THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST
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WITH

AN EXAMINATION OF THE SPECULATIONS OF STRAUSS IN HIS 'NEW LIFE OF JESUS'

AND AN INTRODUCTORY VIEW OF THE PRESENT POSITION OF THEOLOGICAL INQUIRY IN REFERENCE TO THE EXISTENCE OF GOD AND THE MIRACULOUS EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

BY THE LATE

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PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

The first ten Lectures contained in this volume were delivered by the Author at the commencement of the past Session to the Students of Divinity in the University of Aberdeen. The other five, in which the speculations of Strauss on the Resurrection of Jesus are examined, were prepared without any intention of being delivered in the Divinity Hall, but with a view ultimately to publication, and were finished only a few days before the Author's death.

The Author considered it his duty, during the last year of his life, to engage anew in a careful and patient study of the great subject of the Resurrection of Christ, as the fundamental fact on which the whole of Christianity rests, and as the point against which its most powerful and popular assailants have in recent times
mainly directed their attacks. He became more and more deeply impressed with the feeling that all present discussions on the subject of Miracles ought to be viewed with reference to this event—the crowning manifestation of the miraculous power of God. He was also convinced that, while it may be well to expose the fallacy of the general principles and methods by which such writers as Baur, Strauss, and Renan strive to undermine the Faith, it is likely to prove a much more effectual process to examine calmly and minutely some leading portion of their so-called criticism, and to show how utterly unsupported it is by the only witnesses from whom any knowledge whatever of the facts criticised can be obtained,—how inconsistent with the very facts admitted by those authors themselves. In this way he believed the mind would naturally, and without further argument, be brought to perceive the groundless nature of their theories.

He was thus led to think that a work containing a distinct statement, in a somewhat new form, of the general argument regarding the nature, possibility, and design of Miracles, with a renewed and careful examination of the Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus, followed
by an analysis of the reasonings of the principal assailants of the truth of that Resurrection, especially those of Strauss (the most important, plausible, and acute in the literature of modern infidelity), and some others, might prove a useful and seasonable contribution to the support of the Faith.

To the preparation of a work of this nature the Author had accordingly resolved to address himself. The Lectures now published contain the materials he had so far arranged for the first portion of his undertaking. The present volume, therefore, although complete in itself, is to be viewed as only a part of a larger and somewhat modified work, to the completion and publication of which the Author intended to devote the approaching summer.

In the room of the first four Lectures the Author had some intention of writing an introduction bearing more particularly on the special design of the whole work. These Lectures, however, are retained in the form in which they were delivered, as standing in natural and interesting connection with the rest of the volume, and as forming part of the Author's last effort on behalf of his Students and of the Church of Christ. He also intended to intro-
duce a Lecture on the Canon of the New Testament, with special reference to the authenticity and genuineness of the four Gospels; and in this he was prepared to consider particularly the objections that have been recently urged against the Gospel according to St John. After finishing his examination of Strauss, he was about to commit to writing his observations on Renan's theory of the Resurrection; but of this portion of his design he has left only a few guiding notes. Then, leaving the region of unbelief and objections, he intended to conclude with the consideration of a subject which had a powerful hold on his thoughts and feelings,—that of the Resurrection of the Saviour as the sure pledge of ours, and the power of that Resurrection as the ground of religious hope.

Such was the expressed intention of the deceased Author; and the following Lectures are, with the foregoing explanation, committed to the press, in the hope that they may be the means of fulfilling, as far as is now possible, the purpose he had in view.

May He whose Name was sought to be hallowed by them make them the means of establishing the faith of His people, and of arrest-
ing in some measure the bold efforts of those who seek to rob us of our faith and hope! Would that the work now humbly presented, with feelings of deep sadness, to the Church of Christ as a memorial of my father’s faith and labour, had been completed and perfected by himself!

In the portion of the work that is devoted to the examination of Strauss’s views, each Lecture was intended to contain the full discussion of a distinct topic. This will account for the unusual length of some of the Lectures.

My sincere thanks are due to the Reverend Dr Campbell, Principal of the University of Aberdeen, and to the Reverend Dr Forbes of Donaldson’s Hospital, Edinburgh, for their invaluable advice and assistance, so willingly tendered in reference to this publication. Their aid has, I know, been to them a labour of love. To Principal Campbell’s kindness I am also indebted for the accompanying sketch of my father’s life and character.

W. M. MACPHERSON.

Kennethmont, Aberdeenshire,
May 2, 1867.
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MEMOIR.

The Rev. Dr Robert Macpherson, author of the following Lectures, was born on the 9th of January 1806, of parents estimable for their piety and worth. His grandfather was a native of Badenoch, in Inverness-shire—his father a trader in Montrose. Dr Macpherson was no genealogist, but he has been heard to relate the pleasure he once felt, in passing through the country of his forefathers, when a gentleman of high position in the clan, and well acquainted with its history, pointed out to him the spot they had inhabited for many generations, and informed him that they were still remembered for their virtues. Along with something of the sensitive pride and keen temper of his race, he inherited many of its best characteristics—veneration, loyalty, great depth of affection and strength of attachment, with a chivalrous readiness to espouse the cause of the unfortunate and the oppressed.

He received his early training at the academy of his native town, under Dr James Calvert, who long afterwards spoke with affectionate admiration of the distinguished appearance he had made at school, and particularly of "the resolute and indefatigable spirit with which he used to encounter and conquer difficulties." The same energy and indomitable perseverance marked his character through life.
To prepare himself for entering the University and King's College of Aberdeen, he became for some time a pupil of the Rev. William Linton, Rector of the Grammar-School of Brechin, who had attained great reputation in training young men for the bursary competition, and profited so well that at the beginning of the session of 1823-24 he gained one of the most valuable bursaries. As a Student in Arts, he obtained high prizes in almost every class; and at his graduation in 1827, he carried off the Huttonian prize for excellence in all the branches of study, the highest reward the University then had to bestow.

After spending a few years, chiefly near London, as a private tutor, he entered in 1830 the Divinity Hall at Aberdeen. His course there was marked by the same exemplary conduct and distinction as his previous career. At the close of his first session in 1831, he was the successful competitor for a prize given by Sir Charles Forbes, Bart., M.P., Lord Rector of Marischal College, and open to all the Students of Theology in Aberdeen, for the best essay on the question:—"Is there anything in the doctrines of Natural Religion that would lead men to expect that God would bestow a Revelation on the human race?"

The estimation in which Mr Macpherson's character and attainments were held in the University, is attested by the fact that, while yet a Student of Divinity, he was intrusted for some time, during the illness of the respective Professors, with the charge of the Greek classes, and (on two several occasions) of the class of Natural Philosophy.

He was admitted a Licentiate of the Church by the Presbytery of Aberdeen, on the 5th of August 1834, and after acting for a short time as assistant in the parish of North Berwick, was ordained by the same Presbytery, on being appointed Chaplain of the Garrison of Fort-George, on the 3d of November 1835. He had, in the interval, been selected as one of the two Murray Sunday-Lecturers in
King's College Chapel for the session 1835-36; but this honour, highly esteemed by the young divines of the University, his appointment to Fort-George compelled him to resign.

The duties of his chaplaincy, which were often of a difficult and delicate kind, he discharged with great judgment, fidelity, and acceptance; earning, as the recorded testimony of a Commanding Officer declares, the respect and gratitude of all—officers and men—by his exertions in promoting their spiritual welfare.

While at Fort-George he married Anne, eldest daughter of the Rev. Dr Mearns, Professor of Divinity in King's College, Aberdeen, who survives him, and by whom he has left five sons and two daughters.

After the memorable Secession of 1843, he was presented by the Earl of Moray to the church and parish of Forres. Less confident than those who knew him of his fitness for a charge, which, owing to the peculiar circumstances of the time, presented unusual difficulties, and perhaps desirous of a position that might allow more leisure for study, he would fain have relinquished the offer for a less prominent and smaller benefice in the neighbourhood. But this retreat was closed against him; and the result more than justified the opinion of the Patron, and of the friends who had urged his acceptance of Forres. Of this no better evidence can be desired than the following spontaneous tribute to his memory, which appeared in the local newspaper a week after his death:—

"The death of Dr Macpherson has excited a very general and profound feeling of regret in this town, where he was greatly respected and beloved among people of every class, and where the memory of his ministry is still fondly cherished by many.

"He was appointed Minister of Forres in 1843. It was a very trying time, and he entered upon his ministry
under very trying circumstances. The congregation which had been wont to worship in the parish church was broken up and very much scattered by the disruption which had lately taken place, and which had caused the vacancy in the parish; and party spirit was running high throughout the town. But Dr Macpherson was eminently qualified in many respects to encounter the difficulties with which he had to contend, and the happy effects of the energy, diligence, and prudence with which he applied himself to his ministry, were soon apparent in the increasing number and flourishing condition of the congregation which waited on his ministrations. As the angry passions engendered by the agitations of the time gradually subsided, his merits came to be recognised and acknowledged beyond the limits of the Church to which he belonged; and long before he left the parish, he had won for himself such a place as few ministers in these days are able to attain in the esteem of the whole community.

"As a preacher, Dr Macpherson’s talents were of a very superior order. The subject-matter of his discourses always consisted of sound expositions and faithful applications of divine truth—the fruit of much study, of an extensive acquaintance with the Word of God, a deep knowledge of the human heart, and much Christian experience. He had been the subject, as we happen to know, of religious convictions from his boyhood, and he was a preacher who could say, ‘We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.’ The chief features of his delivery were earnestness and impressiveness. His sermons might present few of the flowers and embellishments of rhetoric, but they were pervaded by the burning ardour of a godly zeal for truth and righteousness upon the earth, and an intense abhorrence of evil; and it was impossible to listen to him without being convinced that he was speaking from the heart. He often preached without the aid of notes, and, even when he had his sermon
written and the manuscript lying before him, he was frequently carried away from it by the overflowing fulness of his mind and the fervency of his feelings.

"The duties of the pulpit, however, were the least part of his ministerial labours. He visited assiduously from house to house, especially among the poor, ministering not only to their spiritual but also to their temporal necessities; and wherever there was sickness or trouble of any kind, whether among rich or poor, there he was sure to be found doing the office not only of a faithful minister, but also of a sympathising friend.

"He felt a deep and lively interest in the education of the young. Fraser's Female Industrial School will remain a monument of his enlightened zeal in this respect, no less than of the munificence of him whose name it bears; and one of the greatest disappointments Dr Macpherson met with during his ministry in Forres, arose from the failure of a plan which he proposed, and on which his heart was greatly set, for the establishment of a parochial school in the town.

"He also took an active part in the management of the provision for the poor, especially during the first years of the operation of the present Poor Law Act, when his excellent business habits enabled him to give very efficient assistance in setting the new machinery in motion. In a word, he was always ready, and could be relied on, to do all that was in his power for the promotion of any public object that seemed likely to benefit the town.

"He loved Forres very dearly, and retained his affection for it to the last. It was always a source of extreme pleasure to him to meet with a person from Forres, and to hear of his old parishioners. Students from the town and neighbourhood received much kind attention and hospitality at his hands; and he was occupied during the last day of his life in writing a long letter addressed to a gentleman in this
town, which bears upon it striking evidence of the interest which he continued to feel in the institutions of Forres.”

In 1852 the Professorship of Divinity in the University and King's College having become vacant by the death of his father-in-law, Mr Macpherson was induced to become a candidate for the Chair. This office, founded in 1620 by the Synod of Aberdeen, is in the patronage of a body consisting of the Moderator of the Synod, and two Delegates from each of the eight Presbyteries within its bounds, along with the Principal of the University, the Dean of Theology, and an elected member of the Senatus, and according to the terms of the Charter, framed in times of public academical disputations, is filled up by a competitive trial of the candidates in the learned languages, philosophy, and the various branches of theology. On this occasion several candidates were spoken of, but only two presented themselves for trial, Mr Macpherson and the Rev. Samuel Trail, of Harray and Birsay, in Orkney, also a distinguished alumnus and graduate of the University. After an arduous contest of several days, the choice fell upon Mr Macpherson; but so strong was the impression produced by the learning and abilities of both candidates, that the Senatus Academicus, at the request of the examiners, conferred simultaneously on both the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Dr Macpherson entered on all the duties of his office with intense zeal and devotion. He had always been a laborious student and a close thinker, and never spoke from the pulpit, from the academical chair, or on any important matter of business, without the fullest possible examination of the subject in all its bearings, and the most careful reflection. No man could be more averse from offering, in any capacity, “that which had cost him nothing.” His students had always the satisfaction of knowing that the instructions of their Professor were the fruit of the most scholarly investigation and anxious thought. He seldom delivered a portion
of his course without alteration, and frequently rewrote or entirely recast his prelections, with special reference to the tendencies of theological literature at the time. He was, however, far from making any parade of his great reading and research; and in discussing the views of others, especially of those still alive and of note in any branch of the Church, he generally avoided, if possible, all mention of their names. The Lectures in this volume may be taken as a specimen of his unremitting activity as a theological teacher, and of his care to arm his students against prevailing error.

While he neglected no branch of theological study or instruction, his favourite department was the critical interpretation of Scripture. For several years he devoted to Sacred Hermeneutics much more time and attention than is usually done by Theological Professors. As a Biblical scholar his attainments were of the highest order. His remarks in reference to the exercises of his students on the original text of the Hebrew Scriptures showed how fully and successfully he had for himself investigated the meaning of important and difficult passages; and in familiarity with the text of the Greek New Testament, and with all questions relative to the authenticity and criticism of its various parts, he had probably no superior in Scotland. While naturally led in this direction as a student and a teacher by his own turn of mind and by the academical traditions of Aberdeen, he was even more so by the consideration that such studies, at all times necessary to enable the friends of Revelation to determine its true import, have become in our day the chosen battle-field of its most able and popular opponents.

After the institution in the University in 1860 of a separate chair of Biblical Criticism, he restricted himself mainly, in accordance with the special designation assigned to his office by the Universities Act of 1858, to Systematic Theology; and, in addition to his regular courses of Lectures, he delivered a weekly series of explanatory prelections on the Westminster
Confession of Faith. The profound studies in which the preparation of these prelections engaged him produced in his case, as similar inquiry has often done in the case of others, a strong sense of the moderate spirit and cautious language of that great work—even on those topics on which it has sometimes been represented as extreme—and of its value as an embodiment of Scriptural truth. While lecturing on the Evidences of Christianity, he devoted one day weekly to explaining and examining upon the Second Part of Butler's Analogy.

In conducting his classes, he attached great importance to examination, as well as to the special method of examining which he had adopted, and in his opinion of the usefulness of which his best students fully concurred. It was his practice, at the close of a lecture, or when prescribing a portion of an author for study, to dictate a short series of very carefully prepared questions, and to require written answers to be read in the class at a subsequent meeting. His public criticisms of the exercises and discourses of his students were always founded on a thorough perusal in private, and were not only felt to be valuable on that account, but to be just, considerate, and kind.

His great aim and spirit in discharging the duties of his high office, and the manner in which these were appreciated, may be inferred from the following expressions in a communication addressed to his family "in name of the Divinity Students," after his death:

"In losing Dr Macpherson we have lost both a wise teacher and a warm friend. We know how deeply interested he was in our welfare—not only in our general, but in our individual welfare; how specially interested in all that concerned our efficiency in the high office we aspire to fill; how untiring were his efforts, for this purpose, to give us intellectually a firm grasp of Christian truth, so that we might not only hold it ourselves free from error, but be able to defend
it; and spiritually to guide us all, as the first step towards such efficiency, to Christ Himself, that, being real partakers of His grace and Spirit, we might preach from the heart with that true zeal and earnestness which can spring only from living communion with the Great Master. Brought daily into contact with such a mind, so rich and varied in its powers, yet withal so meekly bowing before the Supreme Wisdom that speaks in Scripture, with a spirit so devout, so earnest, so full of love to God and truth, with a heart so warm and so much interested in all that concerned us,—it is indeed little wonder that we all learned to love him, and that we mourn his loss with unfeigned sorrow.”

While thus devoting himself to the special work of his chair, Dr Macpherson took an active and leading part in all the business of the University, as well as of the Church courts and of several important charities and trusts. He possessed an aptitude for business rare in so close a student. With him all labour was a pleasure, useful labour a passion. His careful and conscientious premeditation of every matter of business was highly valued, as securing a full consideration of the subject in hand in all its bearings, by those who desired, as he did, to act only for the public good, even when arriving at conclusions different from his. The consciousness, indeed, of his own laborious efforts to determine what was right or expedient, the clear perception he thus acquired of the difficulties of every question, and the tenseness of mind resulting from recent severe and wakeful thought, caused him sometimes to come to a discussion in a mood unfavourable for listening with calmness and patience to the reasonings and *verba in labris nascentia* of more hasty thinkers. But in the later years of his life, this tendency, which might well be excused by those who knew the value of his counsels, had been almost entirely subdued, and even when it was most strongly displayed no man was really more open to conviction. Whenever he perceived that any
one had considered the subject under discussion more fully than he had done, or that he himself had overlooked any important element in the question, he would at once manifest a candour and humility which showed how much his aim was not victory but truth.

He had an intense affection for his Alma Mater, and on his return to Aberdeen, after an absence of seventeen years, brought with him all his academical feelings fresh as ever in his mind. In the mean time great changes had taken place. Few of the Professors under whom he had studied survived to be his colleagues. With the advancing age of its guardians, some good features of the old discipline had disappeared. New men, a new spirit, new regulations, a new system of examinations at the beginning and close of each session, bearing on the tenure of bursaries and on graduation, had been introduced. These changes, disturbing, as they did, his old associations, and altering a state of matters under which he had benefited so much, he viewed at first with apprehension and dislike. But he soon came to admit the value of many of them, and even where he did not do so, he gave his help ungrudgingly wherever it could be of use in carrying on the new arrangements. It was a remarkable trait in his character, that while showing great keenness, warmth, and tenacity of purpose, in opposing what appeared to him an improper or inexpedient course, no man could accept a defeat with greater largeness of mind and freedom from rancour—as was shown by his conduct after the union of King’s and Marischal Colleges, to which he had always offered a strenuous resistance. Where great interests were at stake, instead of watching for the fulfilment of his own unfavourable prognostications, he would set himself to work out a measure to which he had been strongly opposed, with a heartiness, a public spirit, and a singleness of purpose, exemplary even to its friends and authors.

In no department of University business did he take
greater pleasure or a more useful part than in the examination of the exercises at the competition for bursaries. The annual return of this interesting scene carried him back to the time when, himself a competitor, his success had opened to him the path of an honourable and useful career; and under the feeling that every Professor, of whatever Faculty, ought, according to his ability, to assist in the work, he shared cheerfully the vigils and labours of each successive competition. The attention he had paid to the writing of Latin, and his accurate acquaintance with the structure of that language, rendered his services as acceptable and useful as they were heartily bestowed.

From his appointment in 1852 till the union of the Universities in 1860, he discharged with earnestness and fidelity the duties of the Lectureship on Practical Religion for the Students in Arts, maintained in King's College by the trustees of Gordon of Murtle; and after that event he delivered the weekly Lecture on the Evidences of Christianity, which was substituted for the previous Lectureships, in triennial rotation with the Professors of Church History and of Biblical Criticism. This Lecture, as conducted by him and his colleagues, has proved a valuable addition to the curriculum in Arts; and the attendance, which is voluntary, shows how highly it is appreciated by the students and those most interested in their welfare.

From 1860, Dr Macpherson, as holding jointly with the same colleagues the office of Murray Sunday-Lecturer, regularly conducted Divine service in his turn in the University Chapel during the whole winter session; and being often called upon for assistance by his clerical friends, by whom and their congregations his services were greatly appreciated, he was at all seasons much engaged in pulpit duty. His character as a preacher has been well estimated in the account given above of his ministry at Forres. Yet he himself has been heard in the intimacy of
friendship to lament with unfeigned humility what he termed his incapacity, "from want of imagination and of musical ear," to impart to his preaching the attractions of style and delivery, the use of which in engaging the attention he was far from undervaluing. But if, in his sermons, there was any deficiency of gratification for the fancy or the ear, it was well compensated by the union of unaffected earnestness and deep solemnity, and by the intense feeling produced of the reality at once of the preacher's faith, and of the great truths he was enforcing. His matter was always sound and weighty; his reasoning clear and conclusive; his spirit in the highest degree evangelical and devotional; but his chief characteristic was the manifest subjection of his own whole being to the theme of his address. One may wonder, in contemplating the great realities of religion, that a preacher should be able at all to think of himself or of what others may be thinking of him, but few preachers have ever shown so complete a forgetfulness of both, or have so little in any respect preached themselves, as the subject of this memoir.

The solemnity which characterised his preaching he manifested even more in prayer. The reverential awe with which he approached the throne of grace, the simplicity yet appropriateness and elevation of his thoughts and language, powerfully enforced his instructions to his students in regard to earnest preparation for the devotions of the sanctuary.

The value of his services in the courts of the Church was very fully and generally acknowledged by the public press after his death. As a member of the General Assembly, his conscientious attention to business in committees, and the active unostentatious interest he took in the missionary schemes of the Church, had long given him an acknowledged claim on public gratitude; and his appearances of late years, especially in the Assembly of 1864, as a prominent speaker, his manifest freedom from party spirit, his moderation in
matters of secondary moment, combined with the most faith-
ful orthodoxy, had gained for him the regard and confidence
of his brethren, and, in a very remarkable degree, of the in-
fluential and pious laity of the Church. There can be little
doubt that, had he been spared for a few years, he would
have been offered the highest honour the Church has to be-
slow—the chair of the General Assembly.

His position, and the estimation in which he was held, as
a member of the local Church courts, may be inferred from
the following terms in which the Presbytery of Aberdeen ex-
pressed their grief for his removal:

"The Presbytery consider the present to be a fitting occa-
sion for placing on record an expression of the sense they
teroint of the great loss which they and the Church at large
have sustained by the death of the Rev. Dr Macpherson, late
Incumbent of the Chair of Systematic Theology in the Uni-
versity of Aberdeen.

"By the decease of Dr Macpherson the Church has been
deprived of one who was indeed 'a master in Israel,' faith-
ful in the inculcation of divine truth in accordance with her
evangelical standards; watchful to guard the youth under
his charge against error and heresy, whatever phase they
might assume; and devoted to a degree beyond his strength,
in preparing and thoroughly furnishing them for the work
of the Holy Ministry. Though dead, he will long speak
to the edification of Christ's people through the mouths of
those who carried into the Church, from under his instruc-
tions, minds stored with sound and wholesome Christian
views and principles.

"A man of solid judgment in ecclesiastical affairs, delib-
erate in forming his conclusions, and well prepared to support
them, and truly devoted to the best interests of the Church
of Christ and the highest wellbeing of our establishments,
while at all times conciliatory in his counsels, the late Dr
Macpherson was deservedly looked up to with respect and
confidence as a leading member of our Church courts, and was rapidly commanding for himself a position of weight and influence in the deliberations of our General Assemblies. In view of imminent contendings for the truth, the Church may have cause to lament his removal in the maturity and vigour of his faculties.

"As a member of Presbytery, the Presbytery have to deplore in Dr Macpherson the loss of one who at all times took a lively interest in Presbytery business, and whose knowledge of Church law and procedure was on frequent occasions of eminent service in guiding them in their deliberations. And especially will they miss his valuable assistance in conducting the examinations of students and candidates for Licence. In this important department of presbyterial work, for which his biblical scholarship eminently fitted him, Dr Macpherson ever took a warm interest and a steady part."

Of the benevolent institutions with which he was connected none engaged his affections and thoughts to such a degree as "The Society at Aberdeen for the Benefit of the Children of deceased Ministers and Professors," of which the chief management had for a considerable time been in his hands, and of his connection with which the following record was unanimously placed on the minutes of the Society:—

"Before proceeding to the special business, the Society feel called on, as their first duty, to put on record their sense of the loss which they have sustained in the removal by death, since their last meeting, of their late secretary and treasurer, Dr Robert Macpherson, Professor of Systematic Theology in the University of Aberdeen. Of the admirable manner in which their departed friend discharged his duties as a Professor and Minister this is hardly the occasion to speak; nor is it necessary, seeing a becoming tribute to his memory has been already recorded in the books of the Presbytery, of which he was so esteemed and valuable a
member. Intimately associated with him, however, as most of the members of this Society were, they cannot deny themselves the mournful satisfaction of stating how fully they concur in all that has been said of his extensive and varied professorial acquirements, and his unsullied Christian excellence and worth. Dr Macpherson became secretary and treasurer of this Society on the death of his brother-in-law, Professor Hercules Scott, with whom for some time previously he had been associated in discharging the duties of the office, to the successful fulfilment of which he brought a combination of gifts and qualities rarely found in the same individual. Tenderly sympathising with the numerous children of our manses and colleges who are left in poverty, particularly when their father is early called from his earthly labours, he gave a ready ear to every application that was made to him; yet so careful was he in administering the funds under his charge, that with conscientious scrupulousness, and at great personal trouble, he sifted every case, and the Society believe that during his time not a penny was given but in exact accordance with the needs of the different claimants. Such an administration inspired public confidence, and during his tenure of office the funds greatly prospered; and though he had often to regret that the grants made were far short of the necessities of the case, yet he had the gratification of being able, recently, to recommend an addition to the allowances of the most destitute, when in very advanced life. It was unanimously agreed that an extract of this minute should be transmitted by the President to the family of the late Dr Macpherson."

While freely giving his time and valuable services to the business of various charities, he responded liberally, in proportion to his means, to public claims on his personal bounty; and some of his private deeds of beneficence were unknown till after his death. But his charity was not limited to mere giving. It showed itself in unfeigned sympathy with
the suffering, in lenient judgment of the erring. His tender-
ness of heart was unbounded. He could not look upon
disappointment, broken hopes, or distress of any kind, with-
out an attempt to afford relief or comfort; and in affording
either, his delicacy was remarkable. He could not bear to
see any one the victim of injustice or of extreme measures.
He would not stand by and see a man run down. And
while, in University government, he favoured a strong pre-
ventive discipline, he always shrank from the infliction of
severe punishment.

Dr Macpherson was a man of great simplicity of character.
Though reserved and cautious, he was truthful and honour-
able in the highest degree, detesting all meanness and duplic-
ity. He was singularly devoid of vanity, affectation, and
display. Endowed with a strong feeling of personal inde-
pendence, he would not step aside to seek applause, favour,
or sympathy, or even to justify himself if at any time mis-
represented or maligned. The influence and respect he
acquired were the result not of any efforts of his to attain
them, but of the confidence reposed in his purity of motive,
his devotion to the public good, and his tried abilities. The
only reward he seemed to covet, and one which he indeed
appeared greatly to enjoy, was the feeling of having been
useful. While, however, entirely free from ambition and any
strong desire of personal distinction, he had much jealous
sensitiveness in all that related to the claims and dignity of
his office—a state of mind naturally resulting from the some-
what changed position in the Universities, in recent times,
of his Church and Faculty, and from the too manifest ten-
dency to degrade the greatest and most important of the
sciences—the science of man’s relation to God—from the
place it has held in all great seminaries of learning.

His ardent love of truth, and his experience of the diffi-
culty with which it is sometimes reached, inspired him with
a sincere respect for all who sought it with candour and
diligence, although they might have arrived at views different from his own. While holding firmly and *ex animo* the tenets of his Church, and that after frequent and mature examination, he possessed an uncommon catholicity of spirit and charity in judging others. He had a kindly sympathy with honest difficulties, and made large allowance for the powerful influence of circumstances on opinion. He seemed utterly incapable of sectarianism, and heartily loved and praised all who, under whatever name, showed love to God and man, and a desire to be followers of Christ. Severe in scrutinising his own mental processes, he was in the case of others tolerant of all, except superficial dogmatism, flippancy, and intolerance.

It was natural that one so scrupulously careful in forming his opinions, and so unambitious of notoriety, should shrink from placing his views before the public in a permanent form. His only known publications, besides his pamphlet on 'The Perpetual Obligation of the Revealed Moral Law and of a Day of Holy Rest,' which he published last year, were two able and elaborate articles in the 'British and Foreign Evangelical Review' for January and July 1858, on the Essays entitled 'The Study of the Evidences of Natural Theology,' and 'Christianity without Judaism,' both by the late Professor Baden Powell.

While more and more confirmed by time and study in his attachment to the standard doctrines of the Church, and grieving over all depreciation of those doctrines, he entertained moderate and catholic views on questions relative to ecclesiastical government and worship, and contemplated with sorrow and apprehension the disposition manifested by opposite parties to invest such questions with undue importance. He always considered the devotional services of the sanctuary deserving of far greater attention than they have hitherto received, and, as his public conduct showed, would not discourage attempts at the improvement of them, if
consistent with the paramount interests of truth and peace.

Although his state of health and studious habits prevented his mingling much in general society, and necessitated his evading or declining the hospitality of his neighbours and acquaintance, he was very far from being of an unsocial disposition. He took great pleasure in the intercourse of intimate friends; and although his mind was almost always filled with an under-current of serious thought, he often displayed a genial mirthfulness of a very attractive kind.

His habitual life was led under a deep and constant sense of the Divine presence, ennobled by unceasing devotion to duty of the highest kind, and adorned with all the graces of domestic affection. It is enough to say that those who saw him most nearly, and who knew him best, reverenced and loved him most.

Dr Macpherson possessed a well-knit and vigorous frame, his only natural defect being extreme shortness of sight, which prevented his deriving much pleasure from external objects. But there can be no doubt that he early laid the foundation of injury to his health by excessive study, the evil being aggravated by the stooping posture and continued pressure against his desk, occasioned by weakness of vision. The effects were manifested in frequent derangement of the digestive functions, from which he suffered often and severely at Forres, and in renal disease of an aggravated form. From the time, however, of his removal to Aberdeen he enjoyed better health, and was scarcely ever laid aside from duty, even for a single day, until within a fortnight of his death. But towards the close of the autumn of 1865 he had begun to be seized with sudden and violent attacks of pain, the locality of which raised at first apprehensions of serious organic disease of the heart or stomach, but which proved to be angina pectoris. His sufferings during these attacks were agonising, but as in the intervals, which were
often of many days' or some weeks' duration, he was free from pain, he never intermitted his labours. The Lectures which form this volume were composed within a short time—the last of them within a few days—of his death. About the middle of January last he was for the first time absent from his class for a day or two, after which he resumed his work. He lectured as usual on Tuesday, the 22d of that month. About midnight he was seized as on previous occasions, and after about two hours of intense suffering, entered, while yet in the full vigour of his faculties, into the eternal enjoyment of that rest, of which the promise, sealed by the Resurrection of Him who gave it, had been the theme of his last meditation.

Of the many tributes to the memory of Dr Macpherson which appeared in the public prints on the announcement of his death, the following, from the columns of a metropolitan newspaper, is worthy of preservation for its eloquence and truth:

"In Dr Macpherson the Church of Scotland has lost one of her ablest scholars and most learned and valuable theologians. In neither capacity, indeed, was he so widely known as he deserved to be; for his modesty, his distrust of himself, and his great conscientiousness, prevented his coming before the public with such works as he was well able to produce. It was by little else than his appearances in Church courts that he was generally known, and so far, at least, appreciated. In the Presbytery and Synod of Aberdeen, and in the General Assembly, his views were listened to with the greatest deference; and in private consultations on points of difficulty, it may be doubted if any Minister of the Church exercised a greater influence. He was especially remarkable for the singular amount of conscientious labour which he brought to every department of his work, and to every inquiry which engaged him. He spared no pains to reach the truth, and it is to be feared
that he often injured his health by the anxious consideration
which he devoted, both by night and day, to any topic that
seemed to him important. This part of his character was
especially displayed in his later years, owing to the state of
theological opinion around him. He did not rest simply in
the views which he had adopted when a younger man. He
set himself to examine them anew; and it was characteristic
of him that, if he did not modify them in any material degree,
he gained a deeper sense of the right and value of free
inquiry; while the charity which was naturally characteristic
of him was greatly enlarged, and became a settled and
experimental principle of his life. Few men have felt more
keenly the value of what they believed to be the truth, or
have held it with a firmer grasp; but still fewer who have
done so have been able to combine with this an equally
generous spirit of toleration to those who differed from them.
It would be easy to find partial illustrations of what has now
been said in the position taken up of late years by Dr Mac-
pherson in the General Assembly, but we forbear speaking
of that. He was not a party man, and it is not a party but
the Church at large that has to mourn his death. We have
already said that Dr Macpherson's valuable qualities were
hardly of the kind which procures public fame. It was in
private that they were best seen. In the bosom of his
family, in the circle of his friends, in quiet conversation on
all the most important topics of the day, he gained for him-
self an amount of love and confidence and esteem which it
is the privilege of few to enjoy. He fully deserved it all;
and however truly it may be said that his loss is a public
one, it is even more to his praise to say that his personal
color and labours were a constant lesson to all who had
either been his pupils or who personally knew him."

University of Aberdeen,
30th April 1867.
THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST ETC.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

ON THE SPIRIT OF THEOLOGICAL INQUIRY.

GENTLEMEN,—You appear here not merely to engage in the study of theological science, but specially to prepare yourselves for the office of the Christian ministry. And though it is not my intention at present to dwell particularly on the nature, importance, and responsibilities of that office, I would yet remind you that it is one of divine institution; that it is designed by the Great Head of the Church to be the means of maintaining and spreading abroad throughout the world the knowledge of His Gospel, and of building up His people on their most holy faith; and that as no office can in itself be more dignified, so there is none to which greater or more solemn responsibilities can attach, and for the proper discharge of which more anxious preparation ought to be made. Assuming, as I am bound to do, that you yourselves believe in the Lord Jesus, and that it is after the most
serious consideration of its importance that you have been led to form the resolution to devote yourselves to the work of the Christian ministry, I would in one word exhort and encourage you to persevere in your resolution, and to apply yourselves with energy to the various studies in which you will have to engage, in order that, with the blessing of God on your labours, you may in some measure be prepared for the office to which you aspire. Let every one of you aim at as high a state of preparation as you can possibly reach; and whilst you devote yourselves to the acquisition of extensive and accurate knowledge of theological truth, aim also at the attainment of those moral qualifications, without which all knowledge, however extensive and accurate, would be in vain. Cultivate assiduously in your own minds and in your own lives those dispositions and habits which alone become the Gospel, and which will manifest to yourselves as well as to others the reality and strength of your faith. Live habitually as the followers of the Lord Jesus, and daily implore that grace which alone can direct and uphold us in the way of truth and life.

My design on the present occasion is to draw your special attention to some important points connected with the study of Theology itself, and, in particular, to certain points suggested by the manifest tendencies of the age in which we are living. But I must premise that we are prone to take an exaggerated view of what are called the tendencies of an age; the fact being, as the history of every age shows, that there always exist to a greater or less extent those very tendencies which we are prone to regard
as peculiar to some one age. The manner, indeed, in which opposing tendencies discover themselves, varies in certain features with the circumstances of different ages; and the conflict may appear keener and more determined in one age than in another, but the essential character of these tendencies is in all ages the same; and, what also merits attention, our estimate of the real state of things in any one age, and especially in our own, is in no slight degree affected by our own peculiar views and dispositions. Let me guard you, then, against forming hasty opinions on such a subject as this. One man, looking at certain manifestations in our own day of what cannot justly be otherwise characterised than as the spirit of Infidelity, if not of Atheism, and overlooking other manifestations which bear witness to the spirit of Faith, is apt to represent this age as exhibiting a peculiar tendency towards all that is opposed to religious belief, if not also to sound morals; whilst another man, taking a different view of the state of matters, is disposed to draw quite a different picture, and to represent the age as one in which pure religion and sound morals are on the whole making decided progress. Now, it appears to me that we are not called upon, and are scarcely qualified, to determine this question. There are undoubtedly circumstances that characterise our age, which, should we fix our attention on them alone, might compel us to adopt the former view; but there are also circumstances not less manifest, which, if they also were solely looked at, might encourage us to embrace the latter and more favourable view. The truth is, that belief and unbelief, truth and falsehood, holiness and sin, carry on a perpetual war in
our world, and that the servants of God have ever to fight the fight of faith. In our own age, as well as in preceding ages, these two opposing forces are struggling for the mastery. The weapons employed on the side of infidelity may vary a little in their structure from those formerly employed; but even in respect to these weapons, that may be said which is applicable to so many other devices of the human heart,—there is nothing essentially new. As for the servants of God, the weapons of which in all ages they can avail themselves are ever the same—sound reason and the Word of God—weapons which have stood the test in all former conflicts, and which can never fail to gain the victory. And it becomes us specially to remember that the cause of truth and religion, though in one sense intrusted to human agency, is conducted and maintained by Him who reigneth over all, and whose counsel, we know, standeth for ever. Whilst, then, we endeavour to take a comprehensive view of the tendencies of our age, overlooking neither those which seem unfavourable, nor those which may appear favourable, to the stability and progress of religious belief, let us have faith in God and in the goodness of His cause, and devote ourselves in all earnestness to present duty, resting assured that, in spite of all opposition, the cause of God must and will prosper, and that He will compel all opposition to be finally subservient to the advancement of His kingdom; for "He maketh even the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of that wrath He will restrain."

