from which he probably drew his figures when he told his Corinthian converts how he had "fought with beasts at Ephesus," and how, when pressed above measure with hardships and indignities, it seemed to him that he was "set forth as the last in the file of combatants appointed to death"—a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.‡ About the city he would mark the temples and columns—columns with their *Corinthian* capitals—which alone had survived the conflagration that destroyed the former city, and works of art wrought in that Corinthian brass into which gold, and silver, and bronze had melted and run; and hence, no doubt, he drew that magnificent illustration§ in the third chapter of his First Epistle, in which he warns us that we build upon the one sure foundation, not "wood, hay, and stubble," but

* 1 Cor. ix. 25.

† 1 Cor. ix. 24.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 32, and 1 Cor. iv. 9.

§ 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13.

“gold, silver, and costly marbles,” that so when “the day that is to be revealed in fire prove every man’s work,” our work may “abide,” just as the precious metals and costly marbles of Corinth remained when all meaner edifices of wood and thatch had been swept away. Within the city, no doubt, he would also take note of the luxury and mammonism shown in the streets and markets, of the schools and gymnasia in which the Corinthians contracted their admiration for mere gifts of intellect and speech, and of those wicked temples in which licentious indulgences were hallowed by forms of worship.

All this we may fairly infer from the allusions which are so plentifully scattered through St. Paul’s Epistles. But we are not left thus laboriously to trace out hints and construct from scattered allusions the story of his religious labours in Corinth. In the Acts of the Apostles* we have some direct account of these. And from this account we learn that on the Hebrew Sabbath he was wont, when first he arrived in Corinth, to go up to the synagogue, and reason and persuade both with Jews and proselytes, apparently speaking at first only as a Jew to Jews, about the “mercy promised to their forefathers,” and the “oath sworn to Abraham.” But soon Timotheus and Silas follow him from Macedonia, and bring so good a report of the converts he has left there, that Paul is “pressed,” *i.e.*, “straitened,” in spirit.

* Acts xviii. 1, *et seq.*

He cannot any longer speak simply as a Jew. He testifies to his astonished hearers that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ of God. They break out into invective and blasphemy; and Paul stands up in the synagogue and shakes its dust from his robes, declaring that, since they will not hear him, he will henceforth "go to the Gentiles."

He had not far to go. Contiguous to the synagogue was the house of Justus, a proselyte, in which the Apostle continued to reason, and persuade, and testify to as many, both Greeks and Jews, as would come to hear. Here his labours were greatly blessed. The household of Stephanas were his first fruits in Achaia.* Gaius, with whom Paul found a home on his next visit to the city, was another of his converts.† Aquila and Priscilla too, with whom he now lived and worked, seem to have received his Gospel. But of all his early converts, none appears to have been more warmly welcomed than Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, whom, on his profession of faith, Paul baptized with his own hands, as indeed, contrary to his usual practice, he had also baptized Gaius and the family of Stephanas. The congregation rapidly grew. "*Many* of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."‡ Among this mixed and growing audience Paul "*sat,*" after the manner of the Rabbis, and taught with unabated fervour "the cross of Christ." Speaking not with enticing rhetorical words, but

* 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

† Rom. xvi. 23.

‡ Acts xviii. 8.

as one who heartily believed in the simple Gospel facts, he won an easy victory over the outworn creeds of Paganism and Hebraism. Some of his converts were, we know, men of culture and wealth ; but most of them were among the foolish, and weak, and low-born ;—"not many mighty, not many noble, not many wise," were called, but mainly the slaves and artisans, men whom the rigorous demands of labour kept in part unsophisticated, and open to the recognition of fact and truth. "These all, smitten as with an electric life-giving shock, became a distinct body, separate from their countrymen and neighbours, and exhibited a singular outward proof of the reality of the change which had passed upon them, not so much by their altered lives—for in this respect they were many of them gravely deficient—as by the sudden display of gifts of all kinds, such as they had either not possessed before, or possessed only in a much lesser degree." They spake with tongues ; they interpreted ; they prophesied ; they were enriched with all utterance and all knowledge : in the miraculous gifts of the Spirit they came behind no church of early times.