It is, I would now observe, one of the marked tendencies of our times to subject all religious questions
—even the primary or fundamental truths of religion—to severe and prolonged, not to say sceptical, scrutiny. Truth, of whatever order it may be, can never suffer from inquiry. Religious truth, like all other truth, invites such inquiry; it rests its claims on our belief upon grounds which are susceptible of investigation, and it calls on every man to examine these grounds, and to build his faith on what is solid and enduring. It is also the case that every man must, with perfect freedom, conduct this inquiry for himself, so that his faith may possess the character of a well-founded, a reasonable conviction. The knowledge of one man or of one age cannot, without the expense of thought, become the knowledge of another man or of another age. Hence the necessity for inquiry must always continue; and it may be a favourable or an unfavourable symptom of a man or of an age when religious truth is made a prominent subject of investigation, according as the spirit with which the investigation is conducted is essentially religious or irreligious. Two men, we shall suppose, set to work to examine the claims of Christianity. One of these terminates his inquiry in the conviction that it possesses no valid claims to a divine origin, but that its origin can be accounted for by reference to the circumstances of the period when it appeared; whilst the other expresses it as his conviction that Christianity possesses valid claims, and that its origin can be traced only to a direct interposition of the living God. Both these men, we shall further suppose, make known to the world, not merely the results of their respective inquiries, but also the modes in which they carried on their investigations. Now, I am convinced that, supposing we were to peruse these
two different inquiries, terminating as they do in directly opposite results, we should discover that the one man commenced his inquiry with the assumption, expressed or unexpressed, of some principle or principles which exerted their influence on his whole mode of thought, and contained in gremio the very conclusion at which he arrived; and that the other man also set out with certain principles in his mind, which, though not necessarily embracing his conclusion, yet led him, step by step, to discern the validity, and to feel the force, of the Christian evidences. We shall afterwards return to this subject.

Meantime we are drawing your attention to a marked feature of our age, in stating the fact that all religious questions or truths seem to be at present once more thrown into the crucible, to undergo a fiery trial. Not merely the truths of revealed religion, but those truths which constitute what is termed natural religion, are subjected to this trial. Not that former ages have not had experience of the same ordeal. Far otherwise: for in all ages the contest between belief and unbelief in revealed religion has generally issued in the contest between belief and unbelief in natural religion. The grand contest is ever one in essence—belief or unbelief in a Supreme Personal God. Now, it is sad to reflect that a contest such as this should be continually arising in our world; that, age after age, not only should no progress seem to be made, but that the conflict should be perpetually waged about the very foundation itself of all religious belief; and that, instead of enjoying the privilege of enlarged knowledge, and of devoting our energies to the spread of this knowledge throughout the world,
we should be called every now and then to resist attempts, unceasingly renewed, to undermine the very foundation of our faith. But such is the state of things, and we must submit to the warfare to which the course of events in God’s providence summons us.

This tendency of the age to subject religious truth of every kind to severe and prolonged discussion, is to be found not only among the professed opponents of religion, but also among its professed friends. There is a manifest jealousy among the latter of all those doctrines which have come down to us as the received doctrines of former ages. If the doctrines themselves are too evidently the doctrines of Scripture to be summarily questioned, then some fault or other is found with the manner in which these have been expressed; the whole subject is spoken of as mere traditional theology; and those who value and defend these expositions of our common faith are represented as surrendering their intellectual and moral freedom, and binding themselves by the fetters forged by others in bygone times. It is, indeed, doubtful whether those who thus speak have for themselves undergone the severe task of real investigation; or whether, as is also a marked feature of this as of some former ages, they are merely giving expression to a peculiar spirit of their own, which seeks to exalt itself by the easier task of depreciating others. But it is not for us to sit in judgment on those to whom we are here referring. It is right, however, in us to observe that, even among the professed friends of religion, there is scarcely a doctrine peculiar to Christianity which is not once more subjected to criticism, and that an extreme jealousy is manifested of every received doc-
trine, on the sole ground that it is the received doctrine—just as if the Bible were such a book that no doctrine whatever could be drawn from it to be held by the Christian Church of all ages as fixed and permanent. Now, you will not fail to observe that we regard it not as a bad symptom when religious truth is made the subject of inquiry—I would add (only, however, in the true sense of the word), of free inquiry—of inquiry unprejudiced, impartial, solemn, and earnest. Such inquiry is due to the subject—the noblest on which it is possible for the human mind to be engaged—and due to ourselves; for religious truth involves our highest possible interests. Such an inquiry, also, is a most salutary exercise for the human mind. It strengthens, enlarges, and elevates all its powers, raising it above the consideration of merely material and visible things to the contemplation of those objects which are spiritual, invisible, and everlasting. To such an inquiry, conducted in the spirit to which we shall immediately refer, we earnestly exhort you to devote yourselves. But what we regard as a bad symptom is that captious, and, as it appears to us, half-sceptical spirit in which, under the plea of freedom from the influence of all hitherto received expositions of doctrine, certain persons profess to conduct this inquiry.

I am anticipating, however, what I wish to say respecting the spirit in which all theological study should be conducted. And though I have really nothing new to address to you on this subject, yet I trust you will bear with me whilst I say a word or two by way of exhortation. I do not mean to give a formal discussion of the subject, as if you were wholly
in ignorance respecting it, but to restrict my remarks to a few leading points.

1. Theological inquiry should be conducted under a profound conviction of the importance and incomprehensible nature of the subject.

I need not dwell on a point so obvious as this, for who can deliberately deny the vast importance of religious truth, or affirm that this truth does not exceed the finite grasp of the mind of man? Our highest interests are essentially connected with religious truth, and therefore to attain to a correct knowledge of it is of the highest moment. Hence it becomes us, in all religious inquiries, to cherish a solemn and earnest frame of mind—a frame of mind in some measure corresponding to the nature of the subject about which we are inquiring. Further, all religious questions having a necessary connection with the infinite and incomprehensible God, can be apprehended by us only partially and imperfectly. We cannot find out God unto perfection. Hence, whilst we endeavour to know the truth so far as our finite minds can attain to it, it becomes us ever to remember that our highest knowledge can be only partial and imperfect knowledge; and that, in our present state of existence, we must rest contented with such knowledge. We are not to reject what we do know, simply because there is much which as yet we cannot know. A deep sense of our comparative ignorance will keep us humble, and cause us to restrict our inquiries within the sphere which lies open to us.

Now, it is most painful to witness the tokens of an opposite spirit in not a few discussions of the present
day on religious subjects. Not only the peculiar doctrines of revelation, but even the very fundamental truths of natural religion, are often discussed in a spirit which seems to attach no importance whatever to these doctrines or truths, and which also seems to assume that they may be discussed and determined with as much ease as matters which lie wholly within our grasp. This flippant and self-conceited spirit is hostile to all due inquiry, and therefore to the attainment of real and exact knowledge. The person who enters on the inquiry with such a spirit may exhibit acuteness, and appear to see much farther than others into the great secrets of the universe; but it is scarcely possible for him, in such a frame of mind, to discern the reality of spiritual things, and to aim at a correct knowledge of these things so far as they have been revealed to us. It is not the knowledge of divine truth that he is aiming at, but the exhibition of self—his own glory is the thing which he is seeking: self is the idol which he is worshipping; and therefore the highest truths, however important or incomprehensible, must all give way to this magnifying of himself. Nor is it inconsistent with this spirit to assume the appearance of coolness and impartiality, and to make strong professions that truth is the sole object aimed at. Quite otherwise: for it is often by assuming this appearance and reiterating such professions that the end aimed at is sought to be gained.

Now, what we maintain is this, that all religious inquiries should be conducted not merely with a profession that truth is the object sought—for who indeed would make any other profession?—but in such a manner as, apart from all profession whatever, will of
itself show that the inquirer is impressed with a profound conviction of the importance and incomprehensible nature of the subject under his investigation. Are the evidences of revealed religion to be inquired into? Then let them be investigated with all possible scrutiny, with a fixed determination to know their character and worth. But let them not be treated as if the subject were one of no interest whatever to the human race, or as if they merely furnished matter for a display of intellectual acuteness. Are the peculiar doctrines of Christianity the subject of investigation? Then let these be inquired into with all possible freedom from the influence of mere human opinion: but let the aim be to know what these doctrines really are, as they are laid down in, or necessarily drawn from, the only infallible standard of truth; and let them not be discussed as if it fell to us to ascertain what all who have gone before us had failed to learn. Are the fundamental truths of all religion made the subject of inquiry? Then it surely behaves us to approach them with all possible reverence; for what other feeling should pervade the mind of that man who ventures to inquire whether there is a God or not? As our faith, even in the reality of the divine existence, must rest on solid ground, so even this subject is one of legitimate inquiry; and the Divine Being Himself will not, we apprehend, be offended with us, His rational offspring, when we reverently and humbly inquire into the reasons which He Himself has given to make known to us the reality of His existence. But such an inquiry, conducted in this reverential and humble spirit, is very different from that upon which he enters whose object is simply
to display with what acuteness he can perplex all
human reasoning even on so fundamental a truth as
this. In short, not to dwell longer on this part of
our subject, all sound theological inquiry is essentially
dependent on a right frame of mind. Endeavour,
then, always to enter upon it in such a spirit as will
be favourable to the attainment of truth, in a rever-
rential, humble, and earnest spirit, for it is such a
spirit which alone it becomes us to cherish, and which
alone will lead us to the knowledge of the truth.

2. Let it be the truth alone which you seek to
know.

After what has been said, I need do little more
than state this point. It is only truth on any sub-
ject that constitutes knowledge. Falsehood or error
constitutes the very opposite. It is ignorance, and
worse than mere ignorance. As rational beings we
are possessed of faculties which, when duly exercised,
enable us to ascertain what is real and true; and
there is in our nature an instinctive desire to know
what is real and true. It is necessary for us to have
confidence in these faculties, and to be influenced
by this instinctive desire to ascertain truth. We are
not to allow ourselves to fall into a distrust of our
rational nature, as if it were in itself insufficient to
enable us to conduct our inquiries, nor are we to
imagine that our instinctive desire to know what is
true is vain, because truth is unattainable. This is
scepticism; and such a view of our nature would put
an end at once to all inquiry whatever, even in the
most common affairs of life. But it is generally in
reference to religion—to spiritual truth—that such
scepticism manifests itself. Now, religious or spiritual
truth, like truth of every other kind, is open to inquiry. We may be unable to know it to the same extent that we are able to know some other kinds of truth. But that is a question of the *extent* to which our knowledge may reach, and does not affect the main point at issue. Is religious truth *to any extent* within the sphere of our knowledge? This is the essential question, and to this question there can be only one just answer. Man feels himself compelled, by the very constitution of his nature, to inquire into what is called religious truth; and however slight may be the knowledge to which he is capable of attaining, he is bound to use his faculties in order that as far as possible he may know the truth. And since the Supreme Being has, as we have good grounds for believing, revealed unto us, His ignorant creatures, the knowledge of Himself, so far as He has deemed it necessary for His own glory and for our good, we are also bound to apply ourselves to the attainment of this divine knowledge, in the full confidence that the truth is not now far from us, but is presented to us in that Word which is emphatically the Word of Truth, and which is to be seen and read of all men.

3. This leads me, in the next place, to exhort you to study with all earnestness this divine Word as the only source whence you are to draw your knowledge of divine truth.

Whilst you do not undervalue the labours of other inquirers into religious truth, but thankfully avail yourselves of their aid, ever remember that it is to the Word of God alone that we must have recourse in order to know the mind of God. Even received
expositions of revealed truth—the creeds or confessions of Christian churches—are always to be regarded as only helps to our right understanding of the truth itself. Whatever value such documents may possess, it is derived solely from their agreement with that Word which is the only infallible standard of faith and practice; and they are to be valued by us only in so far as they express the truth of Holy Scripture. In your theological studies, therefore, you are to have it ever present to your mind that the written Word is to be your guide—the lamp to your feet and the light to your path. And you are always to study this Word with the anxious desire to know what it would have you to believe, and with the immovable resolution to follow wherever it directs your steps. Only you must study it reverently, humbly, and thoroughly—not coming to it with preconceived notions of your own, but approaching it in a teachable frame of mind, that you may receive even as little children the things which it reveals concerning the kingdom of God. Different conclusions on weighty subjects have indeed been drawn by different persons even from this divine Word itself; for it has not pleased God to reveal all things to us in such a manner as to leave no room for the exercise of our reason and the trial of our spirits. Still we are persuaded that the great things of the kingdom of God—those things which it is necessary for man to know, to believe, and to do in order that he may be saved—are all so revealed that no humble and earnest mind can fail to arrive at the knowledge of them.

But it specially becomes you, as candidates for the office of the holy ministry, to aim at the attainment
of an enlarged and accurate knowledge of what the Word of God contains. "Search," then, "the Scriptures" with all diligence and earnestness; habituate yourselves to a thorough study of their contents—to a comprehensive view of that great scheme of mercy which is revealed in them—and you will grow in the knowledge and also in the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. You will find that this great scheme to which I have just referred constitutes the great subject of revelation, and that therefore to know Christ—the Son of God and the Saviour of the world—is to know the truth; for He is Himself the Truth; in Him are laid up all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4. And now, in the last place, whilst you look to the written Word as the alone source of theological knowledge, and study it habitually that you may grow in this knowledge, let me solemnly exhort you to seek by frequent prayer the gracious aid of Him who is revealed to us as the Spirit of Truth.

Whilst we must place confidence in our rational faculties as the instruments by which we attain to knowledge, and whilst we are also called upon to use all diligence that we may acquire this knowledge, most true it is that in our ignorance, weakness, and proneness to err, we also need the guidance of one who is able to conduct us into the knowledge of truth. How thankful, then, ought we to be that there is One revealed to us in Scripture, whose prerogative it is to enlighten the darkened mind, and who is ever willing to be our guide into all the truth! With what earnestness and frequency should we apply for His guidance and direction, humbly beseeching Him to
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keep us from all hurtful error, and to grant to us such a knowledge of the truth as may save our own souls, and enable us to be instrumental in teaching others also! Be frequent, then, and earnest in prayer for the gracious aid of the Holy Spirit; and thus devoting yourselves to the work of study, and thus praying for light from on high, you may pursue your inquiries in cheerful confidence that you will not fail of your desired end.

May these few and imperfect remarks be blessed for your good, and may all that we have to address to you here be made subservient to the furtherance of your knowledge and the increase of your faith.

It is now my intention to address to you a few lectures on several subjects which are at all times, but especially in the present day, of peculiar moment; but these lectures will aim only at giving you the chief features of discussion on each of the topics to which I shall refer.
LECTURE II.

ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

In last Lecture a case was supposed, that of two persons examining into the claims of Christianity, and arriving at two directly opposite conclusions; and it was remarked that, since both these persons had the same data before them, the difference between their conclusions must have had its origin in the principles assumed by each on entering upon the inquiry. I now desire to draw your special attention to this subject.

And, first of all, I would observe that there are in reality only two principles, the one or the other of which must be assumed prior to all inquiry into the claims of a professed revelation in general, or of the Christian revelation in particular. The inquirer must begin with the assumption of the existence of a living personal God, or with the assumption that there is no such Being. There is, and can be, no intermediate assumption. Pantheism, which represents everything as a mode of deity—as the development of a something which in itself has no proper attributes and no separate existence—is essentially only a mere form of expressing what is called Atheism, according to which the visible and tangible world is that alone which exists, and, having had no origin, has the cause of its exist-
ence in itself. Theism implies that there is a self-existent and personal Being, who gave origin to this visible frame of things, and who consciously, and for definite purposes formed in His own eternal mind, governs all. Now, I beg you to observe that there are, and can be, only these two opposite assumptions. Either there is a God, a living personal God, or there is not a God; for it is a manifest perversion of language to call a mere abstraction of the human mind by such a name.

If we suppose, then, that an inquirer into the claims of a professed revelation sets out with the assumption or belief that there is a God, it is evident that he begins with an assumption which renders a revelation possible, and that therefore the claims of any professed revelation form a subject of legitimate investigation. It does not, you will observe, necessarily follow from his assumption that these claims are valid. It is possible that he may discover them to be wholly unworthy of belief, and that the professed revelation has had its origin either in ignorance or imposture; and should he by valid reasoning come to this conclusion, he will feel it to be his duty to reject such a professed revelation. But you will at the same time observe that this assumption or belief does not preclude legitimate inquiry. It allows the evidences of a professed revelation from God to come fairly before the mind, and to be discussed and weighed according to their worth.

On the other hand, the man who assumes that there is no God, no self-existent and personal Being who created and governs the universe, has already, by his very assumption, rendered all inquiry into the claims
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of a professed revelation wholly unnecessary; for it is clear that no revelation can possibly proceed from a Being who does not exist. Such a person may avowedly examine the proposed evidences of a professed revelation; but it is evident that such a task is for him a work of supererogation. He has already settled the question; and his examination of the proposed evidences can be to him only an exercise of curiosity, with the view of ascertaining how the human mind came to be deluded into the idea that there could be such a thing as the particular revelation in question. Religious belief under any form is to such a person a mere phase of delusion, and, like other delusions, may have a history; and his sole object is to trace this history. Beyond this, his investigation has to him no value whatever. Viewed in this aspect, the Christian revelation has to the atheistical inquirer an historical value, and therefore he sets himself to discover in what way, as he thinks, it sprang up and grew to that state in which it has come down to us. But from the very outset he, according to his assumed theory, knew that this revelation had no valid claims to belief, and that in whatever way it did originate, whether in mere delusion or in fraud, its origin was entirely human.

Hence he is compelled to call in question every branch of its professed evidences. He questions the genuineness of the writings in which the origin of Christianity is recorded. Were these writings genuine, he knows that the divine origin of Christianity would be established; but his assumption involves the denial of such an origin, and therefore these writings cannot be genuine. And he sets himself to work in order to show that these writings were of later date than that
which they ascribe to themselves, and were, in fact, the products of conscious fraud.

Again, is Christianity supported by the testimony of miracles declared to have been wrought by its Founder? Is an appeal directly made by its Founder to works such as no mere man ever wrought, in confirmation of His high, His extraordinary claims? Then it becomes necessary to get rid of this peculiar evidence, either by explaining away these professed miracles; or, if that is rather a difficult task, by at once cutting the knot, and boldly affirming that such works, such manifestations of superhuman power, are impossible. And the atheist is right, according to his supposition; for if there is no God—though then it seems impossible for us to say what might or might not be—yet assuredly, on such a supposition, a manifestation of divine power becomes an absurdity. Hence the atheistical inquirer has only to ascertain the particular circumstances which induced men to imagine that the miracles recorded in proof of Christianity were performed. The invalidity of miracles as a proof is already assumed, and the sole inquiry is how to account, on the ground either of delusion or of fraud, for the fact that they ever formed a subject of belief.

In like manner all the other evidences are disposed of. Their worthlessness is already assumed, and the inquirer’s sole object is to give the most plausible account which his ingenuity can suggest of their supposed origin. Hence you will further observe that, though these atheistical inquirers all set out with essentially the same assumption, and accordingly begin with an implied denial of the divine origin of Christianity, yet they may differ among themselves
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as to the manner in which they endeavour to solve the various particular questions which the Christian evidences bring before them. Hence we have a variety of theories on the origin of Christianity, viewed as the mere product of the human mind—the product of human superstition or of human fraud. They differ also in their respective estimates of Christianity, regarded as a mere system of human origin. But the main thing to be observed by us at present is, that they all begin with an assumption which involves the denial of its divine origin, and that all investigation into its professed claims is to them a matter of no value whatever—one of purely historical interest.

Without entering at length into the recent attacks on the Christian revelation, we observe that these all proceed from the atheistical school. The elaborate works of Strauss are based on the assumption that there is no God, no self-existent Being distinct from the visible universe. A revelation is therefore to him a contradiction in terms. A miracle, as a proof of such a revelation, is nothing else than an absurdity. Science knows nothing of the miraculous. Science, therefore, rejects Christianity because it professes to be miraculous, and to be established by miracles. Historical science recognises only the ordinary laws which govern the lives of men. The life of Jesus professes to lie beyond these laws, and therefore historical science rejects this life as presented to us in the Gospel narratives. Such are the declared assumptions with which he commences; and on these assumptions it needs no argument to show that there can be but one conclusion.
We remark, however, that in these assumptions he confounds two ideas which are essentially distinct. Science, strictly so called, does not, it is admitted, recognise miracles; but it only does not recognise them as occurring in the ordinary course of things. A miracle is impossible so far as this ordinary course is concerned. That is a mere truism. But it by no means follows that miracles—real miracles—are in themselves impossible, when we take into view the power of Him who has established this ordinary course. In like manner, there are laws which govern the manifestations of human character; and when we inquire into the life of any man, we proceed in our investigation according to these ordinary laws. But it by no means follows that the life of One who claims to be more than man must be restricted to the operation of such laws. His life rises above the sphere of their operation, and therefore above the sphere of ordinary historical investigation. To proceed in an inquiry into the life of Jesus, and into the evidences of miraculous interposition, on the assumption that this life and these evidences must be reduced to the sphere of ordinary historical and of ordinary scientific inquiry, is manifestly to proceed on an assumption which, so far as the subject is of real importance, precludes all inquiry whatever, involving as it does a *petitio principii*—an assumption of the very conclusion which it is sought to establish. But to this important part of our subject we shall return.

The whole elaborate work of Strauss rests on the foundation that a miracle is impossible; and the whole design of his work—his former as well as his recent work—is to give some plausible account, as he
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imagines, of the rise of Christian ideas as set forth in the New Testament writings—ideas which he traces either to mythical fancies or to conscious fraud, however inconsistent with each other these suppositions are. Strauss is professedly a Pantheist, and Pantheism is essentially Atheism; for it recognises no living God, but the mere idea of perfection as entertained by the human mind, and as gradually advancing with the development of the race. There is, in his view, no distinct Supreme Being, no spirit in man distinct from his material frame, no real immortality beyond death and the grave. According to such a view, a revelation is impossible, miracles are absurd, a supernatural life such as that of Jesus is unreal: there may be an ideal Christ, as there may be an ideal God; but there is, and can be, no reality in the one or in the other. All is mere illusion, and man is the sport of illusion, having a momentary existence, but immediately vanishing, and vanishing for ever.

I would here, but only briefly, notice another recent work, which when it appeared excited no small sensation. I allude to the work of Renan on the 'Life of Jesus.' Renan belongs to what is called the Historical school of philosophy and religion—a school which professes, not to determine what in itself is true or false, but merely to trace the progress of philosophical or religious ideas as these have appeared in the history of the human race. For example, this school admits as facts or phenomena of the human mind the various conceptions which have, in different ages and among different nations, been entertained respecting God, and also the feelings or sentiments which accompany these conceptions; but it restricts
itself to the mere history of these conceptions and sentiments, and allows no inquiry as to the objective reality of the existence of God. It employs, however, religious terms, and often speaks loftily of moral and religious feelings, and of those who have manifested such feelings in any high degree. Jesus is described by Renan as one of the greatest of men, because He attained to the highest religious conceptions, and cherished and manifested the purest religious sentiments. His language about the character of Jesus sometimes rises to the loftiest admiration, not to say adoration. His task was in many respects different from that of Strauss, and hence he sometimes admits what the other rejects. His work, however, on the 'Life of Jesus,' is rather a romance than a strictly critical inquiry, which is the character that the other labours to give to his attack; but in essence there is no real difference between them. To Renan as well as to Strauss there is no Supreme Being distinct from the universe. Man is the highest intelligence in existence; and even man is but a shortlived deity, for there is no immortality to the individual, but only to the race; and yet the romantic writer dedicates his book to a deceased sister, whom he represents as enjoying rest in the bosom of God. Whilst he professes not to reject miracles in a summary manner as things impossible, yet he insists that miracles, should they occur, must occur as ordinary events, and in this way he virtually rejects them, and thus occupies, in this as in other matters, the same ground as Strauss. The denial of the objective reality of the supernatural is, in short, the basis of his whole work; and all his arguments, so far as anything like real argument
appears, are merely attempts to give some account of the life of Jesus on the supposition that He was not what He declared Himself to be.

My great design in these remarks on the late attacks upon Christianity is to show you that the question affecting divine revelation is once more thrown back to that most fundamental of all questions—Is there a God, or is there not? However elaborate these attacks may appear, they are all in reality based on the assumption that there is no God. It is exceedingly important that you should see that this really is the question which lies at their basis. We repeat, we do not affirm that the contrary assumption immediately and by itself establishes the divine origin of Christianity. What we at present affirm is, and the truth of the affirmation is beyond all question, that, on the assumption that there is no God, neither the Christian nor any other professed revelation can be true. There can be no message unless there exists one from whom the message may proceed. If there is no God, there can be no revelation.

Now, it is most saddening and most painful to think that this question about the existence of God should be every now and then forced on our attention, as if it were an undetermined question. And I would here guard you against the danger of having your thoughts continually employed about this fundamental question, important as it is. There is, I apprehend, very great danger to your moral and spiritual state in dwelling exclusively on speculations referring to such a question as this. We ought to be going forward in our knowledge of God and Jesus Christ our Lord, and must not be continually laying
the foundation of this knowledge. Our religious faith is strengthened, not by ever contemplating the grounds on which it rests, but by exercising and manifesting this faith in a life of holiness and righteousness and love. Our faith in God and in Christ can never here be turned into sight. Our faith in an unseen God and in an unseen Saviour must always be subject to trial, and trial always implies the possibility of doubts; and when we know that our faith is well founded, it is our wisdom to keep our faith alive by actual communion with its unseen objects, and by walking habitually in its light. Examine, indeed, to the utmost the grounds on which your faith rests; but when you have found that these are real and solid, and that therefore your faith is well founded, do not yield to mere suggestions of the possibility of doubts, but have confidence in your conclusions, and be steadfast in the faith. If, then, I enter here on these fundamental questions, it is simply because it is our duty here to notice these things, so that you may discern on what a solid rock our faith does rest. But I at the same time exhort you to go on towards perfection—that matured state of the spiritual understanding to which it is our privilege, notwithstanding all the opposing influences which would undermine our faith, to be striving through divine help to attain.

The great question, then, which lies at the very basis of this subject, is just this: Is there a God, or is there not? We believe that there is One Living Personal God, a Being distinct from the visible universe, a Being self-existent, possessed of all intellectual and moral perfection,—the Creator and Governor of the world. Such is our belief. On what grounds does
this belief rest? Does it rest on any grounds which our reason can state and discuss? Or is this belief a blind belief—a mere notion formed by our minds, and one of which we can give no account whatever? Such is our inquiry. Let us then with all possible calmness contemplate the subject.

This Being, whom we denominate God, is not an object of direct perception. "Behold, we go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but we cannot perceive Him: on the left hand, where He doth work, but we cannot behold Him; He hideth Himself on the right hand, that we cannot see Him." This Being is not, then, an object of our immediate perception; He is the Invisible God. How, then, do I know that there is such a Being? I know it from the traces—the visible tokens of His presence, His power, and His intelligence; for everywhere I see the traces of a power and intelligence which I am compelled, by the constitution of my mind, to ascribe to a Being possessed of power and intelligence. Everywhere—before me, behind me, on my left hand and on my right—there are tokens of power and skill which must belong, not to matter, but to mind; not to an abstraction, but to a Being, and to a Being who must, from the very necessity of the case, be self-existent, infinite, and eternal. This is, in brief, the grand and enduring argument which my reason employs in confirmation of my belief in the existence of God. It is an argument old, and yet ever new; an argument level to the meanest capacity, and yet availing to the highest intellect of man; an argument which sophistry may perplex, as it may perplex every possible argument, but which it can never destroy.
The humblest peasant who looks abroad on the fields of nature, and beholds the innumerable traces of power, wisdom, and goodness which these present to his view, or who looks upwards to the starry heights and sees the wondrous display there revealed to him, as well as the man of science, who can in some measure contemplate the objects of earth and the orbs of heaven with the eye of intelligence, is instinctively compelled by the very constitution of his nature to recognise in all these things a manifestation of power, and of wisdom, and of goodness, which can be predicated only of that unseen but all-glorious Being whose works these all are, and to whose existence and attributes they all unite in bearing clear and valid testimony. We pretend not to demonstrate as by a mathematical process that God exists. We point to the works of nature around us, of which works we ourselves form a part, and we proclaim in no hesitating or doubtful manner that these works bear unequivocal witness to the divine existence. However much the argument hence drawn may be cleared up by reasoning and expressed in the language of philosophy, yet the argument in itself is ever the same; and it is the solid, immovable rock on which faith in God ever rests. The argument, when reduced to its elements, consists of principles furnished by the human mind, and of facts presented to us in our own constitution and in the volume of nature; and so long as these principles form a part of our mental possessions, and these facts are open to consciousness and to sight, so long must the human mind ascend as by a ladder fixed on earth, and having its top amidst the heights of heaven, to the recogni-
tion and belief of that Being who, Himself uncreated, gave origin to us and to all nature. We are at present desirous to state the argument in its simplest, its broadest, and most comprehensive form. It is an argument of the strictest analogy, and meets with a response in every unbiassed mind. We know, in some measure, what is meant by power, intelligence, and goodness; and we know certain effects which these attributes can accomplish. We behold in the universe around us clear and decisive tokens of the operation of such attributes. We are compelled to ascribe such attributes to mind and not to matter, and to a living personal mind—to a Being who has power and intelligence and goodness; and further, to a Being who is supreme—to a self-existent, infinite Being.

I am sure that I need not specially exhort you to meditate on this great argument. But I beg of you not only to perceive its nature and validity, but to exercise faith in the conclusion to which it leads. Faith differs from reason, not because, as is sometimes but erroneously imagined, it does not rest on solid grounds, but because the conclusion which it embraces is one which cannot be verified by mere experience, but must, even when established, be an object of our faith. God is an object of faith, not because we have no reasons for our belief, but because He is invisible and infinite, and cannot possibly be an object of sensible experience. Hence it requires an effort of mind to keep our faith in God in active exercise; and hence also it is that faith in God is a subject of trial, and is capable of existing in a variety of degrees. Seeing that the grounds of our belief in
God are real and strong, aim at the possession of a firm faith in the living God: realise Him as ever near you; cherish the loftiest conceptions of His glorious attributes; see His presence everywhere, and live as in His presence; and your faith will, through His grace helping you, be proof against every assault.

In next Lecture we shall further consider this great, this fundamental subject.
LECTURE III.

ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

(Continued.)

You would be labouring under a great mistake were you to suppose that the great contest in these days lies between Christianity and what is called Natural Religion. The contest has once more reached the very foundation of all religion, whether natural or revealed. Not that there is anything essentially new in this feature of our times, for often before has the same conflict raged, though probably never with greater vehemence than in our day. It is also a characteristic of our times that this contest respecting the foundation of religious belief is not confined, as it used generally to be, within certain circles of speculative men. All classes in society are taking part in it. The press, now so powerful in its influence, has involved rich and poor, learned and unlearned, in this great conflict. And the apostles of a material and atheistical philosophy are most zealous and vehement in the spread of their views. At the same time there is also in our day an unwonted zeal on the part of the defenders of the truth. The faith of the Lord's people is strong and zealous. It would be wrong not to look
at both these features of our time; and we must always be on our guard against exaggeration on the one side or on the other. But we may affirm with truth that there never was a time when the Church of God stood in greater need of men able to defend the truth, and to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—in greater need of a well-trained and thoroughly zealous ministry. Though God works when and where and how He pleases, yet we know that it is His ordinary course to employ the agency of men—of men learned in the truth and devoted to His cause. It is painful to observe that in our day fewer than formerly of our Christian youth are willing to give themselves to this service. Without attempting to trace the apparent causes of this decrease, which is so manifest in every section of the Church, let us rather hope that those who do give themselves to the work of the ministry will be found to be men in earnest, men willing and able to go forth in the strength of the Lord to fight the fight of faith, and to maintain the cause of religious and moral truth amidst all the opposition of its enemies; and let us more and more fervently pray to "the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest."

It is for the reasons which I have stated that I am anxious to draw your special attention to the fundamental truths of religion. It is not that I wish formally to discuss them at present. My main desire is to state and defend these truths as briefly as I can, and thus to lead you to meditate on them as the sure basis of our Christian faith. I for one am
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convinced that, to the man who thoroughly believes in a living, personal God, the Creator and moral Governor of the world, the evidences of Christianity become clear and decisive. Difficulties, indeed, will meet him, for it is not the purpose of God that our faith should be free from trial; but he will, I am persuaded, encounter no difficulties which he will not, by patient and serious thought, be able either to remove, or to see that they are involved in the very nature of a scheme which transcends finite comprehension. But to the man who has no real, no steadfast faith in God, as a living personal God, but who has involved himself in the meshes of Atheism, under whatever form it may appear, difficulties insurmountable occur at the very threshold. No kind and no amount of evidence can avail to such a man. A deceived heart has turned him aside. The very eye of his natural reason is darkened; and since the light which is in him is darkness, how great must that darkness be! Such a man is without God, and therefore must be without Christ. Now, it becomes you to know that all the chief opponents of Christianity are in these days professed Atheists or Pantheists; and that between the two systems of Atheism and Pantheism there is in reality no difference. Pantheism is only a form of Atheism. The one as well as the other denies the existence of a living God. The whole question, then, is reduced to the simple and fundamental question, Is there such a Being, or is there not? How important, then, it is for you to give to this question your most serious thought!

Now, I have endeavoured to state to you the argument for our belief in God in the simplest and broadest
form. We do not require the aid of any profound speculation in order to establish this fundamental truth. We may be compelled to engage in speculation in order to meet the counter-speculations of the opponents of the truth. But the truth itself rests on a basis easily seen, and patent to every human mind. And it will be your wisdom ever to employ such an argument in confirmation of the truth. Belief in God, if not innate in the human breast, is at least so consonant to its most instinctive feelings, and so much in harmony with the dictates of unbiased reason and the voice of conscience, that you have only to appeal to these witnesses within us for a clear and decisive testimony to the greatest, the most glorious of all truths,—that we are not in a Fatherless world, but are the offspring—the rational offspring—of an omnipotent and loving God. You have only further to appeal to the universe around us, to the heavens above and to the earth beneath, and everywhere you hear the voice of nature proclaiming the existence and the glory of the great Creator. It requires no profound knowledge either of our own constitution or of the works of nature to arrive with full conviction at the belief of this truth; and you may always have confidence in the native feelings and perceptions of the human mind, darkened and corrupted as that mind has become through sin. Our nature in its essence is still the same as when it proceeded from the hands of the Creator. The image of God has indeed become defaced, but is not wholly removed from our souls. Have confidence, then, I pray you, in the testimony of your own native feelings and perceptions; for if we abandon these as unworthy
of credit, then all knowledge, all truth of every kind, is impossible to us.

Let me now observe, without, however, dwelling on the subject, that the great question immediately before us involves the essential distinction between matter and mind—a distinction to which our own consciousness bears witness, and which is therefore to be received as fundamental in this question. And here it is that you must make your stand, if you would thoroughly meet the sophistry of Atheism; for a materialistic philosophy is the very cradle of Atheism. Even then Atheism may be shown to be involved in manifest contradictions; but that would be all the length we could go; for a positive belief in a supreme Mind—a living and personal Spirit—can rest only on the belief that there is mind,—that we ourselves are living personal intelligences, though dwelling as we do in these tabernacles of clay. It is from the consciousness of our intelligent and moral being—of our own personality—that we rise, however feebly, to the grand conception of a supreme, intelligent and moral Being—of a living and personal God. Hence the unwearied efforts which are once more being made to invalidate man's consciousness of his own spiritual being, and to represent thought and will and conscience as the mere product of a material organisation. Let such a view of our nature be established, and then, in whatever absurdities we may land ourselves, there is no escape from a withering Atheism into the clear and warm atmosphere of a spiritual world. All is dark and chilling. All is involved in deepest gloom and in frightful absurdity. It is not mere mystery, then, but absurdity, that reigns over all. The merely mys-
terious, the incomprehensible, must meet us; for we, the finite creatures of a day, cannot reach the heights of heaven, or stretch back into the depths of eternity. Mystery, the incomprehensible, must meet us in the infinite realms of truth; but on the theory we have supposed, and which is, alas! now so prevalent, it is not, we repeat, such mystery as this—it is absurdity, contradiction, that everywhere bursts on our view and mocks our efforts.

Now, consciousness is that to which the last appeal must be made. Beyond its testimony we cannot proceed. The facts which it testifies must be received as ultimate facts; and if we set aside its testimony, all knowledge, as we have said, becomes impossible. It is, however, of the first importance that we read the testimony of consciousness aright, and that we give a sound interpretation to its statements. Of what, then, as respects ourselves, are we conscious? It is that we, each one of us, are living, personal beings, capable of feeling, thinking, and willing. We are conscious, not merely of feelings, thoughts, and volitions,—not merely of operations or states,—but of ourselves as feeling, thinking, and willing,—of self as exercising these operations or existing in these states. Such is the clear testimony of consciousness respecting ourselves. Again, we are conscious of our bodily frame,—of many of its functions,—and we at once perceive that there is an essential distinction between the matter of which it is composed and the mind which, however connected with it, feels and thinks and wills. The body we are forced to regard as the instrument employed by the mind, but not as one with the mind itself; and when we look beyond our
own bodily frame, we perceive material objects, possessed, indeed, of various properties, but wholly void of all power of feeling, thinking, or willing. Hence we instinctively, without any conscious process of reasoning, come to distinguish between mind and matter. We know each only as it manifests itself; but these manifestations are so distinct that we cannot recognise the one as identical with the other. There is in our entire constitution a mysterious union between the two. Still we instinctively recognise them as essentially distinct, and the superiority of mind over matter is at once acknowledged. Each has a real existence. We must not deny the existence of either; and a sound philosophy, which must be based on the testimony of consciousness and immediate perception, embraces both as ultimate facts. Nor must we form unwarranted speculations regarding either. We must not regard matter as the necessary product of mind, nor mind as the necessary development of matter. All that consciousness teaches us is that matter and mind are both real existences, and that the one is essentially different from the other; and also that it is mind alone which can feel and think and will—that it is mind alone to which power, intelligence, and goodness can be ascribed.

On this fundamental distinction, then, rests all religious belief; for it is in virtue of our own conscious nature—of our own knowledge of ourselves as living, intelligent, and moral agents—that we discern the clear evidences in our own constitution and in the world around us of a supreme conscious Nature, of an intelligent and moral Agent, who transcends our highest conceptions, and is the supreme, the self-
existent cause of all finite beings, of all finite existence, whether animate or inanimate. We cannot escape this conclusion without doing violence to the dictates of our whole rational nature. The conclusion itself being so marvellous, so transcendent, it is easy to raise questions which we cannot solve, and which therefore only perplex our finite understandings. But that is not the point. The real point is, whether the conclusion itself is warranted or not warranted. We beg of you to adhere to this point, and to leave the transcendent nature of the conclusion to speak for itself. Now, what we maintain is this, that when we contemplate ourselves as living personal beings, endowed with the capacities or powers of feeling, thinking, and will, we are forced to regard ourselves as finite and dependent beings, as beings who owe our existence and all that we are to another, to one who also must, though in an infinitely higher sense, be a living Being, possessed of power to create, and endowed with all intellectual and moral perfection. We cannot, we maintain, but so regard ourselves; and thus looking upon ourselves as created beings, we at once, by the very constitution of our minds, rise to the belief of a self-existent and omnipotent Creator. Such, we apprehend, is the process, brief and decisive, by which we attain to the idea and to the belief of the existence of God. The foundation is laid in our own spiritual constitution; and having faith in its testimony, we have faith in God. In like manner we contemplate matter, with its various properties and in its manifold arrangements, and we cannot help regarding it as a thing created—as a thing not existing by any inherent power of self-existence,
but owing its existence and all its properties to one possessed of power and able to arrange. And thus it is that, contemplating the world around us, we behold in the objects which compose it, and in the arrangements which everywhere meet our eye, evident tokens of creative power, and intelligent design, and active goodness. We at once ascribe all these manifestations to One who is not matter, but mind—to a self-existent, conscious, personal Being, infinite in power, intelligence, and goodness. And as we discern a unity in all things, manifold and widespread as they are seen to be, so we arrive at last at the sublime conclusion that there is One God, and only one, the supreme Cause of all things, the Creator and Governor of the world.

Let us for a moment dwell on this sublime, this transcendent conclusion—a conclusion to which reason, in the view of our own spiritual being and of surrounding nature, so clearly and so powerfully conducts us. It rests on an immovable basis; and yet, when we endeavour to look at it in its transcendent greatness, and to realise in our minds, inadequately as at the best we can, the sublime fact of a self-existent, living, and personal God—a Being spiritual, eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in His perfections—a Being everywhere present, everywhere operating, controlling, and reigning—we are apt not only to be overwhelmed, as we well may, with a feeling of awe at the very thought of such glorious majesty, but even to startle at the very conclusion itself, and at times to question whether it is possible for such a conclusion to be correct—possible for such a Being to exist. Now, I beg of you at once to face this diffi-
culty, which springs, you will observe, not from any flaw to be detected either in the basis of the conclusion or in the simple process by which our reason, building on this basis, raises the conclusion, but solely from the nature of the conclusion itself—its infinitely sublime and transcendent nature. What is it, then, in this conclusion respecting the existence of God, which at times startles the human mind, and which, unless guarded against, may lay the mind open not merely to perplexities in speculation, but to doubts, and, should these doubts be cherished, to scepticism, and at last to blank Atheism? What is it, I again ask you to consider, which startles our minds in respect to this conclusion? I believe that it is mainly one thing involved in it, and that this is the idea of Self-existence. Now, may I again beg of you to give to this matter your most intense consideration? Whilst infinitude, of whatever it may be predicated, must ever surpass our limited conceptions, it appears to me that we are specially prone to feel a sense of this limitation of our faculties when we attempt to realise the fact of a past eternal duration—of, in short, an eternal, a self-existent Being. Our reason is indeed compelled to ascribe all existences to a First, an Absolute Cause—to a Being who Himself must have no cause beyond Himself for His existence—who, in short, possesses in His very being what we can only term the cause of His own existence. We see clearly, when we reflect on the subject, that such must be the case; for were it not so, we should have to disown this supposed Being as the First Cause of all, and to proceed in our reasoning till we did arrive at the recognition of a beginningless Being—a Being un-
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caused by aught without Himself. Now self-existence is, we apprehend, that one great mystery—that one fact which overpowers the mind of man in its attempts to realise it. The more you think about it, the more incomprehensible will it appear to you. We comprehend—or rather, I should say, we think that we comprehend—the fact of the existence of one being whose existence has been, as we say, caused by another. We seem to ourselves to have an adequate reason for the existence of any being or thing when we can trace this existence to the operation of another being or thing. But uncaused Being—a self-existent Being—though we know that such a Being must be, is wholly incomprehensible by us; and simply because in this case the incomprehensible nature of the fact appears to us in so vivid a light, we are apt to be startled by the thought, and are, as I have said, in danger of questioning our conclusion.

Now, let it be carefully noticed, that it is literally impossible for us to get rid of this fact of self-existence under any theory whatever. Here is that adamantine wall against which the Atheist as well as the Theist beats in vain. The former, however absurdly, as we shall endeavour to show you, only changes the object that must be self-existent; or, if such language would in his case be contradictory, the object which must have eternally been. No proposition can be more evident than this: something now exists, therefore some thing or some Being must always have existed. *Ex nihilo nihil fit* is a proposition absolutely certain when taken in its literal, absolute sense. Nothing, absolute nothing, must have for ever remained nothing. Atheism, then, is forced to assume
that matter in some form or other must have existed from all eternity — matter, a finite thing, a thing changeable in its forms at least, must have been without a beginning. Apart from the absurdities involved in this supposition, beginningless existence—that is, self-existence—is as essential to the atheistic hypothesis as it is to the theistic conclusion. And therefore, when the weak mind of man stumbles at the idea of a self-existent spiritual Being, it stumbles only to fall into the idea of a self-existent material thing. There is, as I have said, no possible escape from this incomprehensible fact—self-existence. The human mind, when in a sound state, sees that such must be the case; and when overpowered by the vain attempt to fathom the mystery of a self-existent God, it sees only the more powerfully the transcendent glory of His nature, and adores Him who dwells in light unapproachable and full of glory. Here also we behold at once the greatness and the littleness of the human mind—its greatness in being able to arrive at the knowledge and belief that such a Being must be and is, and its littleness in its utter inability to conceive how such a Being can be; and again, I would say, its greatness in knowing that it is because we are finite and He is infinite that we cannot conceive—cannot comprehend His existence.

Have faith, then, I again pray you, in your spiritual constitution, and in your reason, which is the alone instrument of all our thought. Have faith in the basis on which you build, and in the process which reason conducts, and in the conclusion, marvellous as it is, to which reason leads. And then you will have faith in God—in that uncaused, that self-existent
Being, who has life in Himself, and is the Author of life throughout His universe. Exercise your minds in order to keep this faith alive; and instead of stumbling at the glorious conclusion, and yielding yourselves a prey to scepticism and unbelief, you will rejoice in Him who is from everlasting to everlasting God.
Before entering on a brief consideration of the Atheistic hypothesis, I wish to draw your attention for a few moments to what is strictly implied in our idea of the Infinite. And, first, I would remark, what indeed is so obvious as scarcely to require distinct notice, that there is no such thing as "the Infinite" in the abstract, but that the term must be applicable, if applicable at all, to some being or thing which is infinite. We are so apt to use words loosely, and to argue about mere words, that it seems necessary to remind you that this term is merely a predicate, which can have no existence in itself, but can only be realised, if realised at all, as characterising some being or real object—or rather the attributes of such being or object. But the main point to be attended to by us in respect to this matter is the strict meaning of this term; for there is another term, expressing an entirely different idea, with which we are apt to confound it. There is what is called the Indefinite, and there is what alone is the Infinite. For example, you are contemplating a series of numbers, say the series of fractional numbers $\frac{1}{10} + \frac{1}{100} + \frac{1}{1000}$ and so on. The law of this series is easily seen, and you can go on
increasing the number of its terms as long as you please; each separate fraction being of less numerical value than the one immediately preceding, and yet no one so small but there may still be a smaller. In common language we call this an infinite series. Now you will observe two things which distinguish such a so-called infinite series as this: first, it has a beginning, the fraction \( \frac{1}{10} \); and secondly, each number in the series, however far you may carry it, may be looked upon as a distinct number or fraction. Moreover, the whole value of the series can be expressed or summed up in a definite number or fraction. The only thing which entitles you to apply the term infinite to the series is this, that no fraction, however small, can be assigned without your being able to assign a smaller.

Strictly speaking, the series is only an indefinite series—that is, a series of numbers, to which, although it has a beginning, no limit can be assigned. But the infinite, strictly viewed, is different from this. The infinite has no limits whatever. It has neither a beginning nor an ending. The indefinite has a beginning, and is indefinite only because you are not able to reach its end. This distinction between the indefinite and the infinite, the importance of which distinction is fundamental in our subject, may also be made obvious to you by borrowing an illustration from geometry. A line is defined to be that which has length without breadth; and a point is defined to be that which has neither length nor breadth. Take, then, any line, and suppose it bisected. You know that you can always suppose this bisection continued, and that you can assign no limit to these continued
bisections. The process of bisection could only stop if you could reach to a line so small as that it should be a point; but this would, in the case supposed, involve a contradiction, for be the line never so small, it must have length to constitute it a line, and it can never become a point, which by the definition has no length. You see, then, that any line of any definite length whatever can undergo a series of bisections without any assignable end. And yet a line may be conceived, or rather supposed, to consist of a point moving in a certain direction—that is, of a series of mere points in contact with each other. You further may say that any line consists of an indefinite number of such points. The line is in itself of a definite length; but inasmuch as the geometrical points of which it may be supposed to consist have no length, the two things are really incommensurable; the line cannot be said to consist of a definite number of points; but when we suppose them to be commensurable, we are forced to say that the line consists of an indefinite, an unassignable number of such points. In loose language, the line, whatever its length as compared with other lines—with things of its own order—is infinite when brought into relation or comparison with a thing of a different order. The finite line comes to be viewed as infinite relatively to a point, which simply has position, but no magnitude whatsoever.

Now, what I wish you thoroughly to notice is this, that in mathematical science, whether in arithmetic or geometry, we deal only with the relatively infinite—only with the indefinite, and never with the strictly infinite. All the interesting and often most curious
processes which distinguish the science of mathematics through the introduction of the idea of the indefinite or relatively infinite, are wholly excluded when we attempt to reason on the strictly infinite. The essential characteristic of the latter is, that it has no limits whatever. It is the absolutely and not the relatively infinite. It has no beginning and no ending. It is boundless in every possible aspect.

Now, I should not have troubled you with these remarks, were I not convinced, first, that a correct idea of the strictly infinite lies at the basis of our great subject; and, secondly, that often, far oftener than one would at first imagine, the two distinct ideas of the strictly infinite and of the merely indefinite are confounded, especially by atheistical inquirers. You will therefore excuse these remarks, and try to bear them in your minds as we proceed to consider the hypothesis of Atheism.

This hypothesis implies that the visible world—that world which consists of material things, some of them organised, others unorganised—is all that exists; that matter, with the various forces which we perceive to be in operation according to certain methods or laws which also may be known, is the only existence; and that we are not entitled to suppose the existence of a spiritual Being, living and personal, distinct from this matter and its properties or forces, to whom the existence of the latter may be ascribed as its Author. Atheism, therefore, proclaims the eternal, uncreated existence, the self-existence of the material universe. And, as I formerly remarked, it is unnecessary to attempt to draw any distinction between this Atheism and the other form of it which is called Pantheism.
There is really no essential distinction between them; for there can be no intermediate supposition between strict Atheism and strict Theism. To attempt any such supposition is merely to play with words and to trifle with the subject. There either is a God or there is not. Let us, then, keep strictly to the subject, and not allow our minds to be drawn away from it by merely unmeaning verbiage. It is an awful reality about which we are concerned, a reality of infinite moment to every rational being; and we must not engage in the inquiry as if it were one merely for exhibiting ingenuity in the use of words, or for exercising our skill in perplexing a problem which is one of life or death.

The atheistic hypothesis, then, declares that matter, possessed of those properties which we see it possesses, is a thing uncreated, eternal, and self-existent. Now, observe that we do not reject this hypothesis, because it represents something as having existed from eternity, something uncreated and self-existent. We have already remarked that self-existence is that one great mystery which meets us on either supposition—on the supposition of Theism as well as on that of Atheism. We cannot possibly eliminate this fact—for such it is—from the question on either view; and therefore, taken by itself, and altogether apart from that which is supposed to be self-existent, this fact cannot be made the ground for rejecting Atheism. Only let us take care that, when we criticise the hypothesis of Atheism, we do not allow its advocate to substitute the idea of indefinite duration in the room of the idea of a beginningless duration.

And now we must fix our thoughts as best we can
on this material world, and see whether its contents and its condition will harmonise with the fact of self-existence, of beginningless duration; or whether it is such, both in its contents and its condition, as wholly to disprove the assumptions involved. Now, I apprehend that, speaking generally, we shall be allowed by the Atheist himself to contemplate the visible universe as exhibiting a system or scene of continual change, both in the relative position of its various parts, and also in the condition of these parts themselves. Change, unceasing change, is a manifest characteristic of the world. The great end of all scientific inquiry is to mark these changes, and to ascertain the conditions under which they take place: and the conclusion which science ever more and more confirms is, that there is a system in operation, a system proceeding in a way which can to some extent be observed. It is of no consequence, as far as our immediate subject is concerned, what are the laws which are seen to regulate this system of things. The only thing of importance to us at present is the fact that there is such a system,—that, viewed as a system, the world presents a series of changes, which succeed one another in a definite manner. Atheism, then, assumes that this series of changes in the material world has gone on for ever,—that it has been going on, not merely, you will observe, for an indefinitely long period, for millions and millions of past years, but strictly for ever, without a beginning, from all eternity. Now we maintain, not, you will observe, that the fact of eternal, beginningless existence is impossible, but that a series of changes or states, one succeeding the other, without a beginning, is impos-
sible,—is, in short, a contradiction in point of fact. A series may begin and be supposed to go on indefinitely, so that no limit can be assigned to it; but it must have had a beginning, otherwise it could not exist. You may suppose the commencement of this dependent series—for each change in it depends on the one immediately preceding, and causes the one immediately succeeding—to be as far back as you please; but a commencement somewhere it must have had. It must, I say, have had a beginning; and the reasons are as follows.

1. Wherever we see a series of changes in any substance whatever, we are by the very constitution of our minds compelled to believe that it had a beginning. What, let us ask, is the grand end of all physical inquiry, but, if possible, to find out this assumed beginning—to reach to some primordial state of things—to some supposed *germ* or other, from which, as by some law or other, all successive changes or states have proceeded? Science, it is true, can never reach this assumed beginning, because science is restricted to the view of a course going on. But whilst this is true, science labours to push back its inquiries farther and farther, in order that it may reach nearer and nearer to that first state, the existence of which at the beginning of the course it always assumes. The very ideas or assumptions of a first or primordial state—of a germ, of which we hear so much,—all of them necessarily involve the idea of a beginning. But most evident it is that on the atheistic hypothesis there never was a first state of things—a primordial condition of matter—a germ from which all succeeding things could have proceeded. Our instinctive nature, then, so clearly
expressed in all scientific inquiry, rejects a beginning-
less, an eternal series of past changes in the material
world. The two ideas are manifestly contradictory—
the idea of a past series of changes, and the idea that
this series had no beginning. Hence Atheism is
built on an imaginary basis. It contains a contra-
diction in its very supposition regarding the material
world.

2. This absurdity in the hypothesis of Atheism might
be otherwise brought out. Always, however, keep in
mind the really *infinite*, and do not confound it with the
merely *indefinite*. The material world by supposition
had no beginning. It has been from all eternity.
This world presents to us changes in its condition.
We, for example, are living to-day. A few years ago
we were not living. Our fathers then lived, and now
they are no more. We shall soon be succeeded by
other living beings. Now, on the supposition of a
commencement of the course of things, whatever other
speculative difficulties may arise—and difficulties, you
will observe, are not to be confounded with real con-
tradictions,—on the supposition, I say, of a com-
 mencement of the course of things, we can at least
understand why it has happened that we are living
now, and not a hundred years ago; for as this begun
course, however long it may have gone on, consists of
a definite number of past changes, we see why it is
that we now live, for the present is our assigned place
in this course. A Being able to perceive the succes-
 sive changes which have taken place could tell, so to
speak, the number in the supposed series which we
indicate. But on the supposition that the course of
things had no beginning, but is strictly from eternity,
there always has been from every definite point in that course an eternity past—a duration strictly infinite. A succession of changes is possible only when the series has had a commencement; but on the supposition of a beginningless existence no succession is possible. Every supposed change in the supposed succession must have been from eternity, which is manifestly absurd. Even supposing an infinite number of changes, there has been an infinite duration for them to have happened in. Every change must then have happened infinitely long before any definite point of duration. In other words, a beginningless series of changes involves a contradiction, for such a series must have had a beginning. Whatever is from eternity—whatever is self-existent—must evidently, from the very supposition, be ever the same, immutable as well as eternal—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. The material world, then, and all that it contains, must have had a beginning, however remote from the present that beginning may have been; and therefore this material world cannot be an uncreated, a self-existent world. It must owe its existence to a Power, to an almighty Being, distinct from itself; to One who is really self-existent, eternal, and immutable. Hence we again see that Atheism involves a contradiction in its very hypothesis.

3. In like manner, it might be shown that, though we are apt to speak of the material world as boundless in its extent, simply because it is boundless relatively to us, the finite creatures of a day, it cannot, in strict language, be regarded as infinite—as having no limits to its extent. When we bring our minds calmly to reflect on the subject, we cannot fail to conclude that matter,
whether in smaller or larger objects, is a thing possessing only certain properties, and these only in a definite measure. We perceive that everything is stamped with the mark of finiteness; that subordinate systems, such as our own, consist of bodies, which, though unknown to us in all their extent, are yet a definite number; and that, however numerous the stars of heaven may be—however vast, in short, the universe in its extent may be—still there can and must be a limit to this extent,—that the material universe, consisting, as it does, of separate though connected bodies, must still have limits, which, however unknown to us, must somewhere exist; for no possible number of finite objects can ever constitute a strictly infinite number. An infinite number of finite objects is, indeed, a contradiction. Infinity is out of all proportion to the finite. It is an attribute *sui generis*, and is predicable only of that incomprehensible Being to whom alone eternity and immensity belong. He, and He alone, is the Self-existent, the Eternal, the Infinite. The material world must, we thus conclude, be finite both in its past duration and in its extent. Infinitude in any respect whatever cannot belong to such a thing as matter.

Such, then, are the contradictions involved in the atheistic hypothesis. Attempts have been made to evade them, partly by using the term infinite in a loose sense, and partly by bringing forward the difficulties which necessarily cling to all our inadequate conceptions of the strictly infinite. These difficulties are, indeed, great—insurmountable, we should at once say, by the finite mind of man. But a difficulty—an insurmountable difficulty—is one thing, and a contra-
diction is another. The human mind can contemplate
the one, and own its inability to remove it at the very
moment that it receives it as a fact; but the other it
cannot contemplate as a thing to be received. A
manifest contradiction can never be acquiesced in by
our reason; for we are satisfied that truth—the reality
of things—though reaching to the strictly infinite,
can never contradict itself, but must in all its parts
possess a unity and harmony as its essential char-
acteristics. Atheism is based on a contradiction—on
a lie—and no lie is of the truth. It is a lie which,
alas! seems to amuse some minds, and to furnish
scope for their ingenious and subtle disquisitions; but
it is a lie which, wherever it prevails, darkens the
whole region of truth, and corrupts the whole nature
of man, and would render it impossible for him to
live. It is, however, a lie so manifest that reason and
conscience, and the very instincts of our nature, pro-
test against it; and against this τρωτον ψεύδος—this fun-
damental falsehood—the whole material universe, for
the deification of which it is invented, loudly reclaims.
For all nature bears its clear testimony to Him who
alone is God, and to whom reason and conscience
direct us as the source of all truth and goodness, and
before whose august presence our instinctive feelings
cause us to bow down and adore.

But we must now bring these remarks to a close.
Atheism, which means the denial of the existence of
God, represents matter as being eternal and infinite
in the strictest sense of these terms, and is thus in-
volved not in mere speculative difficulties, but in real
contradictions; whereas Theism—the belief in the
existence of God—whilst it presents to us speculative
difficulties which our finite reason cannot overcome, is not only free from contradiction, but also accounts for the origin of the world and the course of events. Viewed as mere hypotheses, the one is condemned by our reason, while the other is accepted as the only philosophical explanation of the facts before us. According to Atheism, the visible world had no origin; there was no first or primordial condition; no primary germ to be developed; for the world—matter with all its forces and laws—is from eternity. And yet there is a manifest system of things—a system having all its various parts adjusted to one another—a system advancing in an orderly course, one stage causing another—a successive order of changes, movements, and living creatures—a wondrous system of objects, animate and inanimate—a system bearing all the marks of having had an origin, and of having been arranged by intelligence and will for the accomplishment of definite purposes—a system, therefore, which contradicts the assumption that it is self-existent, unoriginated, eternal. According to Theism, there is a spiritual Being, self-existent, and immutable in all His perfections; who, in Himself incomprehensible, gave origin to the world, which He ever upholds and governs. The idea of creation surpasses, indeed, our comprehension, but it involves no contradiction. We ascribe it to the will and power of this One self-existent God. We therefore give a reasonable account of the existence of the world, and of the orderly system of things which it presents, when we trace that system, as respects both its contents and its order, to a self-existent God, possessed of almighty power and supreme intelligence. This Being Himself is indeed
incomprehensible; but this fact does not constitute a contradiction, for there is nothing contradictory, but altogether reasonable, in the fact that the finite cannot comprehend the Infinite; that to us who are but of yesterday, He who is from everlasting should be an object surpassing the limits of our knowledge. In one word, our whole nature calls for such a Being—for a living personal God. Our feelings of dependence and worship direct us instinctively to Him. Our reason demands Him as the highest reality and truth. Conscience points to Him as the alone moral Governor of the universe. All surrounding nature also demands His existence; for everywhere we behold proofs of His creative power, His perfect intelligence, and His boundless goodness. If, then, there is one truth on which the human mind may rest with assured confidence, it is that there is a God; and we can only be astonished and saddened at the perversity of the man, who, deaf to the voice within and to the voice without, can bring himself even for a moment to entertain the supposition that there is no God.

Yet, sad as the fact is, it is most certain that, as we have said, never in any former age were such strenuous efforts made to promulgate this supposition; and to such a length have these efforts proceeded, that it is now openly proclaimed by some that belief in God is the chief hindrance to individual and social progress and happiness; for it is this belief, they allege, which stands in the way of those great schemes, which, if realised, would free the world of all the sources of its misery. Alas! alas! were this belief indeed removed from the mind of an individual,
or from the bosom of society, we need no prophetic voice to tell us what would be the result. The very foundation of morals would be sapped. Truth, Justice, and Love would speedily take their flight; man's animal passions would soon assume the ascendancy; and the social state, hastening to dissolution, would meanwhile be a scene of falsehood, injustice, tyranny, and death. But let us not be over-alarmed. The holy, righteous, and beneficent God reigns, and though at times "the floods" of human impiety and passion may "lift up their waves, yet Jehovah on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." "Jehovah reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." "This God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death;" yea, "He will be our portion for ever."

Convinced then, as I am, that the great contest of our day has come once more to be between Theism and Atheism, and that the most strenuous efforts are being made to spread the latter, subversive though it be of all truth and good and happiness, whether in the individual or in society, I have thought it proper to draw your attention to the subject; and it is hoped that the discussion, brief as it has been, may not have been altogether useless, but may have tended in some measure to strengthen your faith in the greatest, the most sublime, and most fundamental of all truths—the existence of a Supreme Being who created and governs the world. No truth can possibly be more important than this, for it is one which comes home directly to each of us, affecting, as it does, our highest duty and our most lasting interests.
It becomes us to cherish this truth as the most precious treasure of our souls, and to defend it with all our energy. It is man's noblest privilege to be able to rise to the conception of this All-glorious Being; and it is his highest duty to acknowledge, honour, love, and obey Him; as it is also his highest happiness to enjoy communion with Him as his God. If you firmly grasp and hold this truth, you will find the way open to examine the evidences of that revelation which has been graciously bestowed upon us; and you will encounter no special difficulty in discerning the validity and appreciating the worth of these evidences. It is when a man vaguely discerns or loosely holds the fundamental truth of a living personal God, that he stumbles when he would inquire into the evidences of revelation, and that he is in danger of yielding to the sophistry by which these evidences are assailed. Only be settled and grounded in the faith of God, and you will find yourselves drawn to believe on Him whom God has sent. On this latter subject also we propose briefly to address you, and specially on the validity of those miraculous proofs which God has given in attestation of the mission of His Son.
LECTURE V.

ON THE EVIDENCES OF DIVINE REVELATION.

In the remarks which I am at present to make on the Evidences of Divine Revelation, it is not my intention to discuss these evidences at length, but to defend their validity as evidences, and specially to show that miracles—real, genuine miracles—are and must be the proper, the valid proof of a divine revelation. I need hardly tell you that it is against the miraculous proof that the efforts of infidelity have in all ages been mainly directed; and that the recent attacks upon Christianity have aimed at throwing entire discredit on this branch of the evidences, as being that without which all other proofs would in reality be of no avail; for it is only in conjunction with this, the direct proof of a revelation, that these others exert their due influence. Hence every effort has been and is still made by the opponents of revelation in general, and of Christianity in particular, to depreciate the value of the miraculous evidence, and even to represent the very idea of a miracle as an absurdity. The sceptic Hume, who devoted the great talent with which he was intrusted to the melancholy task of perplexing those questions on which man's highest interests depend, did not attempt to prove the impossibility of a
miracle. He aimed rather at throwing discredit on that testimony by means of which the evidence which miracles furnish is conveyed to those who were not eyewitnesses of the events. It was the validity of this testimony which his sophistry directly sought to destroy. No doubt, his argument, such as it was, indirectly impugned the possibility of miracles themselves. And his successors in this work have openly assailed miracles themselves, their whole efforts seeming to be concentrated to accomplish this one result—the entire disproof of the possibility of a miracle. It is to be deeply lamented that, influenced by the sophistry of these recent opponents of revelation, not a few of its professed friends have shown a disposition not only to undervalue the miraculous proof, but even to explain away by all sorts of interpretation the miracles alleged to have been wrought in support of the claims of revelation, and to reduce them by means of such interpretations to the level of ordinary non-miraculous events. Miracles, it is now sometimes said, are hindrances to our faith; and these professed friends of revelation seem to imagine that, if we could in any way get rid of these alleged miracles, we should remove a great stumblingblock out of the way of many who but for them would willingly receive the message of Heaven! The subject, then, on which we are entering, is one of the highest moment, and I wish to bring together within a short compass those points which on this subject demand your closest attention.

1. Miracles, as we have said, constitute the valid proof of a divine revelation.

We do not mean that proofs of other kinds
are not required, or that these, when given, are of slight value. Far otherwise: Christianity, for example, is supported in its divine claims by manifold evidence; and every branch of this body of evidence is important, and even necessary. The moral character of Christianity, for instance, is absolutely essential to the support of its claims; for were this moral character other than it is, no further proof would be necessary to discredit these claims. But then you will observe that the moral character of a system of doctrine, however unexceptionable that character may be, can only establish the truth of the system in itself, and can never reach to the Divine authority of the system. The question is still undecided, From whom has this system of moral truth proceeded? Directly from God, or from man? The moral character of a doctrine proves that doctrine to be true, but it does not logically determine that God is its immediate author.

Again, the adaptation of the scheme of redemption, made known to us in the Gospel, to the nature and condition of man, is a powerful branch of the evidence in support of its divine origin. The more we contemplate this adaptation in all its marvellous features, the stronger does the evidence appear which it furnishes to this divine origin. It constitutes—especially in connection with the moral character of the Gospel, from which, indeed, it is inseparable—that internal evidence which appeals to man's conscience as well as to his reason, and leads him to conclude in no hesitating manner that such a scheme as this bears on itself the impress of Heaven.

Still (for we must look at the matter with all calmness and logical severity), had we nothing more
than this internal evidence, however strong might be the presumption raised in our minds in respect to the divine origin of the Gospel, and however much we should feel it to be our wisdom to act on such a presumption, it seems clear that there would still remain an essential link wanting in the evidence—that link by means of which the authority of God is brought directly to establish the claims of the Gospel. "Revelation itself," says the sagacious Butler, "is miraculous, and miracles are the proof of it." They are the proof, you will observe, not directly of the truth of the doctrine revealed, but of its authority—of this truth having come from God. The doctrine may be true, and yet God may not be its direct author. Miracles prove that God is its author. A professed messenger from heaven appears. He delivers a system of doctrine. If his doctrine presents aught inconsistent with the clear dictates of reason and conscience, we at once reject his doctrine, and we are entitled and bound to do so, whatever proofs he may profess to furnish in support of his claims; for reason and conscience constitute the last tribunal to which all such claims must be referred. But should this professed messenger make known to us a system of doctrine, which in itself, so far as we can judge of its character, is evidently true, and not only true, but of importance to us, and which also, even when it transcends the sphere of our natural reason, unfolds to us a scheme which, so far again as we can judge of it, seems adapted to our moral condition, and capable of conferring upon us real, practical benefits, then a presumption of a high order indeed arises in favour of the claims of this messenger; the way is fully open
for receiving such evidence as He may be able to give in attestation of His claims; and we feel an assurance that if He really is what He claims to be, the all-wise God will not leave the claims of His servant in a state of doubt, nor place us, His rational creatures, to whom He has sent this servant, in manifest perplexity, but will, along with the message of truth and mercy, give such tokens to His servant as when presented by Him to us will enable us to know of a truth that this is indeed a messenger of God to man.

The necessity for such evidence as bears directly on the authority of the messenger is manifest. We dare not, without satisfactory evidence, acknowledge any one to be a direct messenger of Heaven. And the evidence must be such as will at once establish his authority—clear, palpable evidence—evidence not in mere words or assertions, but in deed and in truth. The only evidence which can answer this purpose is that which consists in the manifestation of power; therefore of extraordinary, miraculous power. It is the evidence of power which first leads the mind to the recognition of and belief in creative power. The evidences of wisdom and goodness combine with the former, and give us the conception of an all-wise and all-perfect, as well as of an almighty Creator. So it is in respect to our recognition of and belief in an extraordinary messenger from God. We demand in him the tokens of wisdom and goodness; but the token of power is absolutely necessary, for it is that token on which we can directly look, and which leaves no possible room for evasion or doubt. Miracles, then, are necessary to sustain the claims of a Divine Revelation; necessary not exactly to establish the
truth of doctrine, but to confirm its authority as being from God. Miracles are, we repeat in other words, essential as evidence, not to make that true which is not true in itself, but to exhibit in clear light the fact that this truth has come from God; not, we again say, to show the truth of the message, but to establish the claims of the messenger, and therefore the authority with which his message, true and important in itself, is clothed.

In these remarks we have assumed that miracles are possible. Our object has been to show the place which, on this assumption, they occupy among the evidences of divine revelation. They are absolutely necessary, for "revelation itself is miraculous," and there can be no other direct proof of it than that of miracles.

2. We now consider whether a miracle be a possible event or not.

Here we must correctly understand what is meant by a miraculous event. A real miracle is not merely a rare or unusual event, but an event which cannot possibly take place in what is termed the ordinary course of things. There can be no question that there is an established course of nature, in which events take place in accordance with what we term "the laws of nature." Matter is possessed of certain properties, and these properties exert their force in a uniform method established by the all-wise Creator. Physical forces or causes have in themselves no power to change the mode in which they severally operate. Similar causes under similar circumstances invariably produce similar results. In the ordinary course of nature, then, an event may occur which surprises and
astonishes our minds. We may have never before witnessed or heard of such an event, and this new event—new to us—may be inexplicable by us; that is, we may be unable to assign its physical cause or causes—to classify it, in short, among events already known to us. And a person ignorant of physical science may be apt to regard the event as really extraordinary, as strictly miraculous. But the more we become acquainted with the facts and laws of external nature, the deeper does our conviction become, that however rare and surprising any event in the ordinary course of things may seem, it is as explicable as the most common event by the ordinary, established laws of nature. The scientific mind attains at length to the thorough conviction that a miracle, a real miracle, is impossible in the ordinary course of nature; for a miracle is an event which cannot be explained by a reference to mere physical causes. It is the product of no mere physical law, known or unknown, which rules the ordinary course of things. The very supposition that it is or may be so explicable, annihilates at once its character as a miraculous event. A miracle implies the immediate interposition of divine power—of the Supreme Being, in short. It is an event beyond the ordinary course, and is introduced into the ordinary course on purpose to bear witness to an extraordinary interposition of the almighty Creator.

There is a sense, then, in which the affirmation now so common among the opponents of revelation is true, that a miracle—an event not explicable by the ordinary laws of nature—is impossible. This affirmation is most true, when regard is had solely to
these laws of nature. It is most important that you clearly perceive when this dictum is true, and why it is that it is true. The affirmation, then, is ever true when, as we have said, regard is had to the laws of nature alone, to physical causes alone, to the ordinary course of nature alone. And the reason why this is true is just this,—that it would involve a contradiction to suppose a physical cause, which as a cause tends to produce one result, either failing to operate according to its nature, or of itself changing its own nature and producing a different or opposite result. Physical causes have only physical force. They have no efficient power, no intelligence, no will, no power of choice. They operate blindly and mechanically, and cannot possibly operate otherwise. Hence the Theist maintains as firmly as the Atheist can do, that in the ordinary course of nature, viewed solely as governed by physical causes or laws, no real miracle is possible.

But now the great question comes into view, Is there no sense in which a miracle is possible? The Atheist, by his very hypothesis, is compelled to reject the possibility of a miracle in every sense. For to him there is, by supposition, nothing but this material course of things; and it needs no argument to prove that, if the visible course of things is all that exists, no event can possibly happen but in harmony with such a course. A miracle necessarily implies the intervention of a power distinct from and above the course of things; and since, according to the atheistic hypothesis, there exists no such power, a real miracle is in every sense impossible. But the Theist—the man who believes in God, in a living personal Creator—arrives at an entirely opposite conclusion. He con-
templates the material world as the effect of divine power, and he views the whole course of nature, not as having in itself a necessary existence, but as a course established, governed, and carried on by the supreme Creator. The Theist admits as a legitimate conclusion, that in this ordinary course, viewed in itself, no events of an extraordinary kind can take place; but he does not admit that in no sense whatever can such events take place, for he believes that He who created the world and established the course of nature has still the same power, the same intelligence, and the same will, and that it can never be beyond the power of this almighty Being to interpose in the course of events, and to do whatever to Him seemeth good. We can have no adequate idea of what is implied in creative power; but we necessarily ascribe such power to God, and therefore we are warranted in ascribing to Him power to interpose in His own established course of things, so as to accomplish a result which, but for His immediate interposition, could never have taken place. Even man, with his finite power and intelligence, can to some extent interfere with the course of events. He cannot, indeed, produce a strictly miraculous result, for he is possessed of no creative power. But within a certain sphere of operation he can so avail himself of known physical causes and laws as to accomplish results which these causes and laws, if left to their own action, never could have produced. We cannot limit the sphere of the Almighty's operation. He has manifestly the power to interpose; and therefore a miracle, though impossible under the mere operation of physical causes, and though impossible to the finite
power of man, must be possible to the almighty power of God. We thus once more perceive that the question affecting the possibility of miracles, really resolves itself into the question respecting the existence of God. Atheism denies, and must deny, their possibility. Theism admits, and must admit, that they are possible—possible to God.