The only further interruption which St. Paul received from the Jews was the tumult led by Sosthenes, who had succeeded Crispus as the chief ruler of the synagogue. It would seem that while Paul was busy in his work, Gallio, the new pro-consul, arrived at Corinth. The Jews, anxious, if possible, to profit by a change in the administration, and encouraged, perhaps, by the compliant

and gracious character of the pro-consul, accused Paul before him as a disturber of the religious faith and peace of the city. They seem to have hoped that Paul would be given up to them ; and had Gallio been a governor of the stamp of Pilate, or Festus, or Felix, their hope would probably have been fulfilled. Happily he was a man of a nobler cast ; and no sooner had he understood that the question before him was simply a question of " words and names " and the technicalities of the Hebrew faith, than, without permitting Paul to reply to the accusation, he drove Sosthenes and his abettors from the judgment-seat. This was a decision which carried grave consequences with it. The whole city was on the alert to see what the new pro-consul would do, and to gather some hints of the direction in which his sympathies would run ;—whether he would favour the Jews, whose religion was protected by the Roman State, or side with the Greeks, who hated the Jews. It was a great triumph for the Greeks, though Gallio had not meant to give a triumph to either party, but simply to administer public justice, and leave all disputes of sects and factions to settle themselves as best they could. But the Greeks interpret the decision as adverse to the Jews : they deliver Paul from the hands of his enemies ; they rush upon Sosthenes and beat him, probably with the lictors' rods, before the pro-consular chair. And " Gallio cared for none of these things." Why should he ? It was no part of his office to decide religious disputes, but simply

to punish cases of public "wrong and wicked lewdness." He is there to administer the justice of the State, not to control or patronize religion; and it is surely hard that those, who think the State can do no better thing for the Church than to leave it alone, condemn Gallio, and denounce him for his indifference, when he simply acted as they think officers of State should act, and by his impartiality saved the life of the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

How critical the occasion was we may infer from the fact that on all previous occasions Paul had left the cities in which the Jews persecuted him; and that to keep him at Corinth God sent him a vision,* and spake to him saying, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city." God would not have spoken thus had not Paul been discouraged and fearful, had not the danger seemed very great and very imminent. It was only because God cheered and strengthened him that Paul remained at Corinth, risking all the enmity of the Jews in order that he might gather much people of that wicked city into the pure fold of Christ.

III. In all works of early Christian art, and notably in the Roman Catacombs, St. Paul is portrayed as of short stature, bald head, clear grey eyes looking out from under projecting shaggy eyebrows, aquiline nose,

* Acts xviii. 9, 10.

pointed beard, long oval face, and a figure bent and worn with many toils. That he was of a nervous and highly susceptible temperament may be inferred from the impulsive and passionate tone of his letters, an inference which the voice of tradition confirms. His opponents at Corinth, while admitting that his Epistles were weighty and effective, assert that he was of an "infirm" habit of body, and that as an orator his "presence" was unimposing, and his rhetoric "contemptible."* This "weakness," to which Paul himself constantly alludes, he attributes to the exhausting labours which came upon him in his care for all the churches, and the manifold "perils" he had affronted in his missionary journeys.† At Corinth his "infirmities" sorely pressed upon him, he having so much to do, and so little strength with which to do it; he was with them "in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling,"‡ nervously anxious lest his constitutional debility and frequent sicknesses should hinder the effect of his Gospel.

The labours he wrung from his "weakness" are almost incredible. The infant Church was composed of two main sections, each of which gave him perpetual cause for fear lest he should have bestowed his labour upon them in vain. The Gentiles, Greeks and Romans, formed by far the larger section of the Corinthian Church; and these were men who had only just renounced the licentious worship of heathen divinities,

* 2 Cor. x. 10.