3. And now, we would observe, that whether a miracle shall take place or not must altogether depend on the will of God.

If God is pleased to interpose in the course of events, He has power to do so; and further, He has intelligence to enable Him to do so without deranging that general course of events which He has established. We must ever be on our guard lest we limit the perfections of the Almighty. He can work when and where and how He pleases, and accomplish His purpose in so working, and yet maintain the appointed operation of ordinary causes and laws. We cannot comprehend His mode of working. All we can know is the effect produced, which effect we are compelled to ascribe to an immediate interposition of His power. Whether He will be pleased to work a miracle is a question which we cannot a priori determine; for what created being can in this way know the mind of the Lord? But we may safely conclude that, should it please Him to make an extraordinary revelation of Himself to His creatures, He will accompany that revelation with valid evidence—with miraculous proof, which, as has already been shown, is the direct, the proper evidence of a revelation. Paley has, accordingly, justly observed, that "in whatever degree it is probable or not very improbable that a
revelation should be communicated to mankind at all, in the same degree it is probable or not very improbable that miracles should be wrought.” A miracle, we may assume as certain, will not be wrought but for a reason which will justify such an interposition; but should the divine wisdom see it meet to reveal His will and purposes in an extraordinary manner to the human race, who is there that can justly find fault, or say unto the Almighty, What doest Thou? Attempts have been made to ridicule the very idea of miraculous interposition, as if the Almighty were supposed to have discovered some error in His work—in the machinery of nature—and then to have found it necessary to interfere in order to correct this original defect. But it is an easy task first to misrepresent an idea or a proposition, and then to throw ridicule on this fiction of the critic’s own mind. It is far easier to do this than to look at the subject fairly, and to judge of it according to truth. Miracles are not, we may rest assured, wrought for themselves as mere displays of power; nor are they wrought to accomplish purposes which may in their whole extent be accomplished through the instrumentality of ordinary means. If miracles are ever wrought, it is to accomplish ends worthy of God—ends which cannot be reached by the ordinary course of things; for just as miracles are the proper proof of a divine revelation, so the converse also is true, that where miracles are wrought, there a revelation will be found.

4. Assuming, now, that miracles are the proper proofs of a divine revelation, and that they are possible to God, and further, that their occurrence depends entirely on His will, we remark that when
they are wrought they become objects of sensible perception just as any other events are.

There is in this respect no distinction or difference whatever between effects produced by immediate divine interposition and effects produced in the ordinary course of Providence. Eyewitnesses see the effects in the one case just as they see them in the other. It is admitted that in the one case there is the danger of our being deceived by a pretence to work miracles, which does not exist in the other case; but that is not the point before us. Suppose a real miracle to be wrought before eyewitnesses, that miracle is an effect which these eyewitnesses can perceive just as they can perceive any ordinary effect. It is indeed a grave question, which they are bound to determine, whether the thing done is really a miracle or not—whether sight was really given by a word of command—whether thousands were really fed by means of a few loaves—whether the dead were really raised to life—whether, in short, any professed miracle was really a miracle, or only an ingenious device; but, supposing this question to be settled in the affirmative, what we maintain is, that a miraculous effect is as truly an object of sensible perception as any other effect. The essential difference between the two classes of events does not lie in their relation to the senses—the organs of perception—but in the manner in which they respectively take place. It is our Reason which in the one case proclaims the events to be miraculous, and in the other case proclaims the events to be non-miraculous—to be ordinary events. That the events in the one case are miraculous, is a conclusion not discerned by the senses, but drawn by
our reason: whilst in the other case the events are at once accepted by the same reason as ordinary events.

This distinction between the functions of our senses and the operation of our reason is very obvious, and yet it is not seldom overlooked in the discussion of this great subject. We do not by our senses perceive the miraculous power itself—we can witness only the effects of this power. We do not immediately discern physical causes themselves—we perceive only their results. It is results only in both cases that we perceive. It is our reason which determines whether the results are miraculous or not; that is, whether they are such as can be accounted for by reference to known physical causes, or whether they are such as at once bear testimony to an immediate exertion of divine power. Whatever vigilance, then, is to be employed by those in whose presence miracles are professedly wrought, in order that they may not be deceived by a mere pretence to perform such works, these works, if really wrought, are and must be as much within the sphere of our sensible perception as any other works whatever.

5. This brings me to observe, further, that miracles may, as much as ordinary events, become the subject of testimony.

Let it, however, be here noted, that in discussing this point we have strictly nothing to do with the danger to which human testimony is always exposed, of adding to or taking from what alone would be a true statement of an occurrence. The real question before us is, whether an eyewitness of a miracle is competent to testify of the event which he has himself seen to another, so that this person also may be warranted in believing
in the reality of the event. It is in reference to this question that Hume's celebrated sophism comes before us. This sophism is in effect as follows:—'I have had experience of the ordinary course of nature, and have never witnessed a departure from that course. I have also had experience of the value of human testimony, and have occasionally at least witnessed a departure in such testimony from the truth. A man comes to me and tells me that he has witnessed a departure from the ordinary course of nature. Knowing, as I do, so far as my own experience has gone, that this course is uniformly the same, and knowing also, as I do, that human testimony is not always to be relied upon, I conclude that I ought to adhere to the lessons of my own experience, and to reject this testimony. In short, no amount of human testimony can overcome my reluctance to believe that nature has departed from her course.' Though we have, for the sake of brevity, stated Hume's argument in our own words, we believe we have given you a clear and full view of it; and it ought to be admitted that it is an argument which at first sight assumes a formidable appearance. But even Hume himself supposes a case in which he allows that his argument would fail—a case in respect to which he admits that it would be a greater anomaly to suppose the testimony to be unworthy of credit, than to suppose that the extraordinary event testified had happened. But the fact is, that in all such reasonings we are exceedingly apt to be led astray by means of mere words—of words which may have a greater or a less extent of meaning. The word "experience," for example, may refer to the experience of one or more persons, or even to the
experience of the whole human race. To say that a miracle is contrary to experience, may mean that such an event has not occurred within my experience; and such a statement may be perfectly correct. But to say that a miracle is contrary to the experience of the race—that is, that such an event has never occurred at all—is to assume the very point under discussion; for the professed witnesses affirm that a miracle has happened; and the real question is, Is their testimony to be believed or not? Now it seems most evident, that unless with the Atheist we can pronounce a miracle impossible, we cannot a priori determine whether a miracle has taken place or not. And if we admit the possibility of a miracle, then if competent witnesses should declare to us that such an event has really taken place, we cannot fairly, upon the mere ground that we ourselves have not been eye-witnesses of such an event, pronounce their testimony to be unworthy of credit.

Now, what I wish to show you at present is, that a miraculous event, which our argument must now suppose to have really occurred, is a legitimate subject of human testimony—as legitimate a subject of such testimony as any the most common event. Observe, we do not say that we are to be satisfied with the same amount of testimony in the one case as in the other. Far otherwise. The testimony which alone can assure us that a real miracle has happened, must be of the highest moral order; a testimony given under circumstances which can leave no reasonable doubt either as to the competency of the witnesses or as to their veracity. All that is true; but the real point before us at present is, whether a miraculous event
can be the subject of human testimony at all. We maintain that it can be so, just as much as any other event. We remarked that the eyewitnesses of miracles observed only effects, and that it is the province of reason to decide whether the effects be miraculous or not. In the same way, witnesses, whilst they may no doubt state their own view of the nature of any event, in reality only testify what they themselves have seen. They are witnesses to us only of the facts—of the facts which came under their own sensible perception. It is by no means uncommon for persons to testify things which they have seen, and seen correctly, and which they imagine to be exceedingly marvellous; whilst others, to whom this testimony may be given, admit the statements of the facts, but know full well that they are far from being marvellous. If a witness merely told us in general terms that he had seen on some particular occasion a miraculous event, and either could not or would not tell us the event itself and all those circumstances connected with it which are necessary to enable us to judge for ourselves, we should at once reject his testimony, or at least we should feel ourselves to be under no obligation whatever to receive it as valid. The witness must evidently furnish us with such an account of the event, and its accompanying circumstances, as shall enable us to determine by an exercise of our own reason whether the alleged event was really a miracle or not. And what we affirm is, that eyewitnesses of real miracles are fully competent to relate to us what fell under their own sensible observation; and then it is for us to look at the facts so related, and to judge for ourselves as to the nature
of the events. There is nothing connected with the mere sensible facts which take place when miraculous power is exerted, to remove them from the sphere of competent testimony, any more than there is anything connected with these facts to withdraw them from the sphere of sensible perception. There is nothing, in short, which can preclude us from looking at the facts testified, any more than there is anything to preclude an eyewitness from looking at the facts when presented to his view.

We have, though labouring to be brief, dwelt at some length on this general view of miracles; because we are convinced that it is by means of sophistical statements on the subject in general, that infidelity seeks to undermine our faith in those miraculous works which our Lord wrought in support of His divine claims. We have by no means exhausted the subject; but if we are correct in the remarks which we have laid before you, they will perhaps induce you to meditate more fully upon it; and they may also be the means of suggesting to you how to meet the current objections to this great, this essential branch of the evidence of divine revelation.

There is unquestionably in our minds a strong reluctance to receive any account of a miraculous event. The most ordinary testimony is generally sufficient to obtain our belief in an ordinary event, or even in an event which, though strange, may yet come under this category. But even when we have examined the testimony in support of a miraculous event, we are liable to entertain the thought that perhaps in some way or other we may be deceived by this testimony. Now this reluctance to believe in an apparently well-ac-
credited narrative of miraculous events should be treated fairly by us, and should lead us to examine most thoroughly the testimony presented to us, and to examine it under all the circumstances in which it is given. The miracles of our Lord, for example, bear witness to Him as the Messenger of God, and are inseparably connected with His person and work. The eyewitnesses of these miracles bore their testimony in connection with the office assigned them, and under circumstances which tended to put their testimony to the severest test. We are, then, to look at all the circumstances of the case, and after a fair, full, and solemn examination of the subject, to determine for ourselves whether we have sufficient grounds for believing the Apostolic testimony to be true. If we conclude that we have such grounds, then we are called upon to exercise faith in these miraculous events; and we must not allow our general feeling of reluctance to overcome our faith, any more than, when we have come to the conclusion that there is a living personal God, we are to allow the transcendent, the incomprehensible nature of the conclusion, to disturb a faith which we know to be built on the solid rock of the most reasonable evidence. It is when we attempt to realise, to conceive how a miracle can take place, that we begin to stumble. Now, we cannot realise this; we cannot conceive how such an event can be performed; but then remember that we know not how any event whatever takes place. There is a mystery inscrutable by us in every event whatsoever. All we know is, that under such and such circumstances such and such events do take place. And in respect to a miracle, though we know not, and cannot
know, the mode of operation, we have present to our minds a cause sufficient for its production—even the power of Him who worketh all in all. Exercise faith, then, in conclusions drawn by your reason from sound premises; for unless we do this, we shall never come to the knowledge and belief of the truth on any subject whatsoever.

In next Lecture I shall briefly consider the special miraculous evidence furnished to us in support of the claims of the Gospel.
LECTURE VI.

ON THE MIRACULOUS EVIDENCE OF THE GOSPEL.

In last Lecture we made some remarks on the general subject of miracles as the proper evidence of a divine revelation. We would now apply these remarks to the particular case of the Christian revelation. We may briefly state the case as follows:—

There appeared among the Jewish people, at a time which for all practical purposes can be sufficiently determined, one Jesus, who claimed to be the special messenger of God, not merely to the Jews, but to the whole human race, and to have been sent not merely to reform the systems of religious belief then prevailing in the world, or the moral codes adopted by the several nations of the world, but to be the Author of the world's redemption from that state of ignorance, sin, and death into which it had fallen. Jesus claimed to be not merely a Teacher of religion and morals, but to be, in the strictest sense of the expression, the Saviour of the human race. He declared His design to be not to institute a school of philosophy, or merely to reform man's social condition, but, as He himself expresses it, "to seek and to save that which was lost." In order to accomplish this, the declared purpose of His mission, He went about throughout
the land of Judea, teaching all classes of the people the great doctrines of religion and morals, and exhibiting in His own life the practical power of those doctrines. From among those who were led to acknowledge His claims He selected a few who accompanied Him during His ministry, and who, after His own ministry was closed, went forth in His name to proclaim His message of truth and salvation to all nations. The result was, that, through the instrumentality of these chosen attendants, the claims of Jesus were made known within a very brief period throughout the vast empire of Rome, and even in nations beyond that empire, and that Christian societies or churches, composed of professing believers in Jesus, were speedily formed. And to the present day such societies or churches have continued, and are, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition which the religion of Jesus has had all along to encounter, still spreading the knowledge of His name; and there appears to be every probability to lead to the belief that this religion will, in course of time, become the universal religion of mankind.

Such a moral phenomenon as this deserves the earnest attention of every thoughtful mind. Be the real merits of the Christian religion what they may, there must be something in this religion which gives to it a moral power such as no other system of religion ever propounded to man possesses—something in it which reaches man's feelings and reason and conscience, and draws him to acknowledge the claims of Jesus. No doubt these claims have been all along disputed and rejected by some in every class of society; and not a few who have been distinguished
for intellectual talent and for great attainments in science and literature, have openly disavowed these claims, and laboured to disprove them. But many, if not all of these, have done so upon grounds which would equally set aside all religious belief whatever; upon grounds, therefore, which are wholly inadmissible excepting on the hypothesis that there is no God, and therefore can be no messenger from God. With such opponents of the Christian faith all argument necessarily ceases, for there exists no common ground on which they and we can stand in order to discuss the real merits of the question. It is, however, to be kept in mind that other men, not less distinguished than those to whom we have specially alluded for talent and attainments, have professed to have seriously examined the claims of Jesus, and to have arrived at the conclusion that these claims are in their view worthy of all credit. In our own day, as well as in former times, men of comparatively high talents and learning are ranged on both sides of this question. The conflict between these two classes is vigorously going on; and it would appear as if this conflict would continue in future generations. Why it should be so, is indeed, altogether apart from the practical consequences involved, a most marvellous phenomenon. Why, if the claims of Jesus are really unworthy of credit, the opponents of these claims, with all their persistent ingenuity and indomitable labour, are unable so to discredit them as to silence for ever the advocates of these claims, seems indeed to be passing strange. Why, on the other hand, the advocates of those claims should fail so to establish them as not to put their opponents to silence, must appear no less
strange. It cannot be that this question is an indeterminable question, that it is one in respect to which the human mind can arrive at no satisfactory conclusion at all, and that therefore it would be our wisdom to abandon it as one entirely beyond the reach of man's reason. Such a view of this question cannot be entertained, for it is one about a matter of fact, and that fact is, whether Jesus supported His claims or not by competent proof. The truth is, that other considerations are allowed to enter into the examination of this question—considerations which involve the conclusion, and therefore prejudge the question prior to all fair inquiry. We have repeatedly alluded to this feature of the conflict, and it is no mere assertion on our part, but a statement of plain fact, when we affirm that the opponents of the claims of Jesus do ultimately rest their argument on principles which of themselves render these claims wholly absurd. Their argument ultimately rests on Atheism, on the negation of God, and therefore on the negation of the possibility of such claims as those which Jesus preferred. There have indeed been professed Theists who have yet denied the claims of Jesus. With such persons we can legitimately discuss this question, and we are bound to bestow all attention on what they allege; for the possibility that the claims of Jesus were not supported by competent proof must be allowed. We must not begin our argument with a foregone conclusion even in favour of these claims. We must fairly inquire whether or not there are solid grounds for our belief; and if we find that there are no such grounds, then belief in the validity of the claims cannot be, and ought not to be, entertained.
On the other hand, should we ascertain that there are such grounds, then we are bound to acknowledge the claims of Jesus to be valid, and to believe in Him as what He declared Himself to be, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

Jesus appealed to a variety of evidence in support of His claims. He appealed to the doctrine itself which He taught, as containing in itself evidence of its own divine origin. "My doctrine," He said, "is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." He also appealed to His own character, and especially to the fact, which His life fully attested, that He had no selfish or ambitious purpose to serve. "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but He that seeketh His glory that sent Him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him." No one who rightly understands the religious and moral doctrine which Jesus taught, and forms an impartial estimate of His character, as it is portrayed to us, not in mere words, but in the habits and acts of His life, can fail to perceive the powerful evidence which both His doctrine and character furnish in support of His claims. Even some of the opponents of these claims admit the purity and sublimity of His doctrine, and also the spotlessness and beneficence, if not the perfectness, of His character.

Jesus also appealed to ancient predictions respecting a great Deliverer who was to come,—to predictions recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures, and fulfilled, as He alleged, in His own person and mission. This is a branch of evidence of a peculiar kind, involving as
it does what may be termed a miracle of knowledge, even although the events foretold and accomplished may, when viewed in themselves, be classed as ordinary events. "Search the Scriptures"—that is, the Hebrew Scriptures—said Jesus; "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The evidence derived from a comparison of these alleged predictions with the recorded life and ministry of Jesus is of wide extent, and most powerful in its force. The manifest connection, also, of the various dispensations recorded in these same Scriptures with that dispensation of which Jesus was the Author, constitutes one great prophetic proof that the last is the one dispensation to which all the former were preparatory; and the unity of design pervading all these dispensations furnishes a striking evidence that they all have one Author, and that this Author is none other than the one true and living God.

But in addition to the internal evidence furnished by His doctrine and character, and to the external evidence to be drawn from the fulfilment of ancient predictions, Jesus appealed to the miraculous works which He himself performed as direct and immediate proofs of His divine mission. "The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me." That Jesus in these words referred specially to His miraculous works, there can be no question.

1. Now, let us here observe, first, that Jesus did appeal to sensible miracles as the direct proof of His claims. No doubt, He is represented as on certain occasions speaking disparagingly of those who wished
to witness miracles as mere displays of power, or merely as affording relief from present distress, as also of those whose faith seemed to be such as to stand in constant need of such support. He also, on a memorable occasion, warned His disciples against the idea that faith in Him can be produced only by the sensible perception of external evidence. “Blessed,” He said, “are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” The meaning of these words, which have been strangely misinterpreted by some, is surely very obvious. Jesus pronounces those blessed who shall believe in the absence, not of evidence of every kind, but of sensible evidence—those who, in short, believe in the testimony of eyewitnesses—a testimony which the disciple whose conduct gave occasion to these words had deliberately treated as insufficient for faith. Whilst Jesus, then, guards against the mere craving for miracles as ostentatious displays of power, and warns against the idea that sensible evidence is the only ground of faith, He yet appeals to miracles as the direct proof of His divine mission. He thus recognises the necessity for such proof; and this is a point by no means undeserving our notice, for such proof was not then always given in support of the claims of a religious teacher, even when there were other reasons for believing that the teacher was raised up by the special providence of God. John, the forerunner of Jesus, we are told, assumed the office of at least a religious teacher—the office of a prophet to the Jewish nation; and though we have reason to believe that he was raised up by God to be a true prophet, yet he professed to be nothing more than a human teacher and the pre-
dicted herald of the coming Redeemer; and it is emphatically said of him that he "did no miracle." Here, then, is a remarkable distinction between John and Jesus; for the latter appealed directly to miracles, recognising in His own peculiar case their absolute necessity in order to establish His claims, and expressly admitting that, in the absence of such evidence, these claims would be justly rejected. "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me,"—that is, my own mere assertion—"believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him." Can we now fail to perceive that Jesus entertained views respecting miracles as the direct evidence of His extraordinary claims, which reason itself, when calmly considering this subject, pronounces to be right?

2. Having noticed this important point, we next observe that the alleged miracles to which Jesus appealed, were real, genuine miracles. Every one who pays the slightest attention to the ordinary course of nature, becomes so far acquainted with this course as to be able at once to pronounce that there are certain events which cannot possibly take place in this ordinary course, apart from the direct intervention of divine power. There may, indeed, be certain things respecting which it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, for us to pronounce a decided judgment. Cures, for example, of some bodily and also mental maladies sometimes take place instantaneously, and under such circumstances as would render it exceedingly doubtful whether they were effected through the instrumentality of ordinary means or not. We need not
refer to special cases of this kind; the facts themselves are well known. Had the alleged miracles of Jesus consisted entirely of such cures, whether of certain bodily or of certain mental maladies, however beneficent such works would have been, and whatever degree of mere presumptive evidence these works, taken in connection with the internal evidence of His doctrine and of His character, might have appeared to afford, they could not, we apprehend, have constituted that strong direct proof which miracles of an undoubted kind assuredly furnish.

But there are certain things in respect to which we feel perfectly certain that they could not possibly take place without an actual exercise of divine power. And the question is, Did Jesus perform any works of this kind? Are any of His alleged miracles really such as we must pronounce to be true miracles? And observe that, if we can answer this question in the affirmative, the influence of the answer extends beyond these true miracles to all those other works which, taken by themselves, might have left us in doubt as to their real nature. Now, the restoring or giving of sight to the blind, the raising of the dead to life, the feeding of thousands by means of a few loaves, the walking on the sea,—these and suchlike works and acts must be regarded by every one as real, genuine miracles. It requires no scientific knowledge to pronounce such a judgment. These are works which every human being, whatever may be his knowledge of the laws that regulate the course of nature, at once declares to be strictly miraculous. They are works which no mere power of man can effect. They are results which physical causes, left to
their own action, cannot produce. Such works are, every one knows, impossible to the ordinary operation either of physical causes or of human power. There can be no reasonable question, then, as to the real nature of such works. They are miracles in the strictest sense of the word; and if they take place, they are clear, undoubted proofs of the immediate interposition of superhuman—of divine power. "No man can do" such works, "these miracles that Thou doest," said one to Jesus, "except God be with him." This is the testimony not merely of one man, but of all mankind. It is important, then, to observe, not only that Jesus appealed to miracles as the direct proof of His mission, but also that the alleged miracles of Jesus were really miracles—really proofs of the immediate interposition of the power of God.

3. There is another feature of the alleged miracles of Jesus to which, although it does not strictly affect their reality or genuineness as a proof of the immediate interposition of divine power, we may here refer; inasmuch as it connects these miracles with the declared purpose of the mission of Jesus, and in this respect shows a unity in His whole character and work. These miracles were not mere displays of power—of extraordinary power. They were also works of beneficence—works manifesting divine love as well as divine power—works in perfect harmony with the purpose for which Jesus affirmed that He came into the world. Had these miracles been of a different character, whatever proof they might have constituted as respects the manifestation of power, we could not but have felt that there was a moral discord between them and the declared design of
Jesus' mission. But there is no such discord. The alleged miracles are miracles of mercy—miracles which evince love as well as power on the part of Him by whom they were wrought. The only exceptions to this character in these miracles are seen in one case, where a barren tree is doomed to speedy decay, as emblematical of the fearful judgment which was about to fall on the unbelieving Jewish nation; and in another, where, after delivering a human soul from the tyranny of evil spirits, these are permitted to be the agents of destruction to a herd of swine—a judgment which discovered the carnality of their owners. These two cases have been eagerly laid hold of by the opponents of the claims of Jesus. In the one case the objection is manifestly frivolous; and in the other we are bound to suppose, in the view of the general beneficence of all the other alleged miracles of Jesus, that there were circumstances which fully justified the judgment, such as it was, which He then permitted, and only permitted, as is done every day in the providence of God, to be inflicted. But what man, looking at the whole character of Jesus, and beholding His untiring efforts to relieve the distressed—to proclaim glad tidings to the poorest, the humblest, the most unworthy—to heal the broken-hearted—to give strength to the paralysed, sight to the blind, and life to the dead,—what man can contemplate such works as these and not adopt as his own the words of an eyewitness of these works, when he spake of Jesus as one who "went about doing good"? The alleged miracles, then, of Jesus were at once real miracles, and therefore direct proofs of His claims, and also illustrations of the great purpose of His mission.
4. We next remark that these alleged miracles were wrought in such circumstances as enabled those who were present to form a decided judgment respecting them. These things did not take place in a corner. No preparation was made for the exhibition of the alleged miraculous power. The works were done openly, in the presence often of enemies as well as friends, in public as well as in private—and just as what we would term accidental circumstances gave occasion. There was variety, great variety, in the works themselves, in the places where they were wrought, in the persons who were present, in all the circumstances by which they were severally characterised. They were generally performed by the power of a mere word or command, and only occasionally was anything done in order to draw the special attention either of those on whom the miracle was performed or of others to what was taking place.

It has been maintained by a recent opponent of the claims of Jesus, that He should have laid these claims formally before a judicial body, and should have submitted His power to perform miracles to the scrutiny of a scientific committee. Had the purpose of Jesus been merely to display His possession of extraordinary power, or to enlarge the boundaries of mere science, such a mode as that which has been suggested might have been deemed in harmony with such a purpose. But this was not His declared design. He came into the world, as He himself alleges, to reveal God the Father, and to work out an everlasting redemption for the fallen race of man. He came for a high moral purpose—the highest which it is possible for the mind to conceive. His miracles were wrought
only to attest His mission, to accomplish this purpose, and to illustrate its gracious character. The method which He adopted in making known His claims and the purpose of His mission was such as commended itself to His wisdom, and also such as left no possible room for reasonable objection. Those very rulers to whom reference is made knew these claims, and often, either by themselves or through others whom they appointed, seated themselves in His very presence, in order if possible to discover in His words or deeds something of which they might accuse Him. It is strange that men, in their anxiety to throw discredit on the character and claims of Jesus, should represent a method as not having been adopted by Him which to all intents and purposes was virtually adopted. The whole question surely is, Did these rulers know or not know the claims which He preferred? And if they did know them, did they not of their own accord adopt means to test the proof which He offered in support of them? They were beyond all doubt aware of His claims, and they commissioned persons to watch Him wherever He went. He knew all this, and though not seldom brought into collision with these commissioned spies, He pursued His own sublime course, and went on doing good by word and deed, till His watchful enemies were compelled to acknowledge the reality of His miracles, and found no other way to evade their force than by ascribing them, not to the power of God, but to the power of the great enemy of God. No manifestation of miraculous power can meet such a state of mind, for if a man is determined not to believe when proper evidence is set before him, it is not a display of
mere power that will subdue his unbelief. Such a man would not believe though one were to rise from the dead.

But to return to our immediate point. The miracles of Jesus were wrought under such circumstances as enabled impartial eyewitnesses to be perfectly satisfied that they were wrought. The facts in each case were clearly before them. The withered hand was known and seen to be withered; the word of Jesus was heard; the restored hand was seen to be restored. The change from the one state to the other was manifest to the senses. That a miracle was there and then wrought, was an instantaneous conclusion of the reason. The senses do not attest the miraculous power—they attest or rather give knowledge of the facts. It is the reason which ascribes the change to the immediate power of God. And in such a case what other conclusion could have been formed by an unbiassed mind? Beyond all question, if it is true that Jesus by His word did restore a man’s withered hand to a sound state, He did what no mere man can do. He did what only the power of God can do. He established His claims by a direct and all-sufficient proof. And of the reality of this proof those who were present were undoubtedly competent witnesses, for the sensible facts were before them; that reason which belongs to man was in them; and hence no reasonable exception can be possibly taken to their competency as eyewitnesses of such a miracle.

The same remarks are applicable to the eyewitnesses of all the alleged miracles of Jesus; and it is wholly unnecessary for our immediate purpose to apply them
in detail. The essential facts connected with each were within the sphere of sensible perception; and in each case also reason was competent to draw the proper conclusion. But there is one miracle to which I would specially draw your attention, for it was the crowning proof of the claims of Jesus, and also that miracle of which the commissioned apostles of Jesus were the selected eyewitnesses. I purpose to draw your attention specially to the consideration of this miracle; but I cannot omit all mention of it in this general survey. I allude to the Resurrection of Jesus Himself from the dead. At present, however, it is enough to state that the facts connected with this great proof of the claims of Jesus were such as were within the sphere of sensible perception. The disciples had sufficient reason to believe that He really died upon the cross; and after two or three days they again saw Him alive. The conclusion, then, was inevitable that He had risen from the dead; and this effect they justly ascribed to the immediate operation of that Power which alone gives life. The disciples saw Jesus after He was risen—saw Him repeatedly, and conversed with Him, for He abode with them during forty days, at least appeared to them often during that period, and instructed them more fully than He had done before respecting the kingdom of God. At length He gave them His last commands, and constituted them His messengers to all nations, promising to endow them after His return to the Father with extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. And then in presence of them all He was lifted up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Here, indeed, were wonderful events; but events not ex-
ceeding the power of God to accomplish—events which those who were present were fully competent to perceive.

5. And now we have, in the last place, to observe that these men were competent to testify to others what they themselves had seen. We need not repeat the remarks made on this subject in our last Lecture. Those to whom their testimony was given might well be astonished at the facts testified, and were bound and fully warranted to subject such a testimony to the severest scrutiny. But, looking merely at the competency of the testimony, we cannot but admit that whatever a man has seen he may competently tell to another, and that this other, if he is satisfied that the testimony is valid—that the witness is a true witness—may receive and ought to receive as true the information thus given him. Now, it is a fact which can be ascertained, that the disciples who were eyewitnesses of the life and ministry of Jesus—eyewitnesses of His miracles, eyewitnesses of the risen Jesus, and eyewitnesses of His ascension—did, in terms of their commission, go forth, did proclaim to Jew and Gentile the glad tidings of His kingdom, and did bear witness to His miraculous works, and specially to His resurrection as the crowning proof of His claims. It is also a fact that they did all this under circumstances which tried their veracity to the very utmost. They had no worldly end in view. They gained, and could gain, nothing by adhering to their testimony. They had, in fact, to endure the loss of all earthly things, and even to suffer and die in confirmation of their testimony. And the result was, that wherever they went, whilst some did
not believe, others did believe, and that, within a few years after the departure of Jesus, Christian churches were formed in almost every quarter of the vast empire of Rome. And not only was their testimony orally proclaimed; it was soon committed to writing; and the Christian Church became early possessed of a number of writings of various kinds, all of them containing the Apostolic testimony respecting Jesus. And this written testimony has been with the Church from that time to the present, so that every generation is virtually carried back to the first age of the Church, and is privileged to hear, not a testimony orally passing from one generation to another, and therefore coloured or varied as it passes onwards, but the original testimony of the eyewitnesses themselves—of those very men who saw and heard Jesus both before and after His resurrection.

Efforts—the most persistent efforts—have of course been made by the opponents of the claims of Jesus to bring discredit on these Apostolic writings; and ingenuity has racked itself in order to give some account which may seem plausible of their having a different origin. But even the most determined and ingenious of these opponents cannot deny the early rise of Christian churches, nor the fact that these churches were founded on the testimony of Apostles to the alleged miracles, and specially to the alleged resurrection of Jesus. They are compelled to admit that these first messengers of Jesus actually believed in His resurrection, and that others were led to believe in the same alleged fact through their testimony. They only insist that these Apostles were deceived mainly by enthusiasm, that they thought they saw
what they had not really seen, and that, in some way or other, others were induced, but upon insufficient grounds, to believe their statements. It is easy—exceedingly easy—to assert all this, or anything else. But the origin of the Apostles' own belief and the rise of the Christian Church are wholly inexplicable on any other hypothesis than one—namely, on the hypothesis that the belief of the Apostles rested on sensible facts, and that their testimony was believed by others, because it was seen to be valid, competent testimony.

This testimony is, as we have said, continued in a twofold manner;—by the continued existence of the Christian Church, which is a perpetual witness to the original testimony; and by means of those writings which compose the New Testament Scriptures, and which embody this original testimony. We cannot at present enter on the discussion of this part of our subject, important as it is. It must suffice at present to remark that the testimony of the eyewitnesses—of the first ministers of the Word—is in this twofold manner maintained in all its competency and force; and that, however much a sceptical criticism has laboured to impair the value both of the traditional or oral testimony, and of the written record especially, these two witnesses—the Christian Church, with its traditional belief and its peculiar institutions, and the New Testament writings—defy all the efforts of such criticism, and stand forth as firmly as ever, proclaiming in no doubtful manner the certainty of those things which Jesus did and spake. The Church has ever been a public institution, and no effort could or can silence its voice. The New Testament writings
were, with a few exceptions, public documents, at first existing in separate parts, which were severally intrusted to different sections of the Church, but soon collected into one volume and spread throughout the Church, and translated into different tongues, and finally stamped as a whole with the seal of a unanimous belief, being thus constituted the permanent and alone authentic witness of the Apostolic teaching concerning Jesus. These precious writings are indeed open to fair, legitimate criticism; and there may be questions raised respecting some of them which it is now difficult or impossible for us to answer: but taking all the known circumstances into consideration, an unbiassed mind cannot fail to perceive and to own that the evidence, both external and internal, in support of their antiquity, their genuineness, and their credibility, is clear and decided; and that no other satisfactory account can be given of the existence and reception of these writings, than that which has from the first been given—namely, that these writings had for their authors those persons whose names they respectively bear.

Such, then, being the case, we conclude that this testimony which has come down to us is worthy of credit, and that therefore we do well to believe it, and consequently to believe in Him who, by His miraculous works as well as by His doctrine and character, established His extraordinary claims—to believe, in short, that this Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world. Extraordinary indeed is the claim, but the evidence by which it is established is also extraordinary. Apostles believed because they saw and heard; and we, though we have
not seen and heard, also believe, because we have received the competent testimony of those who did see and hear. Such is the ground of our faith, and it is a ground which no assertions to the contrary can affect, or ought to affect. Let us, then, hold fast our faith, and we shall experience the fulfilment of the promise, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."
LECTURE VII.

ON THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

The resurrection of Jesus is, as we have said, the crowning evidence of His divine mission. It is also the great pledge of that hope which He has given to all who believe upon His name. It is literally impossible, therefore, to over-estimate the consideration of the subject now before us, for upon the issue of our inquiry depends whether we are to believe on Jesus or not. If there is evidence to convince us that He rose from the dead, then we must believe that His claims were established, that He was declared to be the Son of God with power, and that our hope in Him as "the Resurrection and the Life," as the Author of salvation to our souls, is sure and steadfast. If, on the other hand, there is no satisfactory evidence of this alleged fact, then, in whatever way we may account for the origin of the report, whether we trace it to an enthusiastic imagination or to conscious fraud on the part of its originators, faith in the claims of Jesus becomes to us unreasonable, and indeed impossible, and hope in Him, as the author of eternal life to us, would be vain and absurd. Such was the view entertained on this subject by one who was led firmly to believe in the reality of the fact, and who,
after he came to believe in it, devoted his life to the spread of the Gospel. "If Christ be not raised," the Apostle Paul wrote to one of the churches which he had planted, "your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." We shall have to recur to these words. We refer to them at present merely in confirmation of what we have said respecting the importance of the subject.

But in respect to this view of the subject we can also appeal to the adversaries of the Gospel. The most determined of these adversaries in our day is unquestionably David Friedrich Strauss; and in his recent work, in which he has restated his theory of "the Life of Jesus for the German people," he has given us his opinion in a passage which, though somewhat long, we extract at length.

"Here then," he says, "we stand on that decisive point where, in the presence of the accounts of the miraculous resurrection of Jesus, we either acknowledge the inadmissibility of the natural and historical view of the life of Jesus, and must consequently retract all that precedes, and so give up our whole undertaking, or pledge ourselves to make out the possibility of the result of these accounts—that is, the origin of the belief in the resurrection of Jesus—without any corresponding miraculous fact. The more immediately this question touches all Christianity to the quick, the more regard we must pay to the sensibility with which every unprejudiced word that is uttered about it is received, and even to the sensible effect which such words may have upon him who pronounces them; but the more important the point is, and the more decisive on the other side, for the whole view of Christianity, the more pressing is the demand upon the investigator to set aside all these considerations,
and pronounce upon it in a perfectly unprejudiced, perfectly decided spirit, without ambiguity and without reserve.”*

The believer and the unbeliever thus agree in their views of the importance of the subject. The whole question as to the origin of Christianity is brought to one decisive point: Did Jesus rise from the dead, or did He not? In discussing this question, we shall endeavour to proceed in that spirit which Strauss justly demands—“in a perfectly unprejudiced and decided spirit”—in a spirit, however, not prejudiced, as his manifestly was, by a foregone conclusion, and decided to maintain that conclusion in spite of all evidence tending to a different result. We need hardly observe that, in a full discussion of this subject, we cannot avoid repeating remarks which have already been made on the general question of miracles. But anxious though we are that the discussion of so momentous a point should be complete, we shall try as much as possible to be brief.

I. First, then, we must enter on the discussion with the clear admission that such an event as that of a resurrection from the dead is possible with God.

We must begin with a clear admission, we say, on this point, for otherwise all further discussion is superfluous. We must assume that there is a living personal God, who is the Creator of the world and the Giver of life to all His creatures; and also assume that, as the Author of life, He possesses the power, should it be His will, to restore the really dead to life. We are not called upon now to establish these against the contrary assumptions, for to do so would be to enter once more on the question of Theism—a

* Strauss’s ‘New Life of Jesus,’ Authorised Translation, vol. i. p. 397.
question which we are now warranted in regarding as settled, so far as our inquiries are concerned. But though we cannot allow ourselves to be driven back to the discussion of these fundamental points, we would beg of you to remember that they have been discussed, and are to us determined points; and that our present argument is not with the Atheist, and cannot be, but with the Theist—with the man who will stand upon the same ground with ourselves, and fairly inquire whether indeed Jesus did rise from the dead. The possibility of such a resurrection does not imply its reality. It only implies that His alleged resurrection may have been a reality, but whether it was so must depend on the evidence adduced. We enter upon the inquiry, then, with no foregone conclusion as to the reality of the alleged fact—we only assume its possibility; an assumption which no unbiased mind can refuse, for "why should it be thought a thing incredible," or a thing impossible, "that God should raise the dead?" We admit, you will observe, as firmly as any atheist can do, that a resurrection from the dead is a thing impossible in the ordinary course of nature, and a thing impossible to human power; but believing as we do, on grounds which to us are most clear and decided, that there is a God, we believe that the restoration of the dead to life is no more impossible with Him, than it was to frame the human body and to breathe into it life at first. The ordinary course of nature—a course which this Supreme and Almighty Being originated and sustains—tells us clearly that the dead do not rise again, so far as this course is concerned; but it does not tell us either that the power of God is exhausted in the
establishing of this course, or that if His power is not so exhausted—if there is still a residue of power in Him who is omnipotent—it is not the purpose of His will to put it forth in restoring the dead to life. Nay, the spirit that is in man seems to suggest to him, as by the force of instinct, that death does not wholly terminate his being. The course of providence, which is as truly of divine appointment as the course of nature, gives startling intimations of a life to come. And notwithstanding the fearful gloom which death throws around the existence of man, his mind, both through instinctive feelings, and the forebodings of conscience, and the marked tendencies of God's moral providence, is by no means unprepared to receive intimations respecting a future state of existence, in which this course of providence, to which that of nature is manifestly subordinate, shall be carried out to its full extent. The possibility, then, of such a fact as that of the resurrection of the dead, is an assumption which we are entitled to make in entering upon our present inquiry.

2. We must next assume that it is possible for eye-witnesses to have satisfactory evidence that a person has been raised from the dead.

Supposing such a fact to take place, we easily perceive the several elements which must enter into this evidence. The witnesses must have known, intimately known, the person when he lived; they must have satisfactory evidence of his death, and they must have equally satisfactory evidence that he is again alive. Now it is admitted that there is no slight risk of mistake, of delusion, or of being deceived, in such a matter as this, especially in respect
to the second and third elements which enter into the complex evidence. A person may be believed to be dead who has only fallen into a swoon. In such a case apparent restoration to life would not be a real resurrection. Again, it is notorious that the power of imagination has often played a strange part in respect to supposed apparitions of the dead. Persons have dreamed or fancied that the departed have appeared to them, and some have actually believed in the objective reality of such apparitions under circumstances which leave us no room to doubt that these were wholly the result of their own excited imaginations. But whilst all this is true, and ought to be carefully borne in mind in our inquiry into the truth, we are at the same time not to rush into the opposite extreme, and to assume that in such a matter it is impossible for eyewitneses to have competent evidence. If these witnesses intimately knew the person in his lifetime, if they also knew upon valid evidence that death took place, and if afterwards they actually saw him alive again under such circumstances as could allow no reasonable doubt to exist as to the fact of his being alive, then all the evidence necessary to establish the fact is afforded; and the only conclusion warranted by such evidence is, that a real resurrection from the dead has taken place. Now, each branch of this evidence is within the sphere of sensible perception. Each consists of a fact which appeals to the senses. The several facts, viewed in themselves, have nothing peculiar, so as to remove them from the sphere of ordinary perception. It is the combination of the facts which causes the peculiarity; and this combination is the work of reason, and not, strictly speaking,
of the senses. The latter are called upon to do nothing but what they are constantly doing—to make known facts to the mind within; and it is the power of reason, that great faculty which belongs to the mind, which, combining the facts together, pronounces the decision that a supernatural event has taken place—that a miracle has been performed—and that this event is to be ascribed to an immediate intervention of divine power. We are warranted, then, in assuming that eyewitnesses may have competent evidence of the reality of such a fact as that of a resurrection from the dead.

3. Again, we also assume that the eyewitnesses of such a fact may bear competent testimony of it to others, who, on ascertaining the testimony to be worthy of credit, are entitled and morally bound to credit the same.

The importance of the subject must be our excuse for dwelling on these points. You cannot be too familiar with them; and we are anxious that you discern them thoroughly, and that they be impressed indelibly on your minds. It is, we are persuaded, from the want of clear and distinct views on these preliminary and essential points that the mind is prone to hesitate, if not to stumble, when the attacks of the opponents of Christianity are skilfully directed; and never, we may affirm, were these more skilfully, powerfully, and plausibly directed than in our own day. The only way in which you can successfully meet such attacks, is by patiently and calmly training your minds to a thorough knowledge of the subject. You will find that these attacks derive their power from assumptions made by their authors—assump-
tions involving the very conclusions which they then seek to confirm by elaborate displays of argument—of argument which, on their premises, is wholly superfluous.

I formerly remarked on the validity of testimony in reference to miracles, and therefore only allude to this point again in a brief manner. There is no question, you will again observe, as to the importance and necessity of our scrutinising in the severest way possible any testimony bearing on such an alleged fact as that of a resurrection from the dead. The supposed witness may have been deceived or imposed upon. We are not to credit a mere vague report on such a matter, nor to believe every one who may profess to have been a witness of such a fact. Even a circumstantial account of such a matter is to be thoroughly examined, for it is by no means uncommon for a false story to be set afloat with a long detail of supposed facts. The character of the witnesses must be thoroughly ascertained, and the motives by which they may seem to be influenced most carefully inquired into. The moral bearing of the alleged fact ought also to be examined and ascertained; for it is not to be supposed that the Supreme Being will give useless displays of His power, and that such a fact as that of the resurrection of one from the dead can be an isolated fact, having no moral bearing whatever. It is clear that when persons appear to us, and testify that one rose from the dead, we have a variety of circumstances to take into view, and that only when all these harmonise and tend to one conclusion we shall be justified in receiving the testimony.
We are not, however, at present discussing all the circumstances which, meeting together, would render such testimony valid, but only stating the points which we must assume in entering upon our inquiry; and the possibility that such testimony may exist is evidently one which we are entitled to assume. The witnesses are competent to state to us the facts which they witnessed, and we are able to look at the facts so stated, and to examine the witnesses, so as to determine whether their testimony is worthy of credit; and if so, whether the facts are such as to warrant our reason in concluding that a resurrection from the dead has really taken place. Without adopting the doubt implied in the following extract as to the possibility of miracles, we are willing to acquiesce in what it expresses respecting the nature of the evidence required to establish the reality of such a fact as that of a resurrection from the dead. In the work already referred to Strauss says—

"Whether we consider miracles in general as possible or not, if we are to consider a miracle of so unheard-of a description as having really occurred, it must be proved to us by evidence in such a manner that the untruth of such evidence would be more difficult to conceive than the reality of that which it was intended to prove."—Vol. i. p. 399.

Let us, then, now proceed to examine this evidence with all possible fairness and earnestness, and with the sole desire to ascertain the truth.

And, first of all, on entering upon this examination, we must ascertain whether the alleged resurrection of Jesus be presented to us as an isolated fact, having no moral bearing, or whether it is represented
as essentially possessing a moral value, not merely to
Himself, but also to mankind in general.

We have already hinted at this question, and it is
one of essential importance in our inquiry. We do
not, you will observe, mean that the reality of any
fact whatever can be proved merely by showing that
such a fact, if real, possesses moral value. This is not
at all our argument. What we mean is this, that such
a fact as that of a resurrection from the dead—a fact
manifestly miraculous—could not be believed by us
as having really occurred, unless it had a moral value
of the highest order. If any person came to us and
said that he had seen one who had been raised from
the dead, and if this was the whole of his statement—
if the alleged fact was an isolated occurrence, having
no connection with any declared moral purpose of
God, or with man's highest interests—then I apprehend
we should be justified in giving ourselves no concern
about the allegation, and would be entitled to reject
the testimony as in some way or other originating
in fraud or delusion. The entire absence of moral
value would, I conceive, more than counterbalance any
amount of evidence proposed to us in the form of
testimony. There is an improbability against a mira-
culous occurrence even after the proof of testimony
has been offered, which improbability can be counter-
balanced only by the moral purpose to the accom-
plishment of which the miracle is declared to be sub-
servient. If this view is correct, we ought, previously
to all inquiry into the evidence itself, to ascertain this
important preliminary point. Now, the adversaries of
Christianity must themselves allow that the resurrec-
tion of Jesus, whether it was real or not, is presented
to us in the Gospel—in the Christian scheme—not as an isolated fact, but as essentially connected both with the high claims of Jesus himself, and with that scheme of salvation of which He declared Himself to be the Author. He claimed to be the Son of God, who for a definite design had become the Son of Man. Now, whilst, in consistency with this claim, He, as the Son of Man, might die, yet we cannot conceive that death should hold dominion over Him as the Son of God. It is in perfect harmony, then, with this claim, that He, the Son of God, should overcome the power of death and be restored in His human nature to life. We do not prove either the truth of His claim or the reality of His resurrection by means of this harmony between the two; but this harmony goes to show that the alleged fact of the resurrection has an important moral bearing in regard to the person Himself who is said to have been raised again.

But further, this alleged fact, the reality of which is in question, is essentially connected with the scheme of salvation which Jesus declared that He came into the world to accomplish for the human race. No one can deny the prevalence of death in our world. No one can deny that death, universally prevalent, is looked upon by man as an enemy, a tyrant, the very king of terrors. No more can any one deny the universal prevalence of sin; and the connection between sin and misery of every form is most manifest. Now, the Gospel assumes and asserts as a thing absolutely certain that sin and death are most closely connected; that death is, in short, the penalty, the just consequence, of sin; that “the wages of sin is death;” and that therefore the salvation of man implies deliverance
from death. And the Gospel represents the death and resurrection of Jesus as the means by which God, in His infinite mercy, has been pleased to work out salvation for the human race. There can be no question that such is the view given us in the Gospel, whether that Gospel be from God or not, respecting the death and the resurrection of Jesus. He by His death is said to have died for us—to have suffered the penalty of death due to us. He is also said to have risen again for us—to have secured by His own resurrection our resurrection to life everlasting. Be these things true or false, such is the uniform testimony of the Apostolic writings respecting the moral value of the death and resurrection of Jesus. So close is the connection between these alleged events and man's highest interests, that Jesus is said to have by His appearing in our world "abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by His gospel."

Now, we beg your earnest attention to this declared view of the moral value of the resurrection of Jesus; for it is generally, and most unfairly, as we think, overlooked or kept out of sight by the adversaries of the Gospel. They would view the alleged resurrection of Jesus merely as an isolated fact—as an event which is reported to have occurred, but which has no moral influence whatever. By thus isolating the fact, they create a prejudice—a strong and natural prejudice—against believing in such a fact. Now, in order that the human mind may believe in the reality of such a fact, it must have fully before it, not merely the external evidence attesting the reality of the fact, but the internal evidence also,—that moral evidence which shows the fact, if real, to be one of the highest
moral importance. It is the combination of these two kinds of evidence which alone can satisfy our reason that such a wondrous fact did take place. In such a case, the consideration of the internal or moral evidence must always precede that of the external; for it is the consideration of the former which moves the mind to enter on the consideration of the latter.

But such a mode of procedure, it is said, brings a regard to our interests—to consequences—unduly into play in an inquiry which ought to be conducted "in a perfectly unprejudiced, perfectly decided spirit, without ambiguity and without reserve." We are, then, it seems to be inferred, to conduct our inquiry with the same coolness and indifference to results as if it were an inquiry into the reality of some alleged physical fact which had no moral bearing whatever. Now, we maintain that, whilst we are to proceed in our investigation in the spirit here described, we do so, not by keeping out of view the essential data of the problem, but by bringing all these together, and then determining the conclusion to which they legitimately lead. Leave out the declared moral purpose to which a miracle is subservient, and you deal unfairly with your reason as well as with your inquiry; for a miracle, which by hypothesis implies an immediate intervention of the Supreme Being, does not belong to the class of ordinary physical events, but is necessarily to be viewed as in connection with some high moral end or other. Attempt to realise in your minds such a fact as that of the resurrection of a human body from the state of death, as a mere historical event, without any moral bearing, and your minds will refuse, instinctively refuse, to believe in the reality of such a
fact,—not because the mind regards such an event as impossible with God, but because it cannot believe that God, whose power is ever directed by His wisdom, would so intervene, unless He had some corresponding moral end in view. It is evidently most unfair, in point of mere argument, to ignore, as not essential to the inquiry, the declared moral influence of the alleged resurrection of Jesus. To do so is to foreclose the inquiry. Whether this be entering upon it "in a perfectly unprejudiced spirit," you may now judge. It is certainly, we must admit, entering upon it "in a perfectly decided spirit, without ambiguity and without reserve."

And herein lies, allow me to assure you, the strength of the infidel argument, whether wielded by the prejudiced but affectedly cool Strauss, or by the equally prejudiced but enthusiastically warm Renan. It will, when you thoroughly examine it, be found to lie in the ignoring of the moral or spiritual value of the life of Jesus—of His teaching, His example, His death, His resurrection, His ascension,—of His whole work as designed to accomplish an everlasting salvation for us, perishing sinners. May I then exhort you to give your most serious consideration to the view which I have anxiously laboured to set before you—a view which the subject legitimately requires—a view which will not prejudice your minds unduly in favour of the external evidence which confirms the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, but only preserve you from unfair prejudice against that evidence, and render you more solicitous to test it by every legitimate means in your power. And when at any time you endeavour to place this external evidence before the
minds of others, remember that it is due to the subject and to your fellow-men to set it before them in combination with that moral evidence which is indissolubly connected with it; and you will then find that you are wielding a combined argument which all the weapons of infidelity will fail to overturn.

Having dwelt at such length on the relation between the moral or internal, and the external evidence of the resurrection of Jesus, but not at greater length than the importance of the subject appears to me to demand, I must postpone entering on the external evidence itself till next Lecture.
LECTURE VIII.

ON THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

(Continued.)

In examining the external evidence in confirmation of the resurrection of Jesus, we naturally turn our attention first to the Christian Church, as by its very existence and constitution bearing testimony to this great fact.

It is allowed by the adversaries of the Gospel, and especially by those recent adversaries to whom in these Lectures we are specially referring, such as Baur, Strauss, and Renan, that the Christian Church was founded on the belief in the reality of the resurrection, and that the disciples of Jesus—those men who by their teaching founded this Church—did themselves firmly believe in the reality of this fact. These are most important admissions; for the whole question is thus reduced to the inquiry whether these disciples, these first preachers of the Gospel, were warranted in entertaining the belief which they professed. We might therefore at once proceed to the discussion of this fundamental point.

Baur, perhaps the most learned of these modern adversaries, endeavours, in his work on “The Chris-
tianity of the First Three Centuries,” to trace what he conceives to have been the history of the development of the Christian Church; and he admits that the first disciples of Jesus—the first propagators of Christianity—believed that Jesus had risen from the dead, and that the first Churches were founded on the same belief. He affirms that this belief in the resurrection of Jesus is that which historically accounts for the origin and rise of the Christian Church. As to his views on the origin of this belief in the minds of the disciples, these will by-and-by come to be considered. Meantime it is important for you to notice that it is conceded by him and others that the Christian Church was founded on the belief that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Referring to the opinion of Baur on this subject, Strauss, who is far from being pleased with Baur’s avowed hesitation to pronounce decidedly on the nature of that belief which the first disciples evidently entertained, thus remarks:—

“It is something very different”—different, he means, from what he had previously said respecting this belief,— “and said by Baur in a genuinely historical spirit, when he states, in connection with the same subject, that the necessary historical hypothesis for all that follows is not so much the real element in the resurrection of Jesus, as the faith in it. That,” adds Strauss, “is a hint for the apologists who would like to persuade the world that if the reality of the resurrection is not recognised, the origin and rise of the Christian Church cannot be explained. No, says the historian, and rightly, only thus much need be acknowledged, that the disciples firmly believed that Jesus had arisen; this is perfectly sufficient to make their further progress and
operations intelligible; what that belief rested upon, what there was real in the resurrection of Jesus, is an open question, which the investigator may answer one way or another without the origin of Christianity being thereby made more or less conceivable."—Vol. i. p. 398-9.

Now, it is to be admitted that there is a certain amount of truth in these statements, and they show with what extreme caution we ought to proceed, lest, in our haste to arrive at conclusions, we expose the truth to the taunts of its adversaries. Apart from the circumstances of the case before us, it is possible, though extremely difficult, to conceive that the belief which the disciples firmly held, and which through their testimony to this belief others were led to entertain, was only one of those strange delusions which the human mind is at times so easily induced to form. Such a thing, we say, is possible; and the question, therefore, as to the real nature and origin of such a belief may be regarded as so far an open question. Apart, as we have said, from the peculiar circumstances of the case, whether as affecting the belief of the first converts or of the first disciples themselves, we do not immediately conclude from the mere existence of this belief that the resurrection of Jesus must have been a real, an objective fact. But it must be conceded to us that such a belief on the part of these disciples, embraced also by others to whom they declared their belief, is, so far as our question is concerned, in favour of the reality of the alleged fact. Let the evidential weight of this belief be what it may, its weight is altogether on one side—in one scale of the balance. That, at least, is certain.

And here we have to complain most seriously of
what we cannot but term unfair treatment of this momentous question on the part of the opponents of the Gospel. We are in possession of no small amount of information from various sources respecting the circumstances under which the first disciples, who, it is allowed, "firmly believed in the resurrection of Jesus," made known their belief throughout the world, and also respecting the circumstances under which the first Churches were planted. We know for certain that these disciples did not believe in the resurrection of Jesus as a mere isolated fact, but in connection with a system of religion, and especially with a scheme of salvation, of which this alleged fact was declared to be a proof and an essential part; and, further, that these disciples proclaimed their belief and confirmed their testimony in a manner which left no room for doubt as to their own sincerity. We have unquestionable evidence to prove that, notwithstanding the opposition everywhere offered to them, these first preachers of the Gospel persevered in their efforts to make known the name of Jesus in every land; that within a few years after they entered on their labours, Christian Churches were formed in all the chief towns of the Roman Empire, and even in Rome itself; and that in a short time the most terrible persecutions were raised against the Christians. These are facts fully established by heathen as well as by Christian authors; and these facts ought unquestionably to enter into our estimate of the nature and value of that belief, which the first converts, and especially the first disciples, held and professed respecting the resurrection of Jesus. Assuredly it is not fair in point of mere argument to overlook entirely, or to regard
as of little moment, such momentous facts, when we would ascertain whether that belief rested on valid grounds or not. It was not the mere belief of the disciples in the resurrection of Jesus which moved them to such unwonted efforts and sacrifices of temporal interests, even to the sacrifice of life itself; nor was it the mere profession of this belief which operated so powerfully on the minds of others. It was this belief, in connection with the glad tidings of salvation which they had to communicate, that formed their chief motive; and it was this belief, as so connected, and as manifested in the manner in which it was done, that constrained others to accept their testimony and to believe in Jesus. When, then, we take into consideration all the essential circumstances of the case, we seem to have the strongest moral evidence which can fairly be required, that it was no mere dogma, as is said, but a fact, that was the object of the disciples' belief, when they bore testimony to the resurrection of Jesus. It is morally impossible, we apprehend, to conceive that, had the fact not been real, men could have been found to cherish such a belief as they did, and to devote themselves amidst such privations, insults, and even tortures, to the propagation of their story. And had it not been manifest that these devoted and self-sacrificing men thoroughly believed in the resurrection as a reality, we can give no rational account of the origin and progress of the Church and of those institutions which either directly or indirectly witness to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Hence, notwithstanding the assertion of Strauss, we maintain that, when we look at all the circumstances of the case, the apologists are right in trying “to persuade
the world, that if the reality of the resurrection is not recognised, the origin and rise of the Christian Church cannot be explained." It is easy, indeed, for him and his fellow-labourer Baur, to distinguish in general between the belief existing in the mind and the reality—the objective reality—of the thing believed. But Baur himself confessed his inability as an historian to pronounce decidedly on the real nature of the alleged resurrection, and that it was only as a philosopher—that is, in his sense, as one who denies the possibility of a miraculous fact—that he could reject the resurrection of Jesus as an objective occurrence. Baur thus acknowledged that his denial of the resurrection as a reality rested not upon historical but on philosophical grounds—that is, on an assumption which he is pleased to style philosophical, but which in truth is a mere begging of the question. The distinction referred to is no doubt to be regarded as in general a real distinction; and as there are cases in which the firmest belief existing in the mind does not warrant the conclusion that the object believed in has a reality beyond the mind itself, so there are cases in which the mental belief is a sufficient warrant for the external reality of the object; and if ever there was such a case, that of the first disciples was undoubtedly one; for, under all the circumstances, their belief in the resurrection of Jesus could not have existed unless that resurrection had been a real, historical fact. The truth of this view of the nature of their belief will be more and more confirmed as we proceed.

The question now before us, then, respects the origin of the belief which it is admitted the disciples of Jesus
entertained in His resurrection. Now, you will observe that there are two suppositions, otherwise possible as suppositions, which are excluded by this admission. The one is that of fraud on the part of the disciples; and in truth this is a supposition, which, though it has had its advocates, is under the circumstances scarcely worthy of notice, not to say refutation. That any number of men could have resolved to go forth among the nations with the view of establishing in the world a religion such as that of Christianity, embracing as it does a system of the highest practical morality, of which a regard to truth, justice, and benevolence are the very elements—that, in order to accomplish their enterprise, they should consciously agree to proclaim this religion in the name of One who had been publicly put to death, but whom they resolved to represent falsely as having risen again—and that, in prosecuting an enterprise distinguished by such contradictory features as truth and conscious falsehood, they should one and all submit to the severest privations and sufferings—is indeed a supposition which we may pronounce morally impossible, and which may therefore be set aside without further consideration. In whatever the belief of the disciples originated, it assuredly did not originate in fraud. Indeed, to speak of belief on their part on such a supposition would be a manifest contradiction.

The other supposition alluded to, as excluded by the admission of their belief in the resurrection of Jesus, is one which, strange to say, has found advocates even among professed friends of the Gospel. These persons, having formed erroneous views respecting the possibility of miracles, have laboured at
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the manifestly impracticable task of vindicating Christianity as they view it on the one hand, and of explaining away the narratives of miracles on the other. They have not seen that whilst miracles are impossible to the power of man and to the operation of mere physical causes, they are still possible to God; and, further, they have not seen that since a divine revelation is itself miraculous, visible miracles must constitute its proper evidence; but looking on the recorded miracles of Jesus as really hindrances to faith in Him, they have sought by the strangest modes of interpretation to bring all these miracles within the sphere of ordinary events. Hence, in respect to the alleged resurrection of Jesus, these persons endeavour to make out that His death upon the cross was not a real death—that though the visible signs of life had ceased, the vital powers had really not become extinct, and that after His body was taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb according to the record, He revived and was again seen alive by His disciples. Jesus then, thus restored from a swoon, lived for some time among His disciples, and soon after died a natural death; after which event these disciples, looking upon His revival as a real resurrection, went forth and proclaimed the Gospel to all nations, asserting at the same time that He had risen from the dead. The very statement of such a supposition destroys itself. It would be difficult, indeed, to heap together a greater mass of manifest absurdities. How could sane men have regarded such a revival as a real resurrection? How, when He afterwards died a natural death, could men, not bereft of their senses, have believed that He was still alive? How could any man in such a case
have borne testimony to a real resurrection and been ready to suffer for such testimony? The supposition is wholly worthless, and may therefore be at once dismissed.

There remain now only two possible suppositions, and to these we must carefully direct your attention. The one is, that the belief of the disciples in the resurrection of Jesus was a belief which had no other ground than that of a mere impression produced in some way or other upon their minds—an impression which, though it necessarily, like all impressions, had a subjective reality, yet had no corresponding objective reality. The other is, that this belief, whilst in itself a subjective impression, originated in an objective reality. In the one case the disciples dreamed or fancied that they saw Jesus risen. In the other they really saw Him risen. And the question is, Which of these suppositions is the one borne out by the facts so far as these are known to us?

In order to determine this question we must go to the New Testament writings, where alone the facts are to be found which can enable us to answer the question. As we formerly noticed, the greatest efforts have been made by the adversaries of the Gospel to throw discredit on these writings, so that their testimony may be of as little avail as possible. Theories beyond number have been framed to give some other account of the origin of these writings than that which all the external and internal evidence known to us warrants. These theories are discordant among themselves, and we might leave them all alone until their authors should agree among themselves, and tell
us with some measure at least, of unanimity, in what way and by whom the Gospel narratives, the Apostolic Epistles, and the other writings were formed. There is another feature besides that of discord which characterises these theories: they all suppose a degree of artifice in the composition of the writings which is truly amazing—equal to the ingenuity, and that is not saying little, displayed by the authors themselves of these various and discordant theories. Whenever men reject the obvious cause of any phenomenon, they are driven to exert their ingenuity to give some plausible account of it. Such we confidently affirm is the real state of the case as respects the several documents composing our New Testament. These documents, written by the authors to whom they are ascribed, were composed at different times and in different places—composed, indeed, as the exigencies of the Christian Church seemed to require; they, therefore, existed at first as so many separate documents; but, as was formerly observed, they were, with a very few exceptions, from the very first public documents. They were meant to be such, and were treated as such by the respective Churches into whose possession they first came. In course of time, as might naturally be expected, collections of these documents were formed, some containing more and some fewer of the whole number finally brought together. There is evidence to show that the Church in its various sections watched over these collections with jealous care. Though fictitious or unauthenticated documents did in course of time appear, and appear under Apostolic names, yet these were always either wholly rejected by the Church, or kept separate from the really au-
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toritative writings. The origin and authority of our four Gospels, and of by far the greater number of the other writings composing our collected New Testament, were never questioned by any portion of the Church; and there is no valid reason assigned by any of the recent adversaries of Christianity, to show that the Christian Church, from east to west and from north to south, erred in its unanimous decision. What, then, is the reason why such efforts are made to lessen, if not to destroy, the value of these precious writings? The main reason is plain: it is avowed—openly avowed. If these writings are what they profess to be, and what the Christian Church from the first held them to be, then the life and ministry of Jesus must have been such as is recorded in them. Miracles, real miracles, must have been wrought by Him. Not only His death, but His resurrection also, must have been real. Christianity must then be neither a mythical delusion nor a cunningly devised fable: it must be true. And then where is the so-called philosophy? where is the conclusion that a miracle is impossible? that the life of Jesus, when critically discussed, must be explained by ordinary historical laws? that there is no future existence to man? yea, that there is no real God? nothing in existence but this visible, this material, this ever-changing scene of things—this eternal movement of material forces? But this philosophy must be maintained—things shall be as it decrees them to be; and, therefore, these writings, which condemn this philosophy and tell us about a God, an immortality, a salvation—which tell us that there is a supernatural order to which this natural, this visible order is sub-
ordinate, must be decried and rejected as writings which were not written by their alleged authors, but appeared at a later date, though they, the opponents of the Gospel, know not when; and were composed by men, they know not whom, and acknowledged by the whole Church to be what they were not, they know not how. Such, I affirm, is the basis of all these theories which go to disprove the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament writings. The basis is a foregone conclusion, and it is worthless as the basis of a real argument.

As we formerly remarked, it would be impossible for us at present to enter specially into this subject. Assuming, then, the writings of the New Testament to be what they profess to be and what they have from the first been held to be, and the contrary of which no critic, be he a Baur or a Strauss or a Renan, has yet established except on the untenable basis of a petitio principii, we proceed with our great question—which is to determine whether the belief of the disciples in the resurrection of Jesus was belief in a mere dream, in a delusion, or belief in a reality, in an objective fact. So far as our main purpose at present is concerned, this question may be soon settled.

Not one of the adversaries of the Gospel, between whom and us there is now any argument, denies the reality of the death of Jesus upon the cross; and we appeal to the whole New Testament in general in confirmation of the statement that His death and His resurrection are represented as facts of the same order. The objective reality of the one is as plainly declared as that of the other. The same Jesus died and rose again. It is unnecessary to adduce particular pas-
sages to this effect; for no one who reads the New Testament with the slightest attention can for a moment doubt our statement. Mere visions, as they are termed, are spoken of in the New Testament, but never is the resurrection of Jesus described as anything else than a real fact. "Who is he that condemneth?" says an Apostle; "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." And the same Apostle declares faith in the reality of His resurrection to be essential to our salvation: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." It is declared to have been an essential qualification of an Apostle to be able to bear witness to this great fact. "Wherefore," said the Apostle Peter on a memorable occasion, "of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection." In truth, the resurrection of Jesus as a reality was the central subject of the Apostolic teaching, as it is the foundation of our belief in His divine claims and the basis of all our hope in Him. Without further argument, we maintain that the uniform general testimony of the whole New Testament is to the reality of the fact.

But we have also the reality of this fact specially proved and insisted upon. And, first, we appeal to the testimony of the Apostle Paul as recorded in his First Epistle to the Church at Corinth. We appeal to this
Epistle first of all, because it is one of the few documents which even the most advanced school of sceptical criticism has allowed to be genuine. And we appeal to St Paul's testimony for another special reason, because attempts have been made to support the theory of mere subjective impression by reference to his words. In the 15th chapter of that Epistle the Apostle Paul combats a false doctrine, which had crept into the Church at Corinth, respecting the resurrection of the dead. This false doctrine evidently was that there was to be no real resurrection of the dead, but that the only resurrection to be looked for was a resurrection of the soul, so to speak, in the present life. The resurrection of the body was the doctrine which was assailed. Now, observe that the main purpose of the Apostle in this chapter is to expose this erroneous view respecting the resurrection of the body. He does this by first insisting on the real resurrection of the body of Jesus. His main purpose is not to establish this latter fact; but by means of this fact, which all professed to believe, to refute the error respecting the general resurrection. And his argument is, that if Jesus really rose from the dead, so shall those who sleep in Jesus rise; whereas, if believers who die are not to be raised, it would follow that Jesus did not rise—a conclusion which, since Jesus did rise, would amount to a *reductio ad absurdum*. It is only, then, for the sake of his argument that he refers to the resurrection of Jesus, and shows its reality by appealing to the sensible evidence which established it. The idea that his words may imply a mere subjective vision is altogether untenable, for his argument demands the objective reality of the fact.
No one who had not a foregone conclusion in his mind could possibly suppose that a mere subjective vision was all that the Apostle's words can mean. He appeals to the sensible evidence given on various occasions and to different persons in confirmation of the reality of the fact. "For I delivered unto you," he says, "first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Observe that the death and burial and resurrection of Christ are all described as of the same order of facts. All were real or all were visionary. There is no distinction, and there can be none. They are all real facts. "And that He was seen"—Seen! how? evidently not, as is said, in a mere subjective vision, but as an objective, living, real Being;—seen with the bodily eye—"seen of Cephas," that is, Peter—"then of the twelve," as the eleven were still termed; "after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once" (how could this be if the vision was merely subjective?), "of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James: then of all the Apostles. And last of all," he adds, "He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." It is argued that this vision of Paul's was entirely subjective, and that therefore the other visions spoken of were of the same character. But such is not the meaning of the Apostle. He saw and heard the risen Lord. He saw at least the objective manifestation of His glory and heard His voice. He had, consequently, sensible evidence that Jesus, who was once crucified, was now alive. Therefore, whatever
peculiar distinction may be drawn under the circumstances between the sensible evidence given to Paul, and that which was given to the Apostles and others who saw Jesus on earth after His resurrection, he had, as well as they, sensible evidence that Jesus was now alive, and alive in glory; and therefore he could justly say of himself, as well as of them, that he had seen the Lord. In the 12th verse we have his argument: "Now, if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" The objective reality of Christ's resurrection is assumed as the ordinary subject of Christian teaching; and it is adduced as overturning the erroneous doctrine which some were advancing that there is no resurrection of the dead. "But if," he adds, "there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." The two doctrines are inseparably connected. And this verse contains the reductio ad absurdum, for the very persons who introduced the erroneous doctrine which the Apostle is combating admitted that Christ had risen. The Apostle's argument is just this: the reality of Christ's resurrection must be denied, if you deny the reality of the resurrection of the dead. And then he goes on to show further consequences which would follow from the supposition of Christ's resurrection not having been real. "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." If there was no reality in Christ's resurrection, the whole Gospel which we preach collapses, and your faith is utterly vain. "Yea, and we"—we the Apostles—"are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He raised not
up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised.” Is this like the language of a man who had only experienced a subjective impression? What clearer and stronger language could have been used by one when insisting on the reality of what he testified? His argument, as I have repeatedly said, is in the form of a *reductio ad absurdum*, and he continues it further. “And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” There is, on this supposition, no salvation revealed. Mankind are still under the guilt and domination of sin. “Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” Those who died in the faith of Christ, and in the hope of a resurrection to eternal life, are in the same state of condemnation with others. And further, “if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” For we renounce the pleasures of a present life, such as they are, and we endure real privations and sufferings, solely because of our faith in Christ—a faith which, on the supposition that He did not rise from the dead, is utterly vain. Observe here the thoroughly practical sense of the Apostle. He was no blind or wild fanatic. He was in full possession of his faculties, and of what we term “common sense.” He had no relish for mere suffering, and he would not have submitted to such a life of privation as that which he and his fellow-labourers in the Gospel endured, if he had had the slightest suspicion that his faith did not rest on solid ground. But it did rest on such ground; for he thus concludes his argument, “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.” The reality of Christ’s resurrection
is all along the basis of his argument; and just as the first-fruits are the pledge of the coming harvest, so is Christ's real resurrection the pledge of the reality of the coming resurrection of all His people.

Strauss labours hard to show that, when we compare the passage on which we have commented, with the threefold account given in the Book of Acts respecting the appearance of Jesus to Paul, and also with other statements in his Epistles referring to certain visions with which he says he was favoured, we have no valid reason for concluding that the special appearance, mentioned in our passage and elsewhere detailed, was anything else than a mere mental impression, occasioned by the peculiar state of Paul's mind, and by the circumstances in which he was at the time placed. Strauss further asserts that as Paul in this passage regards the appearances to Cephas, to James, to the Twelve, and to the more than five hundred brethren, as identical in kind with the one to himself—so we can only infer that all these appearances were entirely subjective, and to be traced to the power of imagination under highly exciting circumstances. We cannot enter minutely into the several accounts given of the appearance of Jesus to Paul, nor is it necessary for us to do so at present. It is admitted that such impressions are possible, and we also maintain that it is in the power of God to favour His servants with what may be termed "supernatural visions." He has access to the human mind, and may, if He wills, employ its powers in such a way that truth may be immediately revealed, or a vision of some scene immediately produced. This is a subject of most interesting and important inquiry,
but it is not necessary for us to discuss it at present. We observe, however, that such supernatural visions—internal miracles, as they may be termed—are very different in their nature from external miracles, which are objects of distinct sensible perception. And the question comes to be, "Was Paul favoured at any time with mere supernatural visions? And if so, was he aware of the distinction between them and the perception of external miraculous facts?" Now, it can be clearly proved from his own statements that he was often favoured with such visions and revelations of the Lord, and that he was perfectly aware of the distinction referred to. The mere use of the same word "appeared" in reference to such visions, and to the case of sensible perception, in no way identifies these two distinct acts of the mind. We are said to see an object in a mere dream, as well as to see it by means of our sense of sight. It is not this word, but the circumstances of the case, which must determine the nature of the appearance.