† 2 Cor. xi. 23, *et seq.*

‡ 1 Cor. ii. 3.

who still held grossly immoral acts to be innocent or indifferent, and who found the doctrines of a future life and the resurrection of the body almost too incredible for belief. If the Gentiles formed the more numerous, the Jews formed the more energetic, section of the Church; and these were men who still retained the rite of circumcision and the observance of the Sabbath, who abstained from "meats" and attended the great Hebrew festivals, and who were eagerly bent on imposing the yoke of their traditions on the neck of their Gentile associates. During his whole stay at Corinth it was St. Paul's task to contend against the habitual licentiousness of Heathenism and the no less habitual intolerance of Judaism,—a very grievous task to a man of his pure catholic spirit.

Hard as it was, this was by no means his only work. During the eighteen months for which, to use Luke's phrase, Paul "sat" at Corinth,* we are not to suppose that Corinth was anything more, nor does Luke's phrase imply that it was more, than his head quarters. In the opening of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians,† Paul salutes not only the "church of God which is at Corinth," but also "all the saints that are in all Achaia;" and the breadth of his salutation appears to indicate that his labours as teacher and evangelist had extended through the whole province of which Corinth was the metropolis. Communication with other parts of the province was easy

* Ἐκάθηρον. Acts xviii. 11.

† 2 Cor. i. 2.

and frequent both by land and by water. Argos was but two days' journey to the south of Corinth; there, as we learn from Philo,* there was a community of Jews, to whom, as his brethren after the flesh, Paul would desire to speak. About the same distance to the East lay the city of Athens, which Paul had briefly visited on his way to Corinth,† and to which he no doubt paid repeated visits that he might confirm and enlarge the faith of his disciples. Within a few hours' walk, along a road alive with traffic, was the port of Cenchreæ, where, as we learn from the Epistle to the Romans,‡ a "church" of Christ had been established. To these, as to other cities and harbours, his connection with which we can no longer trace, the indefatigable apostle, though now a grey infirm man of sixty years of age, would doubtless often travel, winning men to the faith, or establishing them in righteousness.

These were "the churches of God" § in which, as he told his Thessalonian converts, St. Paul boasted of their faith and patience. For, as though it were not enough for him to compose the differences of the Corinthian converts and to extend his labours through the whole province of Achaia, the Apostle during his sojourn in Corinth wrote his two epistles to the Church at Thessalonica. From Timotheus, who joined him at Corinth, he had heard of the persecutions to which the Thes-

* Philo, de Leg. ad Cai.

† Acts xvii. 15, *et seq.*

‡ Romans xvi. 1.

§ 2 Thess. i. 4.

salonians were exposed, and of their misconceptions of his teaching concerning the second advent of Christ. Therefore he writes to them, comforts them in their affliction, and corrects the errors into which their eagerness for the second coming of the Lord had hurried them. In one passage of his Second Epistle* there is an allusion to his apostolic labours at Corinth, and the oppositions he had to encounter, especially from the Jewish section of the Church, a passage which gives us a direct glimpse into his troubled heart: "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may be glorified . . . and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for"—and one can imagine with what a sigh this sentence would be penned—"the faith is not for all."

At last, having continued these varied and exhausting labours for the space of a year and six months, Paul set sail from the port of Cenchreæ for Ephesus. Here he remained, after a flying visit to Judea, for full three years, "disputing and persuading" with the Ephesians "the things concerning the kingdom of God;"† and hence, towards the close of his sojourn in Ephesus, he wrote the letter known to us as the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

IV. The history of the Church at Corinth during the three years which elapsed between the departure of Paul and the arrival of his First Epistle is for the most part sufficiently clear, though no little obscurity hangs over

* 2 Thess. iii. 1, 2.

† Acts xix. 8-10.

certain minor passages in it which have to be laboriously inferred from scattered and uncertain allusions.