Now, looking at the passage before us, and at the accounts given in the Acts of the appearance of Jesus to Paul, to which we shall refer in our next Lecture, we can only state it as our conviction, that as the Apostle evidently describes this appearance as a real, objective occurrence, we must, believing his testimony, conclude that it was such an occurrence. His whole argument assumes the reality of the appearance to the first disciples as well as to himself; and therefore, in the view of the Apostle Paul, the resurrection of Jesus was a real resurrection. True it is that the Apostle does not, as Strauss would have had him do, formally investigate the grounds which he and
the others tell us they had for considering the appearance as something "real." Had the Apostle done so on an occasion when, strictly speaking, he was directly combating, not the denial of the reality of Christ's resurrection, but the denial by some philosophic persons of the reality of the resurrection of Christ's believing people, I humbly think that even Strauss would have regarded such a discussion on such an occasion as not altogether free from suspicion, and might, whether fairly or not, have imagined he detected a latent hesitation in Paul's own mind as to the reality of Christ's resurrection. In short, there is no possible way of convincing scepticism when it is bent on maintaining a foregone conclusion. Sad, indeed, is such a state of the mind—all its ingenuity is turned to ward off evidence, however clear and powerful, and to strengthen by every possible means its own assumptions. Such a state of mind would not yield "even should one rise from the dead."

In our next Lecture we shall consider, however briefly, the grounds on which the first disciples rested their belief in the resurrection of Jesus.
LECTURE IX.

THE VARIOUS NARRATIVES OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

We are now to examine the Evangelic narratives themselves, in order that we may still further determine the momentous question, whether the admitted belief of the first disciples in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus originated in mere mental excitement, occasioned by the circumstances in which they were placed, or in an objective fact, for the reality of which they had the evidence of their senses.

We assume, for reasons which have already been stated generally, that these narratives, or Gospels, as they are termed—the public documents of the Christian Church, and recognised as such from the first by every section of that Church—are genuine and authentic documents, having for their authors those to whom they have from the first been ascribed—namely, the Apostles Matthew and John, and the two companions of Apostles, Mark and Luke. The last of these Evangelists, Luke, further gives us a supplementary account referring to the resurrection of Jesus, in his introduction to his second treatise, commonly called “The Acts of the Apostles.” To this account also we shall have to give attention. As the subject
before us is one of great extent, and as we must compress our remarks within as small a compass as possible, we shall endeavour to avoid all irrelevant discussion, and to bring before you only the chief points which require to be noticed. Our plan will be, first, to notice the pre-intimations, if any, which Jesus gave respecting His resurrection; secondly, to consider the several narratives of the resurrection by themselves; thirdly, to compare these narratives; and lastly, to notice the theories of those who deny the reality of the event.

I. First, then, as to the pre-intimations which Jesus gave to His disciples respecting His resurrection, all the four Evangelists inform us that such were given, and that even the enemies of Jesus were aware of some of them. St John relates that at a very early period of His ministry, Jesus, when asked by the Jewish rulers for what they called a sign (some visible sign from heaven, as they meant by this word, in confirmation of His authority to act as He had been doing in respect to the sanctity of the Temple), replied, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This obscure intimation was at first understood literally by these rulers, but we learn from another Evangelist that they afterwards attached the true meaning to His words. The disciples also did not at first understand their meaning; but they remembered them after He was risen from the dead. On another occasion, after Jesus had given evidence which ought to have convinced the eyewitnesses of the truth of His claims, we are informed by St Matthew that the Scribes and Pharisees, rejecting this evidence, persisted in demanding some further sign from Him, when He declared that no sign would be given them,
except one shadowed forth by what had happened to the prophet Jonah: “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Several other expressions, more or less obscure, were uttered by Jesus in the course of His ministry, all bearing on His death and resurrection, and the progress of His kingdom throughout the world.

But it was not till He was about to proceed to Jerusalem for the last time that He plainly intimated to His disciples the things which were about to happen there. We cannot at present dwell on the peculiar state of mind which these disciples cherished during the whole course of His ministry. They grew more and more in the belief that He was the Christ, the Messiah promised to the fathers, and now universally looked for by the Jewish nation; but they, like the rest of the nation, expected a temporal deliverer, one who would rescue the nation from all foreign oppression, and establish a universal empire of which the earthly Jerusalem was to be the seat. Such a hold had this view of the Messianic kingdom upon their minds that they seemed incapable of understanding even the plainest intimations which were opposed to it, and it was only towards the close of His ministry that Jesus deemed it expedient to give them such intimations.

The three Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, inform us that after He had drawn from them a decided confession of their belief in His Messiahship, He announced to them in the plainest terms His approaching death and resurrection. “From that
time forth," says St Matthew, "began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and Scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." But the Evangelists at the same time tell us that the disciples were completely perplexed by such an intimation; not that they did not understand the meaning of the words, but that they could not conceive how such things should happen to the Messiah—how it could be that He, who was to restore the kingdom to Israel, should be subjected to death, even to a death that was to be followed by a resurrection. "They understood not," says St Mark, "that saying"—that intimation about His death and resurrection—"and were afraid to ask Him"—that is, to ask how such things could be, consistently with His claims to be the Messiah. St Luke informs us to the same effect. "Let these things," said Jesus, "sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not; and they feared to ask Him of that saying." It was evidently the intimation of His death—of His death by a public execution—that disconcerted and perplexed their minds. The intimation of His resurrection was, of course, essentially connected with His death; but it perplexed them solely because the latter event was one which they were unable to reconcile with their deeply-seated convictions respecting the Messiah. We have a proof that this is the correct view of the matter in what St Peter, the spokesman of the disciples on this as on other occasions, ventured to do, when Jesus for the first time plainly told them
of His approaching sufferings and death. "Then Peter took Him"—took Him, probably, by the hand, or aside—"and began to rebuke Him, saying; Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." How strong must have been the prejudice in the minds of the disciples against the very thought that the Messiah should suffer and die, as Jesus had declared, when it moved Peter to act in this manner, and when his conduct on this occasion called forth from Jesus the terrible rebuke: "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou art an offence unto Me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men!"

You will observe, then, that it was the announcement, not so much of His resurrection, as of His sufferings and death, that disconcerted the minds of the disciples. Had they not stumbled at the very idea of the latter, they would have rejoiced in the assurance of the former; and they did not understand the saying about the resurrection merely because they could not understand why He, the Messiah who was to live for ever, should possibly need to be raised again. It is important for you to have a distinct conception of the state of mind thus manifested by the disciples, as also of what it was in these announcements of Jesus which really caused their perplexity—in fact, their unbelief that these announcements would be fulfilled.

Again, you will observe that in these intimations of His approaching death and resurrection Jesus evidently speaks of both as facts of the same order. The resurrection is to be as real a resurrection as the death is to be a real death. Jesus clearly declares that He is to suffer and die, and that He is to rise again on the third day. It is impossible to regard His
words as referring to any other kind of resurrection than a real one. Now, I beg you to consider seriously the importance of this, the only fair—I might say, the only possible—interpretation of the words of Jesus; for since it is of a real death that He speaks, His words can be fulfilled only by a real resurrection from the dead. It is universally admitted, by unbelievers as well as by believers, that He was put to death, and that, so far, His pre-intimations were literally fulfilled; nor can it be denied—nay, it is not denied even by the most decided adversaries of His claims—that His disciples did afterwards firmly believe that He rose again from the dead on the third day. We are entitled, then, to infer that the resurrection, in which they thus believed, corresponded in its nature to that which was foretold—that it was, in their view, a real resurrection.

It is, indeed, still possible to suppose that in this view they were deceived, by mistake the product of an excited imagination for a real, a sensible fact. And there is only one way in which we can pronounce a judgment on this matter, and that is by calmly and carefully examining those authentic narratives which contain an account of the circumstances on which their belief was founded.

Before proceeding to the examination of these special narratives, it deserves to be noticed that, on the very night in which, as He knew, He was to be betrayed into the hands of His enemies, He renewed, under the most affecting circumstances, the intimation of His death, and also of His resurrection, and assured the disciples that He would meet them again in Galilee. On that night He also instituted that Supper which has
ever since been observed by the Christian Church, and which is a standing memorial of His expiatory death, and also indirectly of His glorious resurrection; for whilst it ever points back to the body that was broken and to the blood that was shed for the remission of sins, it likewise looks forward to the time when He, the Risen Lord, will come again to complete the salvation of all His people. "Then said Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."

II. Let us now proceed to consider separately each of the four narratives of the resurrection, in the order in which these are presented to us in the New Testament.

1. The Evangelist Matthew, after minutely detailing the circumstances attending the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, relates that when the even was come, Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, and a disciple of Jesus, went to Pilate, the Roman governor, and begged the body of Jesus; that, on his request being granted, he took down the body from the cross, and, wrapping it in a clean linen cloth, laid it in his own new tomb which he had hewn out in the rock; and that he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and then departed. He also mentions that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary whom he had named a little before—namely, the mother of James and Joses—were present at the interment. Matthew then relates that on the next day, which he says was the day after the preparation—that is, the preparation for the Jewish Sabbath—the chief priests and Pharisees came
in a body to Pilate, and called his attention to a saying which they remembered that Jesus, whom they emphatically designated as "that deceiver," had uttered, to the effect that "after three days He would rise again." They requested, therefore, that Pilate would "issue a command to have the sepulchre made sure until the third day, lest," as they said, "His disciples should come by night and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead, and so the last error should be worse than the first." Pilate listened to their application; a guard of soldiers was stationed at the sepulchre; and to prevent, as far as could be done, the possibility of collusion even on the part of the guard, the stone itself at the opening of the tomb was formally sealed. "In the end of the Sabbath," but not till the morning "began to dawn, toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see"—carefully to look at "the sepulchre. And, lo, there was a great earthquake"—a great shock—"for the angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, and coming to the sepulchre, rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance"—his appearance—"was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." But the angel addressed the women, and said, "Fear not ye; for I know that ye are seeking Jesus, the crucified One. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead: and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told

* θεωρήσαι.  † σειμός.  ‡ ἡ ἱδέα αὐτοῦ.
you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word.

There is a clause in the commonly received text* which implies that "whilst they were now on their way to tell His disciples" Jesus met them; but this clause has been generally omitted in the best critical editions, as not supported by sufficient authority. We can therefore only regard Matthew as relating the simple fact, that either then, or at a somewhat later time when they again were on the same road, "Jesus met the women and said, All hail;" and that the women, "coming up to Him, held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him." Jesus addressed them in soothing words, saying, just as the angel had done before, "Fear not. Go, tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me."

The Evangelist next relates that "whilst these women were going," either on the first, or it may have been on a second occasion, to the disciples, "some of the guard went and reported to the chief priests the things which had occurred;" that after a consultation had been held with the elders or members of the Council, the chief priests bribed the soldiers with a large sum of money to spread a false report to the effect that "the disciples had come during the night and stolen the body whilst they, the soldiers, were asleep;" and that the chief priests gave the soldiers, who would no doubt at once perceive the danger to themselves involved in such a story, an assurance that they would, by their influence with Pilate, secure them against all danger. The soldiers, we are told, took the money,

* ὡς δὲ ἐπορεύοντο ἀπαγγέλαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ.
and spread abroad the report, which, says the Evangelist, was "current among the Jews" even at the time when he wrote his Gospel.

"The eleven disciples," it is then related, "went to Galilee, to a mountain," which it would appear Jesus had at some time or other mentioned as the place where He would meet them. When they were assembled on the mountain, "they saw Him, and worshipped Him. But," the Evangelist adds, "some," whether of these eleven or of other disciples, "doubted"—doubted, that is, at first, whether the person whom they saw, probably at some distance, was really Jesus or not. But "Jesus came"—came up to the assembled disciples—"and addressed them" in audible words, "saying, All power"—all authority*—"is given to Me in heaven and upon earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples† of all nations, baptising them into the name"‡—the one name—"of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you during all the days"§—all the appointed days—"even unto the consummation of the age."||

Such is the brief account which St Matthew gives of the burial and the resurrection of the body of Jesus. It is perfectly clear that, if his account is correct, the resurrection was a real, though of course a miraculous, event. It was evidently not his intention to record more of the circumstances than were in his view sufficient to attest the reality of the fact, and to meet the false report which he knew had been spread

* πᾶσα ἡξουσία. † μαθητεύσατε. ‡ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα. § πᾶσας τὰς ἡμέρας. || ἐως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος.
abroad among the Jews. There is every reason to believe that he wrote his Gospel specially for the instruction of Jewish converts, and hence he deemed it necessary to expose the falsehood of this report, and to show by a mere reference to two actual appearances of Jesus, the one to the women, and the other to the assembled disciples in Galilee, that Jesus had risen even as He had said beforehand, and that He was now invested with all authority in heaven and upon earth.

2. The Evangelist Mark—John Mark, the son of Mary who was sister to Barnabas—was the companion, first of Paul and Barnabas, then of the latter alone, and after that of Peter, whose interpreter—that is, amanuensis or secretary—credible testimony represents him to have been. He wrote his Gospel specially for the benefit of certain Gentile churches; and we now proceed to examine his account of the resurrection of Jesus.

After recording the events of the crucifixion, he also details the circumstances attending the burial of the body of Jesus. "On the evening"—that is, towards the close of the day, which he also calls "the preparation, the day immediately preceding the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea," a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and one "who was in longing expectation of the kingdom of God," laying aside all timidity, "went with boldness to Pilate and craved the body of Jesus. Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was by this time dead, and sent for the centurion," who commanded the soldiers who had charge of the crucifixion, that he might ascertain "whether Jesus had
been any time dead;" and on receiving an affirmative reply from the centurion, he ordered the dead body to be given to Joseph. Joseph, purchasing a linen cloth, took down the body and wrapped it in the linen, and then laid it in a tomb which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone to the door or entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary of Joses,* that is, the mother of Joses, beheld,† carefully beheld, "where He," Jesus, "was laid." Such is Mark's narrative of the burial of Jesus.

"And when the Sabbath was past"—that is, at sunset of that day—"Mary Magdalene and Mary of James,"‡ the mother of James, the same Mary as was mentioned before, "and Salome," whose name also Mark had previously mentioned, "bought spices, with the intention of going to the tomb and anointing the body. Very early in the morning, which was the morning of the first day of the week, they came to the sepulchre;" and the Evangelist adds another note of time, "the sun having risen"—that is, not that the sun was yet above the horizon, as the expression might otherwise mean, but that the dawn was by this time appearing. The time was just as the day was about to break. The women, after setting out on the way, began to consider how they were to reach the body. "Who, they said one to another, shall roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" And when they came nearer, but yet at some distance, "looking up, they beheld the stone rolled away, for it was very large." They advanced to the tomb, and "entering in, they saw a young person sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment, and they

* Μαριά ἡ Ἰωσήφος.  † ἑθεώρουν.  ‡ Μαρία ἡ Ἰακώβου.
were affrighted. And the young person said to them, “Be not affrighted: ye are seeking Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified One. He is risen; He is not here: see, this is the place where they laid Him. But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goes before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you.” The women, “going out of the sepulchre, fled from it; trembling and amazement possessed them, and they said not a word to any one, for they were afraid.”

Such is, so far, the unquestionable narrative of this Evangelist. But we now come to a portion of the received text, which, from its not being found in some ancient manuscripts, and from its containing certain words or phrases not elsewhere employed by Mark, has caused considerable difference of opinion as to its genuineness. We cannot enter on the discussion of this matter. The sound conclusion seems to be, that Mark could not have intended to finish his narrative so abruptly as is done in the previous section, and that this section was appended to it at a somewhat later time, either by himself or by some one whose testimony was undoubted in the Church. The section, though omitted in some manuscripts, is found in others of ancient date, and is also supported by other testimony. As to the use of peculiar words or phrases, whilst such a matter is not to be overlooked, it is still a very precarious ground on which to raise any solid argument. We proceed, then, with the section, in full confidence that if it did not proceed from Mark, it had for its author some early disciple of undoubted credit in the Christian Church. The subject of the resurrection is, as it were, resumed in this section.
“And rising early on the first day of the week, He,” that is, Jesus, “appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.” There has been some difference of opinion as to whether we are to understand the Evangelist (for so we may justly designate the writer, whether he was Mark or some other early disciple) as meaning that the risen Jesus appeared first, absolutely first, to Mary Magdalene, or only first relatively to the next two appearances recorded in this section. The writer mentions three appearances,—the first to Mary Magdalene; the second to two disciples who were on a journey from Jerusalem to the country; and the third, or last, to the eleven whilst they were sitting at meat. Either interpretation we consider to be tenable, and we cannot at present refer to the other Evangelic narratives to determine which is the one that most agrees with their contents. Confining our attention, however, to the section itself, we regard the former interpretation as the one which, apart from all other information, would be suggested by the words of the writer. According to this view, Mary Magdalene, who had in so remarkable a degree experienced the saving power of Jesus, was the first human being to whom He, after His resurrection, appeared. She also was the first herald of His resurrection to others. She went, we are told, and “informed those who had been with Him”—those who had accompanied Him during His ministry, and whom she found “mourning and weeping. And they, when hearing from her that He was alive and had been seen by her, believed not:” they did not believe her testimony. “After that He appeared, but in another,” in a strange, “form, to two of their number as they were walking,
going on a journey into the country. And these, returning, reported to the rest” what had happened, “but neither did they believe them. Lastly, He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and He upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not those who had seen Him after He had risen. And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation”*—to the whole race of man. “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned.” And then He promises that those who would believe should be endowed with miraculous gifts through the power of His name. The section concludes by representing on the one hand the Lord as “received up into heaven, and as seated on the right hand of God;” and on the other, the disciples “going forth and proclaiming the Gospel everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.”

If this narrative is correct, no other conclusion can be drawn than the one, that Jesus, who was crucified and buried, rose again from the dead early on the first day of the week, being the third after His death; and that the most unquestionable evidence was given of the reality of His resurrection. The disciples saw and heard the risen Jesus, and went forth to proclaim His Gospel in virtue of the commission which they received from Him immediately before He ascended on high.

3. We now come to the narrative of the Evan-

* πᾶσι τῇ κτίσει.
gelist Luke. Of him we need only say at present, that he was in all probability a Gentile convert, and that he became the devoted companion of the Apostle Paul. He tells us himself that he had not been an eyewitness of the Lord Jesus, but had received his information respecting Him from those who had been eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word; and that, after tracing everything from the beginning onwards, he had composed his treatise with the view of imparting accurate knowledge of those things which had been accomplished and were generally believed, to his friend Theophilus, and, as we may conclude, through him to other believers. Like Matthew and Mark, Luke narrates in detail the circumstances which attended the trial, the condemnation, and the crucifixion of Jesus; and then, as they also do, he relates those which occurred at the burial of His body.

"Joseph of Arimathea," he informs us, "one of the Sanhedrim, a good and just man, a man who," as a member of the Sanhedrim, "had not consented to the counsel and deed of the rest, a man also who was waiting for the kingdom of God," the new era which the promised Messiah was to introduce, "went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus; and," having obtained his request, "he took the body down and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb hewn out in stone," that is, in the rock, "where never before was any one laid." The burial, he adds, took place on "the day of preparation," that is, on the afternoon of the day immediately before the Sabbath; "and the Sabbath drew on." It was near sunset. "And the women also, who had come with Jesus from Galilee, followed" those who with Joseph carried the body to
the tomb, "and observed the tomb, and how the body was laid. And, returning to the city, they prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested, according to the commandment; but on the first day of the week, when it was deep dawn, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared."

The Evangelist then relates that when these women, some of whom he afterwards names, came to the tomb, "they found the stone rolled away from its entrance." It is worthy of notice that our Evangelist, when narrating the burial, said nothing respecting this stone—one instance out of many that occur to teach us the important lesson which so many seem to require, that silence on the part of a writer does not always or necessarily imply ignorance of facts. The women then, "finding the stone rolled aside, entered the tomb, but found not the body of the Lord Jesus." This circumstance threw them into great perplexity; and whilst they were in this state, "lo! two men appeared to them in shining garments; and as the women were afraid, and bowed their faces toward the earth, they said to them, Why are ye seeking the Living One among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered His words, and, returning from the tomb, they reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. These women were," says the Evangelist, "Mary Magdalene, Joanna" (that is, as we else-where learn from him, the wife of Chuza, Herod's
steward), "Mary of James," the mother of James, "and others," whose names he does not give. These were the persons who reported to the Apostles what had taken place. But the reports of these women "appeared to them as idle talk, and they believed them not. Peter, however," the Evangelist tells us without assigning any reason, "rising up, ran to the tomb, and, stooping down, sees the bandages* lying apart; and he went away to his place of abode,† wondering at what had happened."

As yet the Evangelist has related no appearance of Jesus to any one. But he now gives at great length an account of His appearance to two of the disciples—not, however, of the eleven, but of the rest—who happened to be journeying on that day, the first day of the week, to the village Emmaus, which was about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, and whose conversation was wholly employed about the recent events. "Whilst they were conversing with one another, and reasoning about these things, Jesus Himself drew near and walked with them. Their eyes, however, were holden, so that they could not know Him." Whether this withholding of their eyes from recognising Jesus, whom, as is implied, they had previously known, was owing to the engrossed state of their minds, or to a supernatural power exerted over them, or to the special form or appearance which Jesus assumed, is not expressly stated by the Evangelist; but it seems not improbable that all these three causes operated together to bring about the result. Jesus then "said to them, What words are these which ye are uttering to one another in such earnest disputation,‡ walking

* τὰ ὄδυνα. † ἀπήλθε πρὸς ἑαυτὸν. ‡ ὅσον ἀντιβάλλετε πρὸς ἀλλήλους περιπατοῦντες σκυθρωποί.
and sad? And one of them, Cleopas by name, answered, Art thou lodging in Jerusalem apart by thyself,* and hast not known the things which have happened there in these days? And He said, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But as for us, we were hoping † that He was the One who was about to redeem Israel. But indeed, even beside all this, He is now in the third day ‡ since these things took place. But, moreover, certain women of our company astonished us, having been at the dawn of the day at the tomb, and not finding His body, they came, saying that they had seen a vision of angels, who said that He is alive. And some of those with us went away to the tomb, and found it so as also the women had said, but Him they saw not. And He said unto them, O void of understanding,§ and slow in heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Messiah” — the Christ — “to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets in succession, He explained unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Him ”‖ — that is, the Messiah. “And they drew nigh unto the village whither they were going; and He made as though He were going farther, and they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far

* Συ μόνος παροικεῖς Ἰερουσαλήμ. † ἴδοις δὲ ἠλπίζομεν. ‡ τρίτην ταύτην ἠμέραν ἤγει. § ἀνόητοι. ‖ τὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ.
spent. And He went in to abide with them. And it came to pass whilst He was reclining with them, taking the bread, He blessed, and, breaking it, He gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognised Him; and, departing from them, He disappeared from their sight. And they said one to another, Was not our heart burning within us as He spake to us in the way, as He opened to us the Scriptures? And rising up the same hour, they returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those with them assembled together, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon”—to Peter. “And they related the things which had taken place in the way, and how He was known of them in the breaking of the bread. And whilst they were speaking of these things,* He Himself stood in the midst of them, and He says to them, Peace to you. But being terrified and affrighted, they supposed that they were beholding a spirit”—a spectre. “And He said to them, Why are you troubled, and why do questionings arise in your heart? See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see; for a spectre has not flesh and bones, as ye behold Me having. And having said this, He showed them His hands and His feet; and while they were yet unbelieving from joy, and wondering, He said to them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And taking it, He ate before them. And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which have been written in the Law of Moses,

* Ταῦτα δὲ αὐτῶν λαλοῦντων.
and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said to them, Thus it has been written, that the Messiah should suffer and rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins be proclaimed in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. And lo! I send forth the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high. And He led them out as far as to Bethany; and lifting up His hands, He blessed them. And it came to pass while He was blessing them that He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they, worshipping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.”

In his second treatise the Evangelist Luke gives, in the introduction, a brief account of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. In that account, however, which may be regarded as supplementary to the one in his Gospel, there are some additional circumstances of importance recorded. In particular, he there informs us of the exact length of the time which intervened between the resurrection and the ascension. “Jesus,” he says, “showed Himself alive to the Apostles, after His passion, by many definite proofs, during forty days, being seen of them, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” His last interview with them is thus minutely described: “And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father, which, He
said, ye have heard of Me. For John baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised in the Holy Ghost not many days hence. They then, being come together, asked Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this present time restore the kingdom to Israel? And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing up toward heaven, as He was going, lo! two men were standing by them in white apparel, who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking toward heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in the same manner as ye have seen Him going into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath-day's journey."

Such, then, are the narratives in which this Evangelist states the circumstances connected with the burial, the resurrection, and the ascension of Jesus. He records the evidence which overcame the unbelief of the disciples in the reports that first reached them—the evidence of sensible perception; and he particularly mentions the evidence which proved that the body of the risen Jesus was a real body—that very body which had been laid in the tomb, and which was still a body having flesh and bones, though at the same time it was a body over which Jesus possessed a
supernatural power. From these narratives what other conclusion can be drawn than that Jesus, who was put to death upon the cross, actually rose from the dead on the third day—the first day of the week—and that forty days after He ascended openly, in the sight of the disciples, into heaven?

4. We now come to the last Evangelic narrative, written, as, notwithstanding the strong denial of the adversaries of the Gospel, all existing evidence tends to prove, by that Apostle who enjoyed the special affection of Jesus, and was spared to a good old age to watch over the infant Church, and to witness the advancing progress of the Gospel. The Gospel narrative bears clear internal evidence of the authorship of John; and the main purpose for which it was written is also expressly stated. It was not his intention, says the beloved disciple, to attempt a complete record of the life of Jesus, but to select such facts from among those innumerable tokens which distinguished His wonderful ministry as would confirm the faith of those who believed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and would thus render them more and more partakers of that life which is to be obtained through faith in His name. We must avoid here all irrelevant discussion of the characteristics of this Gospel, and of its relation to the other Gospels. Whether the Apostle John had seen these Gospels or not, it seems undeniable that he was fully acquainted with the peculiar cycle of teaching which the first preaching of the commissioned Apostles embraced, and that whilst throughout his Gospel he kept his own main purpose in view, which was the setting forth of the glory of the Incar-
nate Word in the fulness of that grace and truth which even in His state of humiliation shone forth in all He said and did, he so constructs his record that it becomes a record additional and supplementary to the other three.

After relating at length the apprehension, the trial, the condemnation, and the crucifixion of Jesus, and specially the evidence which proved the reality of His death, he records the circumstances attending His burial. "Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, but up to this time a secret one, for he feared the unbelieving rulers, begged of Pilate to be allowed to take the body away. Obtaining his request, he came" to the place of crucifixion, "and removed the body." Another disciple, Nicodemus, who also was a secret one, and of whom on two other remarkable occasions, especially on the first, previous mention has been made in this Gospel, a member also, as well as Joseph, of the Sanhedrim, was present, and assisted at the interment. The latter had brought a large quantity of myrrh and aloes with the view of anointing the body of Jesus; and he and Joseph then, taking the body, "wrapped it in linen clothes with the spices, according to the usual Jewish mode of burying." The tomb in which the body was laid was a new one; it was in a garden near to the place of crucifixion; and "no one," adds the Evangelist, "had as yet been laid in that tomb." One reason, though not stated as the only one, why Joseph and Nicodemus laid the body of Jesus in this tomb, was because the day was the preparation-day, and only a short time now remained before the Sabbath would come on; and "because the sepulchre was nigh at hand."
"On the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene comes early, while it was yet dark, to the tomb, and sees the stone taken away from it." The Evangelist, in narrating the burial, made no mention of this stone; but from what he now says, we learn that he was aware of the fact that a stone had been rolled to the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene, on seeing that this stone had been removed from its proper place, immediately infers, not that Jesus was risen, but that the body had been removed from the tomb; and, with a mind impressed with this thought, she hastens in a state of excitement to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, whom, without naming him, the Evangelist repeatedly describes as "the disciple whom Jesus loved"—for whom Jesus had, as the word* means, a personal affection, and which disciple was evidently no other than the Evangelist himself. To these two Mary Magdalene runs, and tells them what she had seen, and also states her own inference as a matter of fact: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we"—not merely I, but we, evidently inclusive of others—"know not where they have laid Him." Then Peter and the other disciple immediately set out to the sepulchre. "They ran together," so full of anxiety were they, "and the other disciple outran Peter, and, coming first to the sepulchre, bends down, and sees the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. But Simon Peter, coming up after him, went into the sepulchre, and," not merely sees, but "looks at† the linen clothes lying." This strange fact, contradictory of Mary Magdalene's inference, evidently arrested his attention; for whilst looking at the clothes,

* ἐφίλει.  † θεωρεῖ.
he observed that the napkin with which the head of Jesus had been bound was not lying with the rest of the linen clothes, but had been folded together, as if with care, and left in a place by itself. "Then went in also the other disciple, he who had come first to the sepulchre, and on seeing these things he believed"—he believed, that is, on the ground of what he then saw, that Jesus had risen from the dead. The Evangelist, who is, in fact, here speaking of himself, states, apparently with a feeling of self-reproach, that neither he nor the other disciples as yet thoroughly "understood the Scripture," when its predictions concerning the Messiah implied "that He must rise from the dead." These two, Peter and the other disciple, then "went away to their places of abode."

"But Mary remained outside near the tomb, weeping; and in this state of grief she bent down into the tomb, and she beholds"—intently beholds*—"two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." The other disciple, who saw and believed, had evidently been as yet silent as to his own belief. Mary was still impressed with the conviction that the body had been violently removed. So overpowered was her mind with this sad thought, that even the strange sight of two men—not to say angels—sitting within the tomb, failed to arrest her attention, except for the moment. After replying to their question, "she turns round and beholds Jesus standing," probably at no great dis-

* θεωρεῖ.
tance; but she did not recognise Him, for the idea of His having risen never entered her mind. One thought, and only one, engrossed her whole soul, "His body had been taken away." Jesus, addressing her, said, just as the angels had said, "Woman, why weepest thou?" but He adds, "Whom seekest thou?" Mary at once imagines that this person is the keeper of the garden, and that probably he had something to do with the removal of the body; she therefore says, "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence"—she does not mention the name, but assumes that he knew whom she was seeking—"tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." The language of overwhelming grief, true to nature, is above all cold criticism: Only tell me where thou hast laid His body, and I will take it away. "Jesus says to her, Mary." The sound of her name, uttered, no doubt, in the well-known familiar manner, at once reaches her soul; and, turning full round, she utters the equally familiar word in her native tongue, "Rabboni, Master."

And now, as you may well suppose, a reaction of feeling in no ordinary degree took place, especially in such a mind as we have reason to believe that of Mary Magdalene's was—a mind which at one time had been fearfully disturbed, but had been reduced to calm and self-possession by the power of Jesus. She had received the evidence of sight and of hearing, but she would also have the evidence of touch. But this is at present withheld. "Touch Me not," said Jesus; "for," He adds, "I have not yet ascended to the Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God." Strange interpretations have
been given of these apparently simple words. These we cannot at present detail and discuss. But looking at the words themselves, and remembering Mary's peculiar state of mind, we apprehend that, in order to calm her excited feelings, and to disabuse her of the idea which seems to have rushed into her mind, that, now that He had risen, He would immediately ascend, He deemed it wise to forbid her to touch Him, at the same time assuring her that He has not yet ascended,—that He is not immediately to ascend; and whilst thus withholding from her the evidence of touch, He bestows on her the high honour of being His messenger to His disciples, whom He lovingly styles His brethren. "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend"—I am now soon to ascend—"unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God." Thus calmed and thus honoured, "Mary Magdalene," the first mortal herald of the resurrection of Jesus, "comes and tells the disciples that she has seen the Lord, and that He spake these things unto her." What effect her report produced on the disciples the Evangelist does not say.

He goes on to relate that, "on the evening of the same day, the first day of the week, when the doors of the room where the disciples were assembled were shut for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and says to them, Peace be unto you." It seems evident that the Evangelist represents this appearance as instantaneous and supernatural, and that therefore he states only the fact. The doors were closed, and yet Jesus all at once stood before the disciples. He immediately calmed their minds, naturally excited by so sudden and miraculous an appearance, by uttering that word
which assured them of His love: "Peace," every blessing, "be unto you. And having thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His side," still bearing the marks of the nails and the spear. "Then," it is added, "were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then Jesus again addressed them, saying, Peace be unto you: as the Father sent Me, even so send I you. And having said this, He breathed on them, and says, Receive the Holy Spirit: whose sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose sins ye retain, they are retained." The Evangelist then mentions that one of the disciples, Thomas, who was also called Didymus, was not present at that meeting; and that when the rest told him they had seen the Lord, he declared that "except he should see in His hands the print of the nails, and put his finger into the print of the nails, and put his hand into His side, he would not believe."

On the next first day of the week the disciples were again assembled, and Thomas was with them. The doors were again closed, and Jesus again appeared in the midst of them, and addressed to them His usual salutation, "Peace be unto you." Then specially addressing Thomas, He said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into My side, and be not unbelieving, but believing." Thomas, the Evangelist says, immediately exclaimed, "My Lord and my God"—words which evidently expressed not only his belief in the reality of the appearance of the risen Jesus, but, along with this, his belief that He, who thus appeared and thus manifested all knowledge, was more than man—was indeed his Lord and his God.
Jesus replied to His now convinced disciple in those ever-memorable words: “Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are those who have not seen, and have believed”—words which do not mean, as some have alleged, that Jesus pronounces those blessed who believe without any evidence whatever, but that those are blessed who having not, as Thomas now had, the evidence of sight, believe, as Thomas had not done, the testimony of competent and therefore credible witnesses.

The Evangelist seems to have at first concluded his narrative here, and, for reasons which afterwards occurred, to have added an appendix to it, in which he records what he calls a third appearance of Jesus; that is, as he expressly says, not His third appearance absolutely, but the third to His disciples when all or a number of them were present. I need not detail the circumstances of this appearance, which, we are told, took place at the Sea of Galilee, when seven of the disciples had returned to their trade of fishing. The whole circumstances are deeply interesting, especially those which refer to what took place between Jesus and Peter, who is now made to confess his love to Jesus as often as he had formerly denied any knowledge of Him, and who, after each confession, is solemnly recognised as a commissioned Apostle: especially also the prediction of Jesus respecting the martyrdom which Peter would have to suffer, and the somewhat obscure prediction respecting what was to happen to the other disciple—“the disciple whom Jesus loved, who also leaned on His breast at supper, and said, Lord, who is he that betrayeth Thee? It is this disciple,” says the Evangelist, “which testifieth
of these things, and wrote these things; and, we know," he adds, "that his testimony is true."

The conclusion to be drawn from the whole of this narrative is very evident.

The dead body of Jesus is taken down from the cross by Joseph and Nicodemus. It is laid by them in a new tomb within a garden near to the place of crucifixion.

Early on the morning of the first day of the week Mary Magdalene comes to the garden and finds the stone rolled away from the entrance of the tomb. She believes that the body has been removed, and she immediately hastens to inform Peter and John. These disciples run to the tomb, and John at last, carefully noticing not only the linen clothes themselves, but also how they are placed, concludes that the body has not been removed, but that Jesus has risen. He seems to be silent in respect to this conclusion. Peter and he leave the tomb and return home.

Mary remains, overwhelmed with grief on account of the removal, as she supposes, of the body of Jesus. The idea that He has risen never enters her mind. She sees two angels within the tomb. They speak to her, and she answers them according to her grief. She recognises them not as angelic messengers. She partly turns round, and sees a person standing at a little distance from her; she supposes him to be the gardener. The stranger asks her the cause of her grief, and whom she is seeking. She at once supposes that this is the person who has removed the body, and implores him to tell her where he has laid it. Immediately she hears the well-known ut-
terance of her own name, and at once recognises her Lord. She would have the evidence of touch also, but for wise and kind reasons is forbidden to touch Him, and is sent with soothing words to bear the tidings to the disciples. Whether they believed her or not is not said; probably they did not believe.

But Jesus appears to ten of them on the evening of the same day. His appearance is real, but the mode in which it is effected is supernatural. He gives them full evidence of the reality of His appearance, and of the identity of His body. They believe and rejoice. But one of them, Thomas, is not then present, and he refuses to credit the testimony of the others. He demands for himself the evidence of sight and touch.

Again the disciples are assembled, and Thomas is with them. Again Jesus appears in the same miraculous manner. He addresses Thomas, and offers him the evidence which he had demanded. Thomas is instantly convinced, and expresses his faith at once in the identity and the divinity of the risen Jesus.

On a third occasion Jesus appears to a number of the disciples in a different quarter. They see Him; they hear His words; they experience His miraculous power; they know that it is the Lord.

What other evidence could be demanded to attest the reality of His resurrection? How could the disciples believe aught else than that He who was thus seen by them, and who thus spoke to them, had indeed risen from the dead? Such, then, is the testimony of an eyewitness—of John, that disciple whom Jesus loved.
LECTURE X.

COMPARISON OF THE VARIOUS NARRATIVES OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

III. Having now examined at length the narratives of the four Evangelists separately, we proceed to bring these together, and, so far as we are able, to ascertain whether they are consistent with each other, and thus confirm each other's testimony.

If these narratives present us with true accounts of facts, then, however diversified in details, and however independent of each other they may be, they must be consistent with one another, whether we discern that consistency or not. That they are diversified in certain details, and are in one sense independent of each other—that is, that not one of them is the source whence the others were drawn—must be manifest to every reader. They evidently constitute four distinct and independent witnesses to the one great fact which is the subject of their testimony—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. But though this is the manifest character of these four narratives, it is no less certain that these witnesses must agree substantially in their testimony, and that we have a right to demand such agreement, and are therefore entitled to cross-examine them, so to speak, in order to ascertain
whether this is the case or not. Should we discover that, notwithstanding an agreement in the mere assertion of the fact of the resurrection, their separate accounts are not only diversified in details, but are inconsistent with each other—contradictory, in short, to one another—then their agreement in the mere general assertion would be of no avail, however difficult it might be for us to trace the origin of such an assertion. No doubt the alleged fact is a miraculous, a supernatural fact, and is therefore in itself incomprehensible by our limited reason—incomprehensible, that is, as to the mode of its occurrence. But that is not the question before us. That question refers solely to sensible occurrences; to things seen and heard and palpable; to things within the sphere of sense, and therefore so far within the sphere of human reason.

We cannot, if we would, avoid the inquiry on which we are now entering, and we ought not to avoid it; but we ought fearlessly, and yet humbly, to engage in it under the full conviction that, though we may not be able to discern the agreement of these witnesses in every part of their testimony, yet we shall not entirely fail, but shall see enough to convince us that, if we knew more than what they have recorded, we should perceive their entire agreement.

There are those, as we shall afterwards have to show, who profess to discover contradictions in these narratives, and who therefore conclude that they are wholly unworthy of credit. These are the open—the avowed adversaries of the Gospel.

Again, there are those who, believing in the truth
of the narratives, endeavour to bring them into perfect harmony with one another; and, further, who, believing that this result can be accomplished by what the narratives themselves contain, deem it a failure unless this result is arrived at. This is unreasonable; for a perfect agreement could be ascertained by us only on the supposition that, taking the Evangelical narratives as a whole, we knew that these contained a record of every event that occurred from the resurrection to the ascension of Jesus. Now, it is most manifest that these narratives, taken either separately or together, do not contain such a complete record; and therefore, to expect that from the partial accounts contained in them we can construct such a record, is, as we have said, most unreasonable. All that ought to be a priori expected is, that no real contradiction shall emerge, and that an agreement to a certain extent may be seen; whilst difficulties also may arise, which such partial accounts may occasion, but do not enable us to remove.

Again, we must mention that there are some, and these of no mean name in the Christian world, who, whilst professing to believe in each narrative separately, and therefore in the great fact to which each bears its independent testimony, go the length of utterly condemning all attempts to reconcile the different accounts, and of declaring "all such attempts to be fruitless." Such persons even profess to "see in the failure of these attempts strong corroboration of the truth of the Evangelic narratives," and seem to consider it a mark of superior wisdom to speak contemptuously of "the harmonisers." I cannot too earnestly guard you against such a hasty view as this,
which I regret to say is not a little current in our day. Such a view, whilst it seems not only not to shake, but even in some strange way to strengthen, the faith of its advocates, does, in my humble but decided opinion, tend to play into the hands of the adversaries of the Gospel, and to overturn the whole credit of the narratives in question. Avoid, I pray you, all hasty and rash views, whether on the one side or the other, on every subject, and especially on such a subject as the one before us. Be calm and patient, and here as elsewhere you shall find that, though you cannot know everything as you would wish to know it, you shall yet know enough to assure you that these accounts of the resurrection of Jesus, however varied in their details, present no contradiction, but being substantially at one in respect to those details which they give in common, are therefore such as to warrant us in concluding that they are equally at one even when we are unable to discern this unity in all its completeness. In short, let us only deal fairly with these narratives, not forcing them into agreement, but nevertheless trying to see whether the witnesses do not substantially agree.

Before entering on this comparative inquiry, there is another observation which we have to make, and it is this—that whilst we must avoid all attempts at forcing, so to speak, an agreement between the accounts, we are entitled to propose what may be only a conjecture, a mere supposition, when such conjecture is not unreasonable, in order to explain statements which at first sight seem to come into collision. Such a mode of procedure is perfectly legitimate in such a case as the present; and if the result should
only be to show that two apparently opposite statements may not be discordant or contradictory, even such a result is valuable, for it is sufficient to disprove the allegation of contradiction. Bearing these things, then, in mind, let us now proceed to the inquiry itself.

1. As to the death of Jesus and the burial of His body, these four narratives are in wonderful agreement—in such a state of agreement, indeed, that it seems scarcely necessary to prove it.

That Jesus was put to death after a public trial, and that He really expired on the cross, are facts admitted by the adversaries as well as by the advocates of the Gospel. A few persons, as we formerly remarked, have attempted, in order to explain away the reality of His resurrection, to broach the supposition of a swoon—the mere visible cessation of vital power, and not the cessation of life itself. But this supposition, formed for a special purpose, has met with little countenance even from the enemies of the Gospel, and is in direct opposition to the facts as stated by each Evangelist. We may therefore dismiss it as altogether untenable.

Again, as respects the important matter of the burial of the body, we have the most ample information; and the narratives, though somewhat varied in their details, are easily brought into agreement. Each of the Evangelists relates that Joseph of Arimathea was the person who went to Pilate and begged to obtain possession of the body of Jesus. Taking all the accounts together, we find that this Joseph was secretly a disciple of Jesus—that he was a man of wealth, a man of high character, and a member of the
Jewish Sanhedrim. Matthew tells us that the tomb in which the body was laid belonged to Joseph; that it was a new tomb—one recently made, and cut out in a rock; and that there was a large stone which exactly fitted the entrance or door of the tomb. Mark simply tells us that Joseph laid the body in a tomb which was hewn out of a rock, and that he rolled a large stone to the door of the tomb. Luke says that Joseph laid the body in a tomb that was hewn in stone, and adds, “wherein never man before was laid.” John gives us a little more information,—that Nicodemus, another secret disciple of Jesus, and also a member of the Sanhedrim, took part with Joseph in discharging these last offices to the body of Jesus, and that the tomb was in a garden nigh to the place of crucifixion—a circumstance which in some measure influenced Joseph to lay the body there. He also adds, that never man was yet laid in this tomb. The day also, and the exact time of the day, are mentioned by all the Evangelists. It was on the day of preparation—the day before the Sabbath—and towards the close of that day; that is, a short time before sunset. They all mention the wrapping of the body in linen clothes; and John informs us that Nicodemus brought myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight, and that he and Joseph wrapped the body in linen clothes with these spices, according to the Jewish custom in burying. Matthew tells us that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary—that is, the mother of James and Joses; Mark, that Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses; and Luke, that the women also, who came with Him from Galilee (some of whose names he afterwards as well
as before mentions), witnessed the interment. John does not mention the presence of any women. We thus see that with slight variations, and sometimes with the mention of more or fewer details, there is perfect agreement among the Evangelists in respect to the really momentous fact of the burial of the Body.

There is, however, one circumstance of an important nature which is recorded by Matthew alone. It is that of the application of the Jewish rulers to Pilate to set a watch or guard at the sepulchre. The conduct of Pilate during the trial of Jesus had not altogether satisfied these rulers, and they were, no doubt, much displeased at his having granted the body to Joseph, instead of allowing it to suffer the usual fate of those who were crucified. And now they either feared, or pretended to fear, from some things which they had heard Jesus say, that His disciples, having got possession of the body, would remove it out of sight, and spread the story that He had risen from the dead. Pilate allowed them to set a watch, and to do anything else they pleased to render the sepulchre sure. Now, since Matthew alone relates this circumstance, and also the subsequent conduct of the soldiers who formed the guard, and the means which the Jewish rulers adopted in order to suppress the testimony of the disciples about the resurrection of Jesus, a difficulty has been raised affecting the credibility of all the narratives. If the Jewish rulers had recourse to such means as Matthew mentions, to prevent fraud on the part of the disciples; if, notwithstanding the use of these means, Jesus really rose from the dead; and further, if such a story as that men-
tioned by Matthew was spread abroad, why, it is asked, did not the other Evangelists take notice of a circumstance bearing so powerfully on the evidence of the Resurrection?

Now, let it be observed that this matter respecting the setting of a watch was certainly one of no slight moment to the Jewish rulers. They had already resisted the clearest evidence of the claims of Jesus; and through their own suspicions, real or pretended (probably partly both), they were once more to be put on trial. They devised the very means for another trial of their own hearts. Yet so hardened were their hearts in unbelief, that instead of yielding to the testimony of the very men whom they themselves set as a watch around the tomb, they bribed those men to falsify their own testimony, and to spread, so far as they could, a false account of what had happened. But a little reflection will show that however important to the Jewish rulers the whole of this matter was, it is really in itself of minor importance, as bearing on the evidence for the reality of the resurrection of Jesus. The disciples were to believe, and did believe, in this fact on evidence presented to themselves, and they were to be witnesses, and were witnesses, to others, not of what others said, but of what they themselves had seen and heard. As the whole of this matter about the guard was one with which they had no direct concern, but one which they as well as others could know only by report; and, further, as in their narratives they evidently on purpose record only what fell under their own cognisance, or was reported to them by persons whom they knew; and, again, as the three Gospels in which no mention of this matter
is found were written expressly for the Christian Church in general, and chiefly for the Gentile Churches, we may perceive some not invalid reasons why it did not find a place in these Gospels. On the other hand, there is satisfactory ground for believing that Matthew wrote his Gospel specially for the Jewish converts; and as the false story set afloat was likely to affect these converts in particular, we cannot but discern the wisdom which guided this Evangelist to give to these converts a correct view of a matter which was chiefly to concern them. So far, I humbly think, we can meet the objection which has been raised in connection with this subject. We cannot always account for the silence of an historian in respect even to matters which appear to us of importance; nor are we to infer from such silence that the matters themselves were unknown to him. Matthew evidently felt it necessary, for the special purpose he had in view in composing his narrative, to meet the false report spread among the Jews. It fell in with his design to do so. The other three Evangelists wrote each with a purpose in view different from that which specially guided Matthew; and any mention of the circumstance may not have been called for by that special purpose. As to the fact itself we have the testimony of Matthew; and it might be also shown from the evidently restrained conduct of the rulers towards the Apostles, when these first proclaimed in Jerusalem itself the resurrection of Jesus, that they were not altogether easy in their unbelief. That the false story referred to by Matthew was spread abroad in an expanded form by the Jewish rulers, we have other and sufficient evidence.
2. We now proceed to compare the four narratives in reference to the resurrection itself, and specially the events connected with it on the day on which it took place.

They all agree that this great fact took place early on the first day of the week. None of the Evangelists professes to know at what particular moment on that eventful morning the body of Jesus was restored to life, or the manner in which He, once more quickening this body by His indwelling Spirit, came forth from the tomb. The Evangelists Luke and John alone mention that the linen clothes in which the body had been wrapped were left in the tomb, and John adds that these, and the napkin or bandage with which the head had been bound, were left in such a manner as to convince himself, when he and Peter saw them, that the body had not been taken away, but that Jesus Himself had risen from the dead, leaving these as tokens of His triumph over death and the grave. We shall have special occasion to note the power which the risen Jesus exerted over His risen body, a power which even during His ministry He had occasionally exerted, but now exerted more frequently and fully. It is not said that any mortal eye witnessed the resurrection itself, and in all probability no such eye did witness it. Nor was it necessary that any human being should have witnessed this event in order to establish the reality of the fact. The only thing necessary was, that Jesus when risen should be seen by competent witnesses; and that He was seen is what these four narratives unite in proving. But we cannot avoid remarking that had these narratives been based on fiction or delusion, we should in all
probability have seen proofs of man's ever-restless imagination in attempts to describe to us not merely the fact, but how the fact took place. The absence of all such attempts on such a theme furnishes no slight evidence to a thoughtful mind of the complete self-possession of the four Evangelical writers. The fact itself became first known to certain women who had, as we have already learned, carefully observed where the body was laid, and who had resolved to visit the tomb as early as they could on the first day of the week, in order still further to anoint it.

And now in regard to the visit of these women we require to observe with the utmost care every circumstance related by the Evangelists. That one should tell us more than the others—that each should give us only a partial account—can occasion no surprise. This diversity will only prove the independence of the narratives; and even should we experience some difficulty in harmonising the statements of the various circumstances which occurred, and which could not but give rise to unwonted excitement, we need not be astonished. But we may hope to bring the narratives together so far at least as to convince us that they are not irreconcilably at variance; and if we succeed even to this extent, we deprive the assertion of the adversary of all its force.

Matthew simply tells us that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went on that day, as it began to dawn, to see the sepulchre; Mark says that when the Sabbath was past—that is, after sunset on the previous day—Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him, and that very early in the
morning on the first day of the week they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun—that is, as this last phrase evidently here means, when the dawning of the day was beginning to appear. Luke relates that the women who came with Jesus from Galilee, among whom were, as he afterwards mentions, Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, witnessed the burial of the body, which took place towards the close of the preparation-day, and on their return to the city prepared spices and ointments; and that, resting on the Sabbath-day, they came very early in the morning of the day after, the first day of the week, with the spices. The clause in the received text stating that there were certain other women with them is now generally rejected, and is a clause of no moment, for Luke afterwards expressly says that there were other women with the three whose names, as we have mentioned, he particularises. John names only Mary Magdalene, who, he says, came on the first day of the week early, when it was yet dark, to the sepulchre. When indeed she hastened to tell Peter and John what she had seen and what she inferred, she uses the expression, "We know not where they have laid Him." But in her reply to the two men, as she supposed the persons to be whom she saw within the tomb, and who asked her why she was weeping, she uses a different expression, "I know not where they have laid Him." Without attaching any great importance to this point, I think the fair interpretation is, that Mary included others besides herself in the first expression, whilst in the second, through the absorbing grief which more and more possessed her soul, she refers to herself alone.
It is, however, to be noticed that the Evangelist John makes no mention of other women, and that it is only in this expression of Mary's that we have any intimation in his narrative that there were others besides herself.

Observe, then, that all the four Evangelists are at one in relating, that early, just as it was beginning to dawn, when it might be said that it was either light or dark, one or more women went to visit the sepulchre; that the first three name Mary Magdalene as accompanied by others; that Luke expressly names three women, with whom he also says there were others; and that John mentions only Mary Magdalene. Again, observe that Mark and Luke tell us the purpose which these women had in view—it was to anoint the body of Jesus; whilst Matthew and John make no mention of this purpose. Observe, further, that none of these women doubted that they would find the body of Jesus in the tomb. The idea of His resurrection had passed away from their minds, if ever it had found any real place there. The death of Jesus had completely overwhelmed them. They still believed in Him; but how He, the Messiah, should have died, was what confounded their minds, preoccupied as these were with erroneous views of the Messiah's kingdom. Why John restricted himself to the sole mention of Mary Magdalene, will be noticed by-and-by. Meanwhile, assuming that this Evangelist does not contradict the other three in this matter, we remark that a band of devoted women set out early on the morning of the first day of the week to the sepulchre, in order to anoint more carefully, than had been done in the hurry of the evening of the burial,
the body of Jesus. Among these women was Mary Magdalene. Mark alone informs us of a very natural occurrence. These women had witnessed the placing of the large stone by Joseph to close up the entrance into the tomb; and, as they were going, they began to ask one another how they could get this stone rolled aside, so that they might reach the body. Mark, Luke, and John simply tell us the fact that the stone had been rolled away. Mark, who describes the women as asking one another the question now mentioned, adds, that when they were yet at some distance from the tomb, they looked up and saw that the stone had been rolled away. They saw it at that distance, "because it was very great." But Matthew, inasmuch as the rolling away of this stone was connected with what he alone records, the stationing of a guard at the sepulchre, informs us how it was rolled away. "Behold, there was a great earthquake"—a great shock; "for the angel"—or an angel—"of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers"—the guard—"did shake, and became as dead men." All the four, you will observe, mention that the stone had been rolled away before the women came to the tomb. Now, who rolled it away? The story spread abroad by the Jewish rulers makes the soldiers, who had been stationed at the tomb expressly to prevent the body being stolen, say what implies that the disciples had come and rolled away this stone and carried off the body while they, the soldiers, were asleep. This story bore falsehood on its face. Still, Matthew,
who knew that this story was spread abroad among the Jews—especially among the foreign Jews—was led to state the true, though superhuman, manner in which the stone had been removed from its place. Carefully notice that it is not said that this stone was so removed in order to allow the quickened body of Jesus to escape from the tomb. We believe He had risen before this time, at a moment and in a way not recorded. The stone was removed in order to lay open the tomb to mortal sight, and removed in the way it was in order to free the tomb from the presence of these soldiers, and to give one more proof to the Jewish rulers of the reality of the claims of Jesus.

At what time this event took place—whether before the women left the city for the tomb, or whilst they were on the way—it is difficult to determine. It seems absolutely certain that these women were not aware that a guard of soldiers had been stationed at the tomb; for if they had known this they must have felt hopeless of accomplishing their purpose. It would appear to be equally certain, that if the event happened whilst they were on the way, they were at such a distance that it made no distinct impression at the time upon their minds. Matthew, indeed, introduces the mention of the earthquake in order to account for the removal of the stone, and also for the departure of the soldiers, and the subsequent conduct of the Jewish rulers. And here we may allude to the fact that, in perusing these Evangelical narratives, we are apt very naturally to read each as presenting us with an account of events happening in unbroken succession, without any intervening time during which other events not mentioned in the particular narrative may have oc-
curred. Matthew's narrative, for example, is very brief; and when reading it by itself, we might suppose that the women experienced the shock, and also witnessed the angelic appearance and the terror and flight of the soldiers, and actually came up to the tomb whilst the angel was sitting upon the stone; and, moreover, that he, sitting there, addressed them in the words recorded. Matthew's account does not necessarily imply such conclusions; but had we it alone, these are the conclusions which most probably we should have formed. The other three Evangelists, however, state facts inconsistent with such conclusions; and therefore we are compelled to inquire anew into the statements of Matthew, in order that we may see to what extent we must modify our first conclusions, and if possible reduce all the statements to harmony.

Now, Mark tells us expressly that the women, after expressing to one another the difficulty which forcibly occurred to them about removing the stone, looked up and saw that it was removed; and the reason which he gives for their being able to see that such was the case, implies that they were as yet at some distance—perhaps not great, for it was early morning—from the tomb. Luke simply tells us that when the women came to the tomb, they found the stone rolled away—a statement which harmonises completely with Mark's. John, in the same manner, says that Mary Magdalene, on coming to the tomb, saw that the stone was taken away from its entrance. Hence we receive information which enables us to re-examine Matthew's account, and we now see that the women could not have witnessed the events which took place
when the stone was rolled away and the soldiers fled. We also perceive that Matthew does not expressly say that they did witness these events, or come up to the tomb whilst the angel was sitting upon the stone. Nay, when we carefully consider the address of the angel to these women, we see that he is then within the tomb; for he invites them to enter and see the place where the Lord lay—words which, though not altogether inconsistent with the supposition that the angel is outside the tomb, do certainly better accord with the supposition that he is now within it; so that he can literally say, "He is not here: come, see the place where the Lord lay."

But, again, judging from Matthew's narrative alone, we might infer that these words were addressed by the angel to the women as soon as they reached the tomb and were looking into it. Mark's narrative, taken by itself, seems also to favour such a conclusion. The women, entering the tomb, saw, as they at first thought, a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment, and they were affrighted. Luke's narrative gives a little more information on this point. The women enter the tomb and search for the body, but find it not. They were greatly perplexed by this circumstance, and whilst they were in this state of perplexity, not knowing what to think or what to do, for such is the meaning of the Evangelist's word* indicating their state of mind, "behold two men," as they seemed to be, "appeared to them"†—not stood by them, as our version has it—"in shining garments." Some time, then, however short, did intervene between their arrival

* διαπορείσθαι.  † ἐπίστησαν.
at the tomb and their entrance into it, and the appearance of the angel, or as it is in Luke, of the two angels.

We thus already learn that our conclusion, founded on Matthew's narrative alone, requires to be modified by what Mark tells us; and, further, that the conclusion which we might draw from both these narratives must also be somewhat modified by what Luke tells. Need we, then, wonder that John, who wrote last of all, should give us a little more information which may require us, not to alter any fact stated by the other three, but to alter or rather to modify still further the conclusion which we ourselves drew from their combined statements? Mary Magdalene was unquestionably one of the women who came together to the tomb. She did not come alone, but in company with the others. Now, John, purposing to relate specially for a very evident reason, as his narrative shows, this woman's conduct, and what happened to her on this eventful day, restricts his narrative to this purpose, and tells us that when she saw the stone was rolled away, she hastened—she ran—to the house or lodging where she knew she would find Peter and John, or one of them at least—probably the latter, for with him there lived also one who could not but feel a profound interest in the events of that day. It is clear that Mary Magdalene did not enter the tomb along with the other women. They sought for the body, and did not find it, and were then in a state of utter perplexity. Mary Magdalene, more rapid in her conclusions, at once inferred, not that Jesus had risen, but that His body had been taken away. Impressed with this instantaneous conviction, she imme-
diately ran from the tomb to inform Peter and the other disciple.

We seem now, with this fourfold narrative before us, to be able to give some harmonious account of all these varied statements—an account which is at least so accordant with all the facts as to disprove the charge of contradiction. A number of women, devoted to Jesus, after making preparation for anointing His body, repair early to the sepulchre. As they are advancing on their journey, they begin to ask themselves how they will succeed in getting the stone removed. Looking up, they see, though at some distance, that it is removed; and when they reach the sepulchre, they find that such is the case. Mary Magdalene immediately concludes that the body of her Lord has been taken away, and, without a word to the rest, starts off and hastens to where Peter and John are residing. The rest of the women enter the tomb, and are for a time perplexed at not finding the body there, when angelic beings appear to them, of whom one probably is the speaker.

It was, then, after Mary Magdalene had left the garden in haste to inform Peter and John, that the rest of the women entered the tomb, and were addressed by the angel. The address is recorded by each of the first three Evangelists, and is substantially the same in each narrative. In Matthew it is, “Fear not ye: for I know that ye are seeking Jesus who has been crucified. He is not here: for He is risen as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told
In Mark it is, “Be not affrighted: ye are seeking Jesus of Nazareth who has been crucified: He is risen; He is not here: behold the place where they laid Him. But go away, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there ye shall see Him, as He said unto you.” In Luke, who makes mention of two angels, both these are represented as addressing the women; and the address is given thus: “And as they,” the women, “were afraid, and were bowing down their heads towards the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living—Him that liveth—among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.” The Evangelist adds, that the women remembered these words. Nothing can be more clear than that these three accounts of the angel’s address, whilst varying in one or two minor details, and thus shown to be independent accounts, are, not only in substance but in the leading details, the same. Jesus had foretold His resurrection on the third day, and had promised to meet His disciples in Galilee. The women, as well as the disciples, stunned by the intimation of His approaching death, the thought of which had been their chief stumblingblock, were unable to understand what He meant when He spake of His resurrection, and seem to have for the time wholly forgotten the words. The angel, whilst assuring them that He was risen, reminds them of the words of Jesus, and tells them to go and inform the disciples, that, according to His promise, He was going before them—even as a shep-
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herd before his flock—into Galilee, where they would see Him. These words do not necessarily imply that they should not see Him anywhere else than in Galilee, but they mean that He would specially meet with them there.

Having received this testimony to the resurrection of Jesus, and also this message for the disciples, the women proceed in haste to deliver the message. And here again we require to notice very carefully the statements in each of the three narratives. John, as has already been said, omits all mention of these women, restricting his narrative to Mary Magdalene, who was now alone on her way to himself and Peter. Matthew, after mentioning the quick departure of the women from the tomb, in a state of mind in which fear and great joy alternately held place, and their running to carry word to the disciples, says nothing as to their actual coming to the disciples, or as to the manner in which their message was received. But he immediately relates that Jesus met these women and saluted them, and that they, coming up to Him, held Him by the feet and worshipped Him; and that Jesus calmed their minds, and also gave them a message to His disciples. There is a clause in the received text which would indicate that this took place when they were on the way to the disciples with the angelic message; but this clause has little authority, and the text simply reads, "And lo! Jesus met them, saying, All hail; and they, coming up, held Him by the feet and worshipped Him. Then saith Jesus unto them, Fear not: go away, tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me." This address evidently repeats the angelic message.
Now, the question is, when did this event occur? Did Jesus meet these women whilst they were on the way from the tomb to the disciples? or did this meeting take place at some time, however short, after they had delivered the first message? In short, were they sent a second time with a message—now not from an angel, but from Jesus Himself? Let us examine the narratives of Mark and Luke on this important point.

I have already noticed the peculiar state of Mark's narrative of the resurrection. It consists of two sections, the first embracing the first eight verses, and the second the rest of the chapter. The first ends abruptly, just when the Evangelist is beginning to record the departure of the women from the tomb to the disciples. "And going out," he says—that is, going out of the tomb—"they fled from the tomb. Trembling and amazement held"—possessed—"them, and they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid." Such is the abrupt conclusion of the first section; and so far as its statements go, we only learn that the women fled from the tomb in a state of great terror, and that they did not speak to any one—that is, to any one whom they met. But it is not said that they did not go to the disciples and deliver the message which they had received. In short, from the manner in which this section ends we learn nothing more about the proceedings of these women. In the second section, which we consider as having been appended either by Mark himself or by some one of entire credit in the Apostolic Church, there is a brief summary given of the proofs of the resurrection. The writer resumes the subject, and begins by men-
tioning the appearance of Jesus, not to the women of whom we have been speaking, but to Mary Magdalene, expressly stating that Jesus appeared to her first, and that she went and told this fact to the disciples, and that they did not believe her report. We thus learn nothing from Mark's narrative, whether in the first or the second section, respecting the other women, beyond what has been already noticed. But we learn the important fact, that Mary Magdalene was the first to whom Jesus appeared; for though a different interpretation of the word "first" is perhaps possible, as meaning only the first of the three appearances recorded in this section, we apprehend that, unless we are compelled by other statements to adopt such an interpretation, the natural interpretation is to regard the writer as meaning the first absolutely.

In this state of matters, then, let us examine the narrative of Luke. He relates that the women, on receiving the angelic message, returned and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. He makes no mention of the appearance of Jesus to these women. But after specifying the names of some of the women, and taking no notice of the fact which John's narrative leads us to recognise, that Mary Magdalene, though she was with the rest at first, had left them at the tomb, he mentions that the women reported to the Apostles what had happened to them, but that their words were treated as idle tales; that, in short, the Apostles did not believe the testimony of the women. Luke evidently combines the two distinct reports of Mary Magdalene and of the other women; for after saying that the
Apostles did not believe the women, he adds, what at first sight appears to contradict this, at least in some measure, that "Peter rose up and ran to the sepulchre; and that, stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed to his own abode,* wondering at that which was come to pass." We shall have to notice this statement again: meanwhile we see how it was that Luke mentions Mary Magdalene as one of the women who came and told the Apostles what had happened. He blends, as we have said, in one statement, two different transactions. But Luke, when relating the conversation between Jesus and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, represents Cleopas as saying this among other things, "Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, who were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive." There is no mention by Cleopas that the women, whether Mary Magdalene or the rest, on first bringing their reports, had seen Jesus Himself. The contrary is implied; and so far as Cleopas knew, no one had as yet seen Jesus; for he adds, "And certain of them who were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but Him they saw not." This was, according to Cleopas, the chief defect in the evidence as yet received. No one, whether of the women or of the disciples, had, according to him, as yet seen Jesus.

The conclusion, then, seems to be, that it was not when the women were on the way from the tomb to

* ἀπῆλθε πρὸς ἑαυτὸν.
tell the disciples what they had seen and what the angel had said to them, that Jesus met them; but that this meeting took place after they had reported the message to the disciples, who rejected their testimony, and treated their words as the words of persons under delusion. The probability is, that these women, so contumaciously treated by the disciples, went back in a melancholy state of mind towards the tomb, and that it was then that Jesus met them and consoled them, and gave them a message from Himself, corresponding exactly to the one which had been rejected, but still conveying an expression of His sympathy with His sorrowing, though unbelieving, disciples: "Go away; tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me."

This appearance, then, of Jesus to these women, we conclude, for the reasons stated, took place after they had conveyed the angelic message to the disciples. It also, we at the same time conclude, took place after His appearance to Mary Magdalene, to whose proceedings we would now draw your special attention. Whilst her name occurs first in the lists of the women given by the first three Evangelists, it is John alone who informs us of the manner in which she acted, and of the events which befell her on this eventful day. His narrative has all the appearance of one supplementary to the others. It is evident from what John relates, that though she had come with the other women to the sepulchre, she did not enter it along with them, but at once inferring from the removal of the stone that the body of Jesus had been taken away, instantly set off to inform Simon Peter and John. These two disciples were at the time
living in a different place from the rest. John would appear to have had a house or lodging by himself, for we know that he took the mother of Jesus away with him to his own home. Whether Peter was for the time also living in the same house, or was there merely on that day, we cannot tell; but Mary Magdalene seems to have known that they were living either in the same house, or not far from each other. To these two disciples, then, she went alone; and we need not repeat the circumstances which occurred. We have already noticed these; and at present we are simply considering whether the different narratives are consistent with each other. Now Matthew, whose narrative is so brief, tells us nothing more about Mary Magdalene than that she, accompanied by the other Mary, went early to see the sepulchre; and looking solely at his narrative, we might suppose that these were the only women who did so, and also that Jesus appeared to these two women together. But Mark gives additional details. He mentions only the two named by Matthew as present at the burial; but he adds Salome to these two when he names the women who went on the morning of the first day of the week to visit the sepulchre and to anoint the body of Jesus. Judging solely from the first section of his narrative, we might again suppose that these three women entered the sepulchre, and saw the angel, and returned with his message to the disciples. But in the second section there is a circumstance mentioned which obliges us to modify this conclusion, for it is said that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Consequently she must have been alone when this appearance took place. No mention is made of
the appearance recorded by Matthew to the other women. Now, when we examine Luke's narrative, we find that, along with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, Joanna also went, besides other women whose names are not given. Taking the three narratives together, we learn that there were not only the four women whose names are given, but also others with them; so that we conclude there were several more than four who went together on that morning to the sepulchre. Luke further tells what has been already noticed, that these women brought a report to the disciples, which was not believed by them, but was treated as an idle tale; and yet he says, in apparent opposition to this statement, that Peter was so impressed by the report that he arose and ran to the sepulchre; that, stooping down, he saw the linen clothes lying by themselves; and that he departed, filled with wonder at what had happened.

There is a manifest difficulty on the face of this part of Luke's narrative. The disciples, spoken of as a body, disbelieved the report, and treated it as an idle tale. Now Peter for one did not so treat it; for he instantly ran away to the sepulchre. The apparent discrepancy here is most manifest; and it is only John who gives us the means by which it may be at once reconciled. Luke blends, as we have already said, two distinct reports in one. All that he states is true; but his statement does not enable us to see how both parts are true and consistent with each other. John tells us that Mary Magdalene alone came to Peter and the other disciple, as he designates himself. Hence it was the rest of the women who came with
their special message to the disciples as a body. Peter, accompanied by John, runs to the sepulchre, and sees, according to John, exactly what Luke relates about the linen clothes. John tells us that he himself inferred what had happened, but he says nothing about Peter's conclusion. From his silence on this point we may conclude that the effect upon Peter's mind from what he saw was not that belief at which he himself had silently arrived, but that wonder of which Luke makes mention. Again, John tells us that Jesus did appear to Mary Magdalene alone, and as this is declared by Mark, or at least by the credible writer of the second section of the conclusion of his Gospel, to have been His first appearance, so we may conclude that it was prior to that appearance with which the other women were favoured. Hence all the seeming discrepancy is reconciled, and that by no violent interpretation, nor by the suppression of a single fact recorded in any of the narratives, but simply by bringing them together, and listening to the varied information which each imparts.

As yet, however, only Mary Magdalene and the other women had seen the risen Jesus; and it is stated that the twofold testimony was as yet producing no other effect on the minds of the majority, at least, of the disciples than that of astonishment. They were overwhelmed with grief, and would not believe the women, and especially Mary Magdalene, when she assured them that Jesus was alive, and had been seen by her. But as the day advanced, other testimonies were added to those of the women. Matthew makes no mention of these. In the second section of Mark's narrative we are told that, after His appearance to
Mary Magdalene, Jesus "appeared in another form"—in a form different from His former usual one—"to two of them"—that is, of the disciples—"as they walked, and went into the country; and that these two," who, it is implied, recognised Him at last, "went and told it to the rest of the disciples; but that neither believed they them." John makes no mention of this event, but Luke gives a lengthened and most deeply-interesting account of it. We do not again detail what he says. An attempt has been made to create a discrepancy between what is said by Mark as to "the other or strange form" in which Jesus appeared to the two, and what Luke alleges as the reason why these two did not at first recognise Jesus—"their eyes were holden that they should not know Him." The attempt is really frivolous, for both expressions may fairly be regarded as meaning the same thing. The fact that these two did not recognise Jesus might be owing to the form—the unusual form in certain respects—which He then assumed; and to express the whole of this fact, Luke might fairly say that "their eyes were holden that they should not know Him." Never let us descend to frivolous criticism. We have thus a perfect agreement as to this appearance of Jesus between Mark and Luke, and there is nothing in the other two narratives opposed to it.

We cannot here avoid remarking, that if ever there was a narrative bearing internal evidence of its historic truth, of its being a narrative of real facts, that narrative is the one given by Luke, detailing the conversation between these two disciples and the risen Jesus. Fiction or delusion never produced such a narrative as this. It bears the true stamp of reality
on its very face. How must the hearts of these two men have burned whilst the wondrous stranger laid open to them the meaning of the Scriptures, and showed them out of these Scriptures that it behoved the Messiah—the Christ—first to suffer the very things which they told him Jesus, whom they once believed to be the Messiah, had suffered; and then, after suffering these things, to enter into His glory! Study over and over again this most precious narrative, and meditate upon it, till you also feel the words of the risen Jesus kindling your hearts.

As soon as Cleopas and his fellow-traveller recognised the risen Jesus, who instantly withdrew Himself from their sight, they returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven (as the chosen disciples were now termed, Judas having gone to his own place) assembled, and also other disciples, styled by Luke "those who were with them." Who these others were, we are not informed by the Evangelist. In his second treatise, when he mentions a meeting of the eleven and others, which took place on the day of the ascension and immediately after that event, he tells us that, besides the eleven, whose names he gives, there were present "the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brethren." All we can say is, that some of these, and probably others, were present on this occasion also, brought together by the repeated marvellous accounts of the day. It was now evening. When the two from Emmaus came into the room where the eleven and others were met, they found them in a state of high excitement, owing, it would appear, to an event which had just been told them, but of which no further mention is made in any of the narratives—namely, to an
appearance of Jesus to Simon Peter—an appearance which must have taken place not long before, and which Peter now, no doubt, reported to the rest. The two found them, says Luke, assembled, and saying, probably aloud, to one another, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." Up to the time when this testimony was given, they had received testimony only from the women—from Mary Magdalene on the one hand, and from the company of the rest of the women on the other. This testimony they had not believed; but now they have the testimony of one of their own number, of Simon Peter himself; and when he told that he had actually seen the Lord, their unbelief seems for the moment to have given way, and they burst forth, just as the two arrived, in the exclamation, that now all doubt was removed: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." The Apostle Paul, we need scarcely remind you, refers to this appearance as one of the visible proofs of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus. The two now related the events which had occurred to them in their journey, and how Jesus was known of them in breaking of bread. Luke does not say how their report was received, but Mark tells us that once more unbelief resumed its sway in their troubled minds. "Neither," says he, "believed they them." Nothing but the actual visible presence of Jesus seemed to be capable of producing lasting conviction.

And now we are told by Mark and Luke and John, that whilst they were thus assembled, and were alternately believing and unbelieving, Jesus Himself appeared amongst them. This appearance of Jesus
on the evening of the day of His resurrection—the first day of the week—is not recorded by Matthew, who only mentions an appearance—the one promised by Jesus before His death, and intimated by the angel, and again promised by Jesus—to the eleven in Galilee. In the second section of Mark's narrative there is also only one appearance to the eleven mentioned; and although it is blended with what was perhaps said in all its fulness by Jesus at a subsequent appearance, yet we apprehend it is to this, the first appearance of Jesus to the eleven, that the writer specially refers; for he says, "After that"—after His appearance to the two who were going into the country—"He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them who had seen Him after He was risen." This address evidently implies that Jesus then appeared for the first time to His assembled disciples. We here learn that the events of the day had been so ordered for this, as well as other reasons, to try the hearts of these His chosen disciples. They had been tried, and found wanting; for they had received valid and sufficient evidence, and yet had not believed.