The first fact of any note which occurred after Paul left Corinth was the arrival of Apollos,* the Jew of Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures. The Alexandrian Jews were famous for their learning and culture, their profound acquaintance with the Greek systems of thought, and their ardent endeavours to express the truths which came by Moses in the terms of the Greek philosophy. Apollos, who had shared their advantages and who was a man of a very studious and fervent spirit, after a brief course of instruction from Aquila and Priscilla,† who “expounded to him the way of God more perfectly,” arrived at Corinth shortly after the departure of St. Paul, and “helped them much who had believed through grace,” mightily convincing the Jews that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah foretold by their Scriptures. Founding himself on the very truths which Paul had made familiar to the Corinthians,‡ “watering” what he had planted, “building” on the

* *Apollos* is the abbreviated form of Apollonius. And here, in this name, we meet with another of those minute and undesigned coincidences which go so far to establish the accurate truth of the Apostolic History. The New Testament tells us that Apollos, or Apollonius, was of Alexandria. Now this was the name of the first governor left by Alexander the Great in the province of which Alexandria was the capital; and from that time Apollonius, or the abridged form Apollos, became one of the commonest names in the city, many parents naming their sons after the popular governor.

† Acts xviii. 24, *et seq.*

‡ See the honourable testimony borne to his labours at Corinth already cited from Acts xviii. 26, 27, and again in 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6.

foundation which he had laid, Apollos was able to meet the Greek craving for "wisdom," *i.e.*, speculation, and for "words," *i.e.*, rhetoric. Eloquent by natural gift, and accustomed to translate revealed truths into philosophical terms, he was gladly welcomed by the Gentile members of the Church, some of whom soon announced their preference of his scholastic ornate method of teaching over the grave simplicity, the "great plainness of speech," which Paul affected while at Corinth.

Another event which largely influenced the Corinthian Church was the arrival of certain Judaic teachers, armed with "letters of recommendation"* from (probably) the church at Jerusalem. Teachers of this stamp—Rabbis, Scribes, Pharisees—who had adopted the Christian faith without giving up the law of Moses, tracked Paul's steps wherever he went, and were a perpetual tormenting hindrance to him in his great work. They prided themselves on having "known Jesus after the flesh," or with holding their commissions as Christian teachers from the Apostles who had "complicated with Him from the beginning;" or they claimed a special authority on the ground of their intimacy with "the brethren of the

* Many references to these *Epistola Commendatoria* will be found in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and notably in 2 Cor. iii. 1. Allusions to similar emissaries from the church at Jerusalem, and, after the destruction of Jerusalem, from the "school" at Batanea, are scattered through the inspired Epistles. One such will be found in Gal. ii. 12. Professor Plumptre, in his poem "Thoughts of a Galatian Convert," vividly sets forth the pernicious consequences of their pride and bigotry.

Lord," or as members of the "school" which these "brothers" of Jesus had founded at Batanea.* They were of a Jewish rather than a Christian heart; for while they received Jesus as the promised Messiah, they still held themselves to be the chosen people, the theocratic nation, entitled therefore to the exclusive favour of God. If other nations or persons desired to share his favour, they must submit to circumcision and avow themselves proselytes to the Hebrew faith: to believe on Christ and work righteousness was not enough. Hence their aim was to make the synagogue the porch to the Church, to turn all the Gentile converts into Jewish proselytes who should differ from other Jews only in that they recognised Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God. At first they would be content with nothing short of this, hoping no doubt that, if by enforcing circumcision they kept some Gentiles aloof, they should win over a large number of Jews to the Christian faith. In so many words they assured the earlier Gentile converts, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved."† But after the decision of "the Council of Jerusalem," a decision which excused *Gentile* converts from the burden of the law,‡ they were compelled to change their tactics. The decree of the Council assumed, or seemed to assume, that the Jewish Christians would continue to observe the law of Moses. Of this they took

* Julius Africanus, in Eusebius, *H. E.* i. 7.

† Acts xv. 1.

‡ Acts xv. 22-29.

advantage, insisting on the separation of those who observed the law from those who did not observe it. They held and taught that uncircumcised Gentiles were in a lower spiritual condition than circumcised converts; that only the latter were true sons of faithful Abraham and in full acceptance with God.

Now this was not a mere question of words, and names, and outward observances. The question really at stake was, Whether those who believed in Christ should be simply an additional Jewish sect, or whether they should form a catholic Christian Church, altogether distinct from the synagogue, "dead to the law," and open to all who trusted in the Son of God. Hence the harassed Apostle so passionately opposed himself to the Judaising teachers who marred his work, and roundly assured his Gentile converts, "If ye should be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."*

At Corinth, the Church being so largely Gentile, these Judaising teachers did not venture to require circumcision; nor as the memory of "father" Paul was still fresh and dear to many of its members, did they at first venture to attack him openly. The attack was covert. They began to ask, as we may infer from the Apostle's defence,† whether Paul had "seen the Lord?" whether he had wrought any mighty "works?" and whether these were not the invariable and authentic signs of a true Apostle? They doubted whether, if Paul were indeed an Apostle,

* Gal. v. 2.

† 1 Cor. ix.

he would not "lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other Apostles and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas."* They hinted that if he had not his own doubts about his apostolic calling, he would not scruple to accept a maintenance from the Church instead of working with his own hands.† In short, they followed the usual course of the sticklers for a blind and narrow orthodoxy, and turned the freedom and boldness, the unconventionalism, and unclericalism, and generosity of the earnest teacher against himself. These hints and insinuations, and seeds of doubt, bore bitter fruit before many months were past; and those "unreasonable and wicked men," growing bold by Paul's continued silence, did not scruple to affirm that they could discover none of the signs of a veritable apostleship, whether in his character or work.‡

The worst and most mischievous result of their wicked interference was the rise of that factious spirit, the correction of which occupies so large a place in both St. Paul's Epistles to the Church. The Roman genius for party strife, the tendency to faction which had long been recognised as "the peculiar malady of the Greek commonwealth," the rigid pedantic formalism of the Jews,—these, with the turbulent democratic habits of the people of Corinth, made it inevitable, perhaps, that parties should spring up in the Church. But that they sprang up so early as they did was owing mainly to the presence of

* 1 Cor. ix. 5.

† 1 Cor. ix. 6, *et seq.*

‡ 2 Cor. x.-xii.

the teachers from Jerusalem, and the way in which they fanned a naturally factious temper into a flame.

The Church was split up—"the Christ divided," as Paul phrases it*—into four different factions, whose respective war-cries were, "I am of Paul," "I of Apollos," "I of Cephas" and "I of Christ."

The Faction of Peter, those who said, "I am of Cephas"—characteristically preferring the *Hebrew* form of the Apostle's name—were the open disciples of the Judaic teachers, and were themselves, no doubt, mainly of the Jewish stock. Peter was "the Apostle of the Circumcision," and to him all those clave who prided themselves on their Hebrew descent and privileges. They laid stress on the special promises made to St. Peter, and inferred the inferiority of Paul as compared with "the Rock" on which the Church was to be built. They depreciated St. Paul as an advocate of celibacy. They probably declaimed on his audacity in venturing to withstand Peter to his face when that unstable Apostle turned his back upon the Gentiles. They iterated and reiterated that Paul had never seen the Lord, till even Paul himself seems to have grown somewhat sensitive on that point; and they affirmed that it was an indispensable qualification of an Apostle that he should be one of those who "companied" with the disciples "all the time that Jesus went in and out among them." They appear even to have accused him of "walking in craftiness, and handling

* 1 Cor. i. 13.

the Word of God deceitfully,"* of being actuated by selfish and sinister motives, of being neither a true Hebrew nor a true minister of Christ.†

It was natural that as the Jewish members of the Church gathered round the teachers from Jerusalem, the Greeks should rally to the Apostle of the Uncircumcision. Hence arose *the Faction of Paul*. They had caught somewhat of their master's bold free temper. They were disposed to ridicule the scruples of their less enlightened or less courageous brethren; to laugh at idols as bug-bears; to enjoy all the good creatures of God, and sometimes to abuse them; to decry the law, and disregard days and ceremonies.‡ Some of them went so far as to exult over the fall of the holy nation, and to glory in *their* exemption from the yoke of circumcision as though it had been won by their own prowess. As the Jewish Petrine party grew more rigid in their formalism, more narrow in their dogma, more exclusive in their spirit, the Gentile Pauline party grew more disposed to carry freedom into licence, and to refine on the doctrines of the Gospel till they lost their savour, or to pervert them into arguments for immorality. St. Paul had taught them that the law was dead to them and they to the law, meaning that they had a Spirit in them which would guide them into a free natural holiness apart from and better than the righteousness of outward forms: they interpreted

* 2 Cor. iv. 1, 2.

† 2 Cor. xi. 22, 23.

‡ 1 Cor. viii. 1, *et seq.*; ix. 19, *et seq.*; x. 23, *et seq.*

him to mean that they might break the law of God with impunity. The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, said St. Paul; "circumcision availeth nothing, nor uncircumcision," meaning to set forth the independence of the true religious life on outward forms: they interpreted him to mean that all outward actions were indifferent, and that sins of the flesh were of small account. "Ye are risen with Christ," affirmed St. Paul, meaning that the dying of the Lord Jesus for sin effects a corresponding death to sin in the believer, and his resurrection a corresponding resurrection to holiness: they interpreted him as denying the physical resurrection of Christ and the future resurrection of the body, thus occasioning the grand argument of the fifteenth chapter in the First Epistle.

The Faction of Apollos seems to have consisted simply of those who, while they held to the truths taught by Paul, preferred the eloquent philosophic expression of them given by Apollos. Their error was an undue love of speculation and the glittering splendours of rhetoric. And there would perhaps have been no great harm in this preference if it had not led them to elevate Apollos, much against his will,* into Paul's rival. As partizans they began to exaggerate all the minute points of difference they could discover between the two teachers,

* From 1 Cor. xvi. 12, it appears that Apollos knew how his name had been abused, and was reluctant to revisit Corinth lest his presence should seem to sanction the abuse.

and gradually formed that craving for the mere wisdom of words and an airy speculative way of handling the Gospel truths, which, as Paul warned them, was fast emptying the cross of Christ of its saving contents.*

The Faction of Christ is commonly held to have been a subdivision of the Hebrew party which claimed to be of Peter.† St. Paul had not seen the Lord while He was on earth; and those who claimed to pertain with special right to “Christ” may have been those who had seen Him, or who clave to such of the teachers from Jerusalem as had seen and followed Him. On the other hand, they may have been, though this is held to be less likely, those members of the Church who, when it first split into factions, refused to join any of them, or to be known by any name save the Common Name. If they were, they must at last have so condemned sectarianism as to become sectarian, and have been so ready to quarrel with brethren of a less catholic temper as to lose their catholicity,—a posture of affairs not altogether unknown in the present day. But the opinion which carries the greater weight of authority is, that they were simply a variety of the faction which named itself after Cephas, just as the followers of Apollos were simply a variety of the faction which gloried in the name of Paul.

The “*weak brethren*,”‡ of whom we hear so much in St. Paul’s First Epistle, do not appear to have belonged to any of the factions, or at least not to have been con-

* 1 Cor. i. 17.

† 2 Cor. x. 7, *et seq.*

‡ 1 Cor. viii. 7; ix. 22.

spicuous in them ; but to have been, for the most part, Jewish members of the Church who could not fully take up the liberty with which Christ had made them free. They were of a tender sensitive conscience, full of scruples, fettered by early habits, and prejudices, and superstitions ; not able to decide rapidly and conclusively between evil and good. And, like most persons of this infirm and relaxed temper of mind, they were mainly busy with ordinances and observances,—wanting to know whether they might eat meat from the temple shambles, whether they might intermarry with the heathen, or, indeed, marry at all ; anxious, above all things, to be minutely accurate in their forms, and orthodox in their opinions ; for ever putting cases of conscience to themselves, and not able to extract any authoritative reply. There was great danger for nervous self-distrusting casuists such as these, amid the turbulent factions of the Corinthian church,—danger lest they should have their scruples overborne, and be led by bolder spirits to do that which, though not wrong in itself, would be wrong in them. St. Paul is very tender in dealing with these “babes in Christ,” extending to them the protecting gentle pity which strong men yield to nervous women and weak frightened children.













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