That Luke refers to this appearance on that evening is abundantly manifest; for he tells us, that whilst these men—the two from Emmaus—were speaking, and whilst the eleven, or most of them, were probably exhibiting signs of unbelief, He Himself stood in the midst of them, and said, "Peace be unto you;" and that He then, as we have before observed, endeavoured to calm their minds, affrighted by His sudden appearance, and to convince them by sensible proofs that
though He showed Himself as having a superhuman power over His body, yet it was a real body, having flesh and bones.

Whether the remainder of the recorded address was delivered at this or at a subsequent appearance, we cannot pronounce for certain; for we have repeatedly seen that it was not unusual for these first three Evangelists to blend together either events or addresses which, though strictly happening or delivered at different times, were so allied that they might in a brief narration be recorded together. But it is by no means improbable that substantially the same instructions were given by Jesus at every appearance to His disciples. It was always, we are informed by Luke in his second treatise, about the things of the kingdom of God—of the new dispensation—that He spake to them. We need not, therefore, be surprised that these Evangelists, purposely giving only a brief summary of events, blended together things which, though occurring at different periods, were substantially the same on each occasion.

John in his narrative gives us additional information in respect to this first appearance of Jesus to the eleven. After mentioning that Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken to her these things—the things recorded by John—and without telling us, what we learn from Mark and Luke, that her testimony was not believed, he records, as we have seen when examining his narrative by itself, the exact time when, and circumstances in which, Jesus for the first time appeared to the assembled disciples. We need not repeat the details, but we here see a perfect
agreement, as respects this first appearance, between Mark and Luke and John. Each Evangelist gives us some information peculiar to himself. Mark, or whoever wrote the second section, tells us that the disciples were sitting at meat; Luke, that Jesus suddenly appeared whilst the two from Emmaus were speaking; and John, that Jesus came and stood in the midst of them, though, for a reason assigned, the doors were shut or closed. Mark relates that He upbraided them for their unbelief; Luke states at length how He endeavoured to relieve their terror and doubts, and to convince them that it was He Himself who now stood before them; and John, whilst implicitly confirming these two previous statements, when he records that Jesus showed them His hands and His feet, goes on to relate His special bestowal upon them of the Holy Spirit. All these statements, though varied, are perfectly reconciled, and mutually support each other.

John further mentions, what neither Mark nor Luke records, that one of the eleven was not present on that evening, and how this unbelieving disciple was led at a subsequent meeting to full faith in the risen Lord. He then mentions an appearance of Jesus to seven of the disciples at the Sea of Galilee, and with the interesting account of what took place on that occasion concludes his Gospel.

Matthew concludes his Gospel with an account of the fulfilment of the promise that Jesus would meet His disciples, His brethren, in Galilee. This was evidently a most solemn meeting; and it manifestly took place shortly before the ascension of Jesus. The eleven were present, and in all probability the "more than
five hundred" mentioned by Paul were also present; for we are told that when those present saw Him, they worshipped, but some doubted. The eleven would no longer doubt, but it may have been that there were present some who were not yet convinced, and who may therefore at first have doubted whether it was He. On that memorable occasion Jesus proclaimed His sovereignty over heaven and earth, and commissioned His disciples—especially the eleven, for they only are specially mentioned by Matthew—to go and make disciples of all nations. But Matthew does not say that this was the last appearance of Jesus to the disciples. He makes no mention of His ascension, though that is implied in the words with which he represents Jesus as concluding His address.

Mark records no other appearance but that one which took place on the evening of the day of the resurrection. It is not improbable that the address, which he records after mentioning this appearance, was delivered at a subsequent time; for it also bears the marks of a farewell address. Still, for reasons already assigned, it may not have been the last address given by the Lord. The Gospel concludes with a simple statement of the ascension of Jesus to the right hand of God, and with another statement as to the labours of the commissioned Apostles, and of the signs or miraculous proofs with which the Lord, according to His promise, confirmed their word.

Luke gives us information additional to that given by the other three. After mentioning the first appearance to the disciples on the evening of the first day, and the manner in which Jesus convinced them of the reality of His risen body, he records an address
which may in its substance have been delivered then and at subsequent appearances (for he himself tells us elsewhere that during forty days there were such appearances), and which, beyond all question, would be given in His last interview with them. He then simply mentions that Jesus led the disciples out as far as to Bethany, and, lifting up His hands, blessed them; and that whilst He was in the act of blessing them He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. He concludes by telling us that the disciples worshipped Him who thus ascended on high, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.

We have already considered the details recorded by Luke in his introduction to his second treatise. These give us more information, especially as regards the time which intervened between the resurrection and the ascension, but are in no respect discordant with the brief narratives contained in the four Gospels. The fullest information given has reference to the events which happened on the day of the resurrection itself; and may we now not conclude by saying, that in respect to these most momentous events we have found the four Evangelists at perfect harmony, so far as we are furnished with facts which enable us to pronounce a judgment on so infinitely important a subject? Amidst much diversity substantial unity prevails. With one combined testimony they clearly prove that "the Lord is risen indeed."

But we shall refer to this united testimony on another occasion.
LECTURE XI.

STRAUSS ON THE BURIAL OF JESUS.

Having considered the several narratives which give us an account of the facts proving the resurrection of Jesus, and having also endeavoured to compare these narratives among themselves so as to determine whether they are consistent with one another, we might now proceed to draw the conclusion which the evidence presented to us seems to warrant. But before formally doing this, it becomes us to hear whether any objections have been taken to these narratives, and, if so, carefully to consider their nature and worth. As it ought to be our sole wish to ascertain the truth, and as the Gospel of Jesus Christ, however precious it may appear to us, can be of no real value unless it be true, and as the truth of this Gospel rests pre-eminently on the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, so we cannot possibly be too anxious to examine with the utmost impartiality the evidence, on the one hand, which is presented in support of that fact, and the objections, on the other hand, which have been taken to that evidence. After such an examination it rests with us individually to make up our minds, and to determine, each for himself, what our conclusion shall be.
In two works recently published we have the objections to the evidence in favour of the resurrection stated to us in as complete a form as they have ever been, or probably can be, stated by any one. I allude to the works of Strauss and Renan. The former, in his recent work, entitled 'The Life of Jesus for the German People,' has stated these objections in an elaborate form; and the latter, in his second book on the origin of Christianity, which he entitles 'The Apostles,' has also presented these objections, though in a somewhat different shape, yet in a manner calculated to produce no slight impression on the reader's mind. I believe, then, that in these two works, and especially in the one by Strauss, we may find all that has been, or probably can be, said against the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, and that when we have examined what they have to object against this alleged fact, we may consider that we have the case fully before us.

Now, in order to do justice to the subject, we must submit to exercise patience in listening to and examining these objections. It may be irksome—nay, exceedingly painful—to us to have to dwell upon such objections; and we may often feel that we might fairly dismiss them in a summary manner. But on such a subject as this we must not adopt such a course. We must allow the objector to choose his own way in stating what he has to say, and we must follow him in his course, and honestly consider whether what he says has weight or not. It is for him to select the ground on which he is to stand; and there is no help for us but to take our place beside him, and argue the question with all possible
fairness. Whilst, then, we might, I think, legitimately in one respect decline to reason on this subject with either of these men, because they both assume the impossibility of a miraculous event—the impossibility of such a fact as that of the resurrection of one who has really died—yet, inasmuch as the mere possibility of the fact does not imply its reality, and, further, since by adducing objections to the evidence given in support of the resurrection they do virtually abandon their assumed principle, and so far come over to our ground, we are bound to meet them, and patiently to hear whatever they may have to say.

For these reasons, then, I intend to enter fully into this momentous part of our inquiry, and to consider minutely the portions of the two books referred to, but specially the portion of Strauss’s work devoted to our subject. And I have no doubt that you will see the propriety of our doing so, and that you will kindly give me your patient attention. It is no pleasure to me to dwell on objections such as these men have brought forward, and most gladly would I go on to subjects more in unison with our views and feelings. But when we engage in any work we must do it thoroughly, otherwise it had been better and wiser to have let it alone.

Without further preliminary remarks, then, let us proceed to hear and examine the objections of Strauss to the reality of the resurrection of Jesus. He expresses himself, as I formerly noticed, as perfectly aware of the momentous nature of the subject. I shall not again quote his words to that effect. He knows and admits that the whole character of Chris-
tianity is involved in the question—that, in short, this question of the resurrection of Jesus is decisive, one way or the other, of the divine or human origin of the Gospel. He enters upon the inquiry with his mind fully open to its importance, and he expresses a resolution, as we also formerly remarked, to conduct it in the most impartial manner. But, whilst we give him credit for such expressions, and must deal with him as one who has so expressed himself, we cannot forget, and ought not to forget, that with him the inquiry is really ended before it has begun. A resurrection from the dead is with him an impossibility, not merely, as we at once allow, in the ordinary course of nature, or in respect to the finite power of man, but in every sense—an utter impossibility in any aspect whatever. Now, we cannot forget, and, as I have said, we ought not to forget, that such is with him a fixed and unalterable principle of belief. So that whilst we will listen to him, coming as he does over to our ground, and thus apparently admitting the possibility of the resurrection of Jesus, yet we know beforehand that he cannot possibly conduct his inquiry with an unprejudiced mind; for that he should be able to do so would imply not a miracle, but a contradiction; and whilst we are perfectly ready to admit the possibility of the one, we can by no means allow the possibility of the other. We are entitled, then, beforehand, to expect that Strauss will argue only on one side of the question, for with his assumed principles he cannot do otherwise. Still, it is possible that even with a mind thus preoccupied he may detect something defective in the evidence which has been adduced; and we may rely upon it, that if a real
defect is to be found in that evidence, such a mind as his will not be likely to fail in discovering it.

Again, let us carefully notice what is the question which Strauss places before him. He is not one of those who have attempted to deny the very existence of such a person as Jesus, or to represent Him and His disciples as a set of impostors. Strauss admits that a man called Jesus did exist, that He taught doctrines bearing on morality and religion, and that He went about, accompanied by a number of disciples, teaching His doctrines and doing many benevolent acts which attracted the attention of the Jewish people; and, further, that He at last gave Himself out to be the Messiah whom the Jews expected, and that He was looked upon by His disciples as the Messiah. Strauss also does not question the fact, that Jesus incurred the hatred of the Jewish rulers, and that He was at last put to death as a criminal, after undergoing a trial before the Roman governor of Judea. Strauss admits all these things as historical facts; and, further, he admits that soon after the death of Jesus His disciples did believe that He was risen from the dead, or at least that, though He had died, He was yet alive, and alive in a state of exaltation, and that He would come again—probably very soon—in glory, as the Messiah, to carry on His reign. Strauss, you will carefully bear in mind, admits belief in the resurrection of Jesus on the part of the disciples; and also that, cherishing this belief, they went forth in course of time and proclaimed it to the world—to Jew and Gentile—and that they succeeded in laying the foundations of the Christian Church on the basis of this very belief.
Thus the question with Strauss is not, whether the Christian Church was founded on the belief of the resurrection of Jesus, or even whether the disciples—the first preachers of the Gospel—entertained this belief. He admits both of these things as facts. The only question before him is, What was the origin of this belief which the disciples cherished? Did it originate in sensible perception—in the actual presentation to their minds through their senses of an objective fact? or did it originate in a mere subjective impression produced by mental excitement, and without any presentation of an objective fact? Of course we know, a priori, what will be Strauss's answer to this apparently delicate and subtle question. We know that there is only one answer which he can possibly give, were he standing upon his own ground. But, as we have said, he has virtually come over to our ground; and as we are not a priori shut up to the one answer or to the other, but are prepared to hear with impartiality whether of these two answers is the one warranted by the facts which compose the evidence, we must hear what he will tell us in support of his view, although that view has been already necessarily determined by him. I have dwelt on this, because in all such inquiries the first thing to be clearly seen by us is the exact question which is to be discussed. The question then is—the reality of the disciples' belief being admitted on both sides, by Strauss as well as by ourselves, what was its origin?

It may be as well to remark here, that although Strauss more than questions the received view of the authorship of the Gospel narratives, and indeed con-
siders these as having been written, not during the Apostolic age, but in the course of the second century, and although his opinion on this subject is really founded on what he, were he speaking of the opinions of his opponents, would call a dogmatic view, and is, as we believe can be historically proved, in direct opposition to evidence bearing on the subject; still, as it is upon the contents as well as upon the authorship of these narratives that the main question at present under discussion depends for its answer, he is not entirely precluded from stating to us objections which, apart from the question of authorship, he may think he can draw from these contents themselves. The question of the authorship of these narratives, as well as of the other writings which enter into the canon of the New Testament, is undoubtedly one of essential importance, and one which we cannot allow him any more than ourselves to settle merely upon a theoretical or dogmatic view, but in respect to which we must insist on being guided by evidence, and evidence alone. Still, inasmuch as he professes to discover in the very contents of the narratives grounds for objecting to the reality, not of the disciples' belief, but of the fact itself in which they believed, we will, setting aside for a moment the mere question of authorship, but assuredly not conceding his opinion on that subject, hear what he has to say in respect to these contents. I think I have now given you a clear and fair view of the state of matters in which Strauss and we are to commence our common inquiry.

In reference to the death and burial of Jesus, though he never for a moment forgets his manifest
determination to question every point bearing on the subject of inquiry, Strauss does not seem disposed to throw any strong doubt on the reality of the former. But he does question the accounts given in the narratives—we mean, of course, the Gospel narratives—in respect to the latter. He does not question the crucifixion of Jesus; but, as the narratives themselves show—and Strauss never doubts their contents whenever these seem to favour, or to be capable of being made by him to favour, his own view—that Jesus was only a few hours upon the cross, and as "crucifixion, in which," as he says, "the loss of blood occasioned by the wounds of the nails was so slight, was not a punishment that killed quickly," he states what circumstances would have warranted the conclusion of a real death; and then says, that "on the other hand, if after a few hours Jesus appeared to be dead, and was immediately taken down from the cross, His death might possibly have been only apparent, and a condition from which He might again recover."* Then he refers to the statements in the Gospels referring to this subject, evidently with the view of giving some colour to the supposition of a merely apparent death; and mentions the recorded surprise of Pilate when he was informed that Jesus was so soon dead, and also the recorded testimony of John, whom, of course, he does not allow to have been the author of the fourth Gospel, to the reality of the death as attested by the facts mentioned in that Gospel, which recorded facts he regards with more than suspicion. In short, whilst, according to his usual mode (and in saying this we do him no injus-

* 'New Life of Jesus,' vol. i. p. 392, 393.
tice, but are only stating what every page of his book testifies), he tries either to throw discredit on everything recorded in the Gospels, or to turn every statement, though made to show what actually occurred, to the service of his own preconceived purpose, yet at last he concedes the reality of the death of Jesus.

But he makes this concession in a way worthy of notice. "The proof of the reality of the death of Jesus," he says, "which certainly cannot be given in a sufficient form on the side of His crucifixion, is contained in the deficiency of all satisfactory proof of His resurrection. If He is to be considered as having really died, of whose continuance in life there is no historical information, the death of Jesus on the cross must be considered to have been a real death."* You have here a perfect specimen of that kind of argument which characterises his whole work. Because crucifixion was a mode of punishment which did not until after a time terminate in death, and because Jesus, according to the testimony of the Evangelists, was on the cross only during a few hours, we are to consider His death as a doubtful matter; although those very Evangelists, on whose testimony we rely for the one fact, present to us the clearest evidence that the other fact—His death—did really take place. Again we are to consider His death to have been a real death, because there is no satisfactory proof of His resurrection, or of His having continued in life after His crucifixion. The assumed deficiency of all such proof of His resurrection is to be the only ground of our belief that He really died.

* Vol. i. p. 394.
But, as is implied in this argument, if, contrary to the supposition, satisfactory proof of the resurrection should be produced, then in that case we fall back to our place of departure, and deny that there is satisfactory proof of His death.' In one word, Strauss will receive the testimony of the Evangelists so far, and so far only, as it can be employed to sustain his pre-conceived conclusion that a real resurrection from the dead is a thing which cannot be.

He next discusses, in connection with the death, the question which has been raised by some as to "whether only the hands or the feet also of the crucified Jesus were nailed to the cross." We agree with him in regarding this as a subordinate question, and also in his conclusion, that, "everything considered, the nailing of the feet as well as the hands may be the most probable."* But the next question—that affecting the burial of the crucified and now dead body—is one of a different character; it is, in fact, of pre-eminent importance. Strauss, after a few remarks upon it at this stage of his argument, which he considers as sufficient to throw doubt upon the whole matter, reserves the full discussion of it to a later stage. We deem it of essential moment to hear at once all that he has to say on this subject. He admits that so early as "the time of the Apostle Paul it was a Christian tradition that Jesus was buried after being taken down from the cross." The first epistle of this Apostle to the Church at Corinth refers to this so-called tradition; and this is one of the few writings to be found in the New Testament which even Strauss admits to be an authentic document. In that epistle

* Vol. i. p. 396.
Paul writes thus to the Corinthian Church: "For I delivered unto you first of all"—or rather, among the first things, as matters of first importance*—"that which I also received"—received not from man, but, as he tells us in a former part of the epistle, from the Lord; by special revelation, in short—"how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." No doubt, the burial of Jesus was a fact everywhere believed in the Christian Church on the testimony of the Apostles, and therefore, if we assign to the word tradition its strictly literal meaning, we may say with Strauss, that in the time of Paul there was a Christian tradition respecting the burial of Jesus. Yet let us not concede to him the loose or vague meaning of this term, but hold to the truth, that the burial, as well as the death and the resurrection, of Jesus was a fact which Paul and the other Apostles testified and taught as of primary importance. There is, then, satisfactory evidence that in the apostolic age, and upon apostolic testimony, the crucified body of Jesus was believed by the Church to have been buried. And Strauss admits that what he terms "a Christian tradition" to this effect, "has, historically, nothing against it."

"For," he continues, "though, according to the Roman custom, persons who had been crucified were accustomed to hang until they wasted away from weather, or were consumed by birds and putrefaction, and the Jewish law required that they should be taken down before evening, and buried in some dishonourable burying-place, there was a Roman law which gave the bodies of criminals so executed to their relations

* παρέδωκα γὰρ ὁμίν ἐν πρῶτοις, ὦ καὶ παρέλαβον, κ. τ. λ.—I Cor. xv. 3, 4.
or friends if they themselves asked for them. No one of
the Evangelists says that Jesus' own disciples did this with
regard to the body of Jesus; all, on the other hand, repre-
sent a man who stood only in a distant relation to Jesus,
the rich Joseph of Arimathea, as here coming in. There
are, indeed, different statements as to the mode in which
the burial was performed, which give rise to doubt, and
reserve the point for a later investigation, under which, also,
the isolated notice of Matthew as to the watch at the grave
will fall."—Vol. i. p. 396.

Before we hear what Strauss has afterwards to say
on this subject, let us observe that we have, as indeed
he admits, the unanimous testimony of the Evangelists
to the facts that Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate
and craved the body of Jesus, and that Pilate granted
it. Matthew and John* expressly tell us that this
man was, though secretly, a disciple of Jesus; and
Mark and Luke† describe him in language almost
equivalent to this; he was one "who was waiting for
the kingdom of God"—for the predicted reign of
the Messiah. The statements of the four Evangelists
respecting the mode in which the burial was per-
formed, though varied in one or two particulars, are
not merely in substance, but in most of the details, at
one. And we presume to say, that if any statements
of fact can bear the impress of historical truth, these
statements bear it. Let any one who has not a fore-
gone conclusion in his mind read these statements,
and he must, we affirm, feel the conviction that he is
reading statements of actual facts. But Strauss, you
will observe, cannot allow the burial any more than

* Matt. xxvii. 57; John xix. 38.
† Mark xv. 43; Luke xxiii. 50.
the death of Jesus to be accepted without a reserve. He cannot enter on the investigation of the evidence bearing on the resurrection with a free unprejudiced mind; and he labours at every step to throw doubt on every statement, however clear and historically certain. He reserves, however, he tells us, for later investigation, this subject of the burial, along with the other topic concerning the alleged watch at the tomb. There are, we think, reasons which might be stated for this deferring of the consideration of so important a subject as that of the burial of the body of Jesus; but before stating what these appear to us to be, we shall pass on to ascertain what he has to say further on this head.

The next time that Strauss refers to this subject of the burial is when he is discussing the statements in the Gospels respecting the places where the alleged appearances of the risen Jesus are said to have occurred. According to these statements, the first appearances occurred at or near Jerusalem. As we shall have afterwards to examine what he says on this particular subject, we mention at present only what, in course of the discussion, he says in respect to the burial:—

"In addition to this," he remarks—that is, in addition to something that he had said immediately before—"there is the consideration that the interment of Jesus in the stone sepulchre of Joseph, is anything but historically corroborated, as has been already intimated, and shall be hereafter more accurately discussed. But if Jesus was, as is probable, buried with other condemned criminals in a dishonourable place, his disciples had not from the first the tempting opportunity of looking for his body."—Vol. i. p. 432.
The argument under discussion here will come to be considered afterwards. But you will observe that Strauss uses much stronger language in this passage than he formerly did when expressing his opinion as to the burial. Formerly, after stating that the Roman law allowed relatives or friends to ask for the bodies of crucified criminals, and after admitting that all the Evangelists represent a man whom he rather unfairly describes as standing in a distant relation to Jesus, the rich Joseph of Arimathea—as if this were all that the Evangelists say of Joseph—"as here," at this stage, "coming in," he observed that differences, which differences he did not mention, in the statements as to the mode of the burial, gave rise to doubt. But now he advances beyond a state of mere doubt, affirming that the burial of Jesus in the stone sepulchre of Joseph is anything but historically corroborated; and that the probability is, that His body was buried along with the bodies of other condemned criminals in a dishonourable place. What evidence he has for the latter assertion he does not state; and as for the former, he does not tell us what he considers to be the historical corroboration of a fact. He merely asserts both these things, and the only reason which can be assigned for both assertions is, that they are necessary to his hypothesis. Everything, however clearly and strongly attested, must give way to that hypothesis; and when such is the case, it is manifestly perfectly easy to support any hypothesis whatsoever. But, then, what kind of reasoning is this that allows me not only to assume my theory, but also to construct my facts in opposition to all historical evidence in order to support it? Such reasoning
may be called hypothetical reasoning, but assuredly it is not that kind of reasoning which ought to be employed when we are dealing with facts. If the statements of the Evangelists are not true, let them be shown to be untrue, and then we shall know how to regard them. But let us not first assume that they are not true, and then by-and-by represent them as historically disproved. Is it, I would venture to ask, conceivable that such definite and consistent statements as are to be found in the four Gospels respecting the burial of the crucified Jesus, would have been made, had His body not been laid in the tomb of Joseph—had that body been really thrown with the bodies of other crucified criminals into some dishonoured place? Whether that body was again raised to life or not, can we for a moment believe that these statements, impressed as they are with the clear stamp of historical verity, were the fabrications of after times? There is nothing in the statements to cause the slightest doubt, or even to occasion surprise; for viewing Jesus even as a mere man, who by His teaching and character had drawn some friends around Him, though on account of His claims and His exposure of prevailing hypocrisy in high places He had incurred the deadly hatred of the chief priests and rulers, so that they could not rest until they cut Him off by a cruel death (and all this Strauss admits), is it any cause of wonder that, since the Roman law permitted relatives or friends to crave possession of the bodies of condemned criminals, some one of the friends of Jesus should avail himself of this permission, and crave the body of Him whom they so ardently loved, and believed to be the Mes-
siah, and whose death they knew was due to no crime of His, but entirely to the relentless, though groundless, malice of His enemies? What, may we not ask, should we have thought, and what would not Strauss himself have forced us to think, had the Evangelists told us that, notwithstanding the professed attachment of many to Jesus during His ministry, and their profound grief when they saw Him delivered into the hands of His enemies, and hanging like a malefactor on the accursed tree, and notwithstanding the kind indulgence of the Roman law, there was not one among His friends who even thought of craving possession of the body, in order to rescue, as far as was now in their power, their deceased Master from further disgrace; but that they all so forgot Him, and their own relation to Him, as to allow His body to be thrown with the bodies of notorious criminals into some dishonoured place? But it is necessary to the hypothesis of Strauss that no such burial as that attested by all the Evangelists should have taken place; and, this being the case, the conclusion is that no such burial did take place. The weight due to such an argument need not be formally estimated.

It is in his second book that Strauss gives us his promised accurate discussion of this subject, as also of the other topic connected with it—the stationing of a watch at the tomb. And here, once for all, let me briefly point out to you the plan of Strauss's whole work. In a long introduction he professes to investigate the sources of our information respecting the life of Jesus, and endeavours to disprove the genuineness and authenticity of the Evangelical records. He then, in his first book, assuming that the life of
Jesus, however superior in certain respects to the lives of other men, could be distinguished by nothing of a miraculous or superhuman character, labours to throw discredit on every narrative implying that Jesus was so distinguished, and that His life, therefore, is not to be judged solely by the laws which regulate the lives of merely human beings. Admitting the existence of Jesus, and assuming that in His life there could have been nothing miraculous or superhuman, Strauss examines with great minuteness and subtlety the Gospel narratives, and endeavours to separate what, under the circumstances, may be supposed to have been His character and course of life from what, under the assumption, can be regarded as only the product of delusion and fiction on the part of His followers. And having made this separation, he devotes his second book to the examination of these delusions and fictions with the view of ascertaining their rise and growth—that is, the conditions under which the stories embodying them were formed.

Now, this mode of procedure is, upon his assumed principles, perfectly legitimate. If we assume as our point of departure that the life of Jesus, when critically or historically examined, must be viewed as in no essential respect differing from the ordinary life of man, we cannot admit as true those statements which imply that, though truly man, He was yet possessed of a higher nature than man's, and that He performed miraculous works—works which it is manifest no mere man, unendowed with superhuman power, can do; and in order to obtain a view of His real life, we are compelled to separate, as we best can, such statements from the other parts of the Evangelic record.
And having succeeded, as we may think, in making this separation, we may fairly, with our assumed principle, endeavour, if we are so minded, to trace the origin of these supposed fictitious stories. Such an inquiry, however, possesses only a literary or historical interest; for, on the principle assumed, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, whether it then be viewed as a cunningly devised fable or as a purely mythical production, loses all its moral value. It is no longer the Gospel of salvation to a sinful and perishing race.

In his second book, then, Strauss, according to his promise, discusses the subject of the burial of Jesus, as also the narrative in Matthew respecting the watch stationed at the tomb. I deem it of importance to examine at length this discussion, because such an examination will not only show you how completely Strauss fails to set aside the unanimous testimony of the Evangelists in reference to this matter of the burial, as further the testimony of Matthew to the other fact, but will also enable you to see the entirely hypothetical manner in which, throughout his second book, he attempts to account for the origin of what he designates the mythical or legendary stories in the Gospel narratives. I need not repeat that our examination, however tedious and even painful, must be thorough, in order that it may be of any worth.

Strauss begins his discussion thus:—

"It was naturally of great importance to the earliest Christian consciousness that the honour of burial should have been paid to the body of Jesus. Even Paul mentions it as a tradition that Jesus was buried (1 Cor. xv. 4); but in
saying this, he only wishes, as a preparation for what is said immediately afterwards of his resurrection, to establish that the body of Jesus went under the earth. In itself this might have been done only in the manner which was usual among the Jews in the case of persons executed, by his being taken down from the cross and covered over with soil in the burial-place of other criminals. The Romans, however, as was remarked above, if the relatives announced themselves as coming to apply for the body of a person who had been executed, were accustomed to give it up to them for burial. And according to the Evangelists such a person did really announce himself to Pilate, in a rich man of Arimathea, by name Joseph, who belonged to Jesus as a disciple (Matt. xxvii. 57, ff.; Mark xv. 42, ff.; Luke xxiii. 50, ff.; John xix. 38, ff.)”—Vol. ii. p. 395.

In the first sentence of this introductory portion, Strauss, you will observe, states the feeling to which he means to trace the story that arose in the early Church respecting the burial of Jesus. Although there was nothing miraculous in the fact narrated by all the Evangelists, that a disciple of Jesus craved the body, and on obtaining his request buried it in a tomb; although, even with the implied sanction of Strauss himself, who allows that "the earliest Christian consciousness”—that is, in plain words, the prevalent feeling of the earliest Christians—"naturally considered it of great importance that the honour of burial should have been paid to the body of Jesus," we may justly ascribe the existence of such a feeling to the first disciples—to those persons who personally knew Him, and believed on Him and loved Him, and who were filled with grief when they saw Him condemned to a criminal's death; although nothing could be more natural than that one or more of these first disciples
should desire to rescue the body from further degradation, and should therefore avail themselves of the privilege which the Roman law allowed; and although, had none of them done so, we should have had an argument of a peculiar kind, and of no ordinary weight, raised against the reality of the resurrection, and founded upon this very neglect on the part of the friends of Jesus; and, moreover, although there does not exist the slightest particle of real evidence which can be brought forward against the unanimous testimony of the Evangelists to the fact of the burial of the body in the tomb by Joseph;—still this fact, so natural in every respect, and so naturally recorded and unanimously attested, must, owing to the manifest exigencies of the argument against the resurrection of Jesus, be called in question, being first merely doubted, next declared not to be historically corroborated, and now wholly set aside. All this is done, we repeat, without the slightest particle of real evidence.

It is supposed by Strauss that the reader is by this time convinced that no such burial as is recorded took place—that he will now overlook the pure assumption which is made, and will proceed with him to inquire, or rather, as we shall see, to conjecture, how in the “earliest Christian consciousness”—that vague but most useful expression—the idea of the burial sprang up, and finally grew into the belief, and therefore the story, of a real burial. Even so early as the time of Paul, “the Christian consciousness” was at work on this subject; for at the time when he wrote his first epistle to the Church at Corinth—probably about twenty-seven years after the death of Christ—“he
mentions it as a tradition," says Strauss, "that Jesus was buried." The idea, then, of the burial must have taken possession of "the Christian consciousness" some time at least before this, and must have grown very rapidly indeed, and that, too, whilst the first disciples of Jesus were—most of them, at least—alive, and able to check the progress of the error, if error it was. But what does Paul mean when he says that Jesus was buried? According to Strauss, "Paul only wishes, for the sake of his subsequent argument, to establish that the body of Jesus went under the earth;" and this would have been the case had the body been taken down from the cross and covered over with earth in the burial-place of other criminals, so that, after all, the Christian tradition which Paul mentions may have been a tradition only to that effect. But how such a fact as is now supposed should have satisfied "the earliest Christian consciousness" which demanded an honourable burial for the body of Jesus, and should, by so satisfying this consciousness, have assumed the important aspect of a tradition, and further, in what way this tradition became afterwards changed into the idea and belief of an honourable burial, Strauss does not attempt to explain. Nay, it seems questionable whether, with all his subtlety—and it is not slight—he perceived the contradiction into which he here, at the very outset of his "accurate discussion," manifestly falls. If "the earliest Christian consciousness," we repeat, demanded an honourable burial for the body of Jesus, and if this consciousness created the tradition to which Paul refers, then Paul also, who adopted this tradition, could not mean, when he says
that Jesus was buried, that the body was thrown with the bodies of other criminals into some dishonourable place, as Strauss formerly expressed himself. Paul must have meant that the body was laid in some honourable tomb.

Now, although the Apostle does not expressly say where the body of Jesus was laid, no one who is not bent on using the most frivolous criticism can doubt that, when he says Jesus was buried, he does mean that His body was laid, according to the testimony of the Evangelists, in a tomb or grave. And how does Paul say that he knew this fact as well as other facts respecting Jesus? No doubt he may have heard the testimony of other Apostles; but he tells us plainly that he had higher testimony than even that of Apostles. "For I delivered unto you," he writes, "first of all,"—or rather, among the first things, as things of first importance—"that which I also received." Received from whom? From the Lord, as he expressly said before in this very Epistle (xi. 23), received directly by divine revelation—"that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Let us notice in passing the importance here attached to the fact that "Christ was buried"—a fact attesting the prior death, and preparatory to the subsequent resurrection, and a fact of such importance as to have been made, in the case of this Apostle, the subject of special revelation. But Strauss assumes—inconsistently with the view which he wishes to take of the words of Paul, and of the supposed tradition to which he thinks Paul refers—that the idea of an honourable burial of the body
of Jesus sprang up in the minds of the earliest Christians, and, growing rapidly, at length embodied itself in the mythical stories which were afterwards recorded by the so-called Evangelists. He then proceeds to account for the special form with which this idea clothed itself. Here we shall have a specimen both of the manner in which he subjects to the so-called "higher criticism" the Gospel narratives, and also of the manner in which mythical ideas grew up in the minds of the earliest Christians, and at last became consolidated as real, objective facts—first, of course, in their minds, and lastly in written records.

According to Strauss, though he does not expressly say so, but leaves us to infer his view from statements made in different parts of his work, the case was this: The body of Jesus was buried along with the bodies of other condemned criminals in the place set apart for that purpose. But, in opposition to this known fact, the idea of an honourable burial sprang up in the minds of the earliest Christians. How are we to account for the origin of this idea, and for the special form in which it embodied itself? The Evangelic narratives present us with varied statements of this form. Let us, then, examine them, and we shall trace the whole matter to its origin. The idea itself is one which would naturally arise in the mind. These Christians could not but wish that their Lord's body, crucified though it had been, should not be treated with ignominy even after life had become extinct. How, with their knowledge that it had been so treated, the idea that it had not been so treated could spring from the mere wish that it should have been differently treated, Strauss does not attempt to
explain. He evades, after his usual manner, that primary question altogether. He does not even state the question; and he evidently does not wish his reader to think of it. But this is a question which in fair argument we cannot evade, and I beg your special attention to it; for by evading this question Strauss implicitly condemns his own theory, since a theory can be pronounced good only when it explains all the phenomena.

In what way, then, did the mere wish, however strong, on the part of the earliest Christians, that their Lord's body had been honourably buried, pass into the idea and belief that it had been so honourably buried, when they knew the contrary to have been the fact? Had this occurred at some later age, when the knowledge of the real fact had been forgotten, we might not have been so greatly at a loss to conceive how the idea of and belief in an honourable burial could have arisen, though even then we should have been at a loss to account for the apparently natural and certainly most consistent narratives contained in the Gospels. But how this idea and belief could possibly have assumed the appearance of a reality in the minds of the earliest Christians, if they knew the contrary to be the truth, surpasses, we confess, our power to conceive. Strauss, however, has a way always at hand to get over even such a difficulty as here presents itself. He assumes that the wish created the idea and caused the belief. This is the basis of his promised "accurate discussion." Grant him his assumption, and he will soon explain the whole matter. Give him a place, and he will move the whole Christian world. Let him first form his own premises, and he
will speedily demonstrate his conclusion. Only be it observed that, whilst a conclusion may be logically drawn from the premises, an error in the latter vitiates the former. And it is scarcely worth while, after assuming that such and such was the case, to enter upon a lengthened argument to demonstrate that such was the case.

Having silently assumed that, in direct opposition (according to his own view) to their knowledge, the earliest Christians embraced the belief that the body of Jesus had been honourably buried, Strauss evidently wishes us to perceive in the indulgence of the Roman law on this subject a ground for the prominent idea embodied in every form of the mythical story. That law allowed the relatives and friends to crave the body of a condemned criminal. Hence we have an explanation why, in the story which embodies the full-grown myth, a person is introduced who goes to Pilate and craves the body of Jesus. But Strauss, whilst keenly anxious to trace the origin of everything mentioned in the story, does not attempt to explain why this person was called Joseph of Arimathea. His name and place of birth are expressly mentioned in all the four editions of the story. He certainly comes in as a real living man, and not at all as a mythical—a merely ideal personage. Why was he called Joseph? Why was he of Arimathea? Surely Strauss, who never omits a single thing in any narrative which he thinks he can account for in some way or other, must have seen that an explanation was needed here. Why, we again ask, if a real Joseph—a man of Arimathea—did not go to Pilate and crave the body of the crucified Jesus, does the story
say so? Had it merely said that some friend of Jesus went and made the request, though even then we should not have felt ourselves on that account necessarily in the region of myths, still the case would not have been so clearly in the region of realities. But the story—each form of it—the fourfold story—names the man and also gives the place of his birth, or at least of his abode. It was Joseph of Arimathea who went to Pilate. And the question is, how, upon the hypothesis of Strauss, did the specific idea of Joseph of Arimathea enter into "the earliest Christian consciousness" in connection with not merely the wish for an honourable burial, but with the belief that such had been the character of the burial? No attempt at explanation is made by Strauss. He is silent, and evidently hopes that his reader will acquiesce in this silence. He assumes that no such man went to Pilate and craved and obtained the body of Jesus. Silent assumption is once more his way of overcoming an otherwise insuperable difficulty.

But though Strauss takes no notice of the fact that, according to all the narratives, it was a man of Arimathea, Joseph by name, who went to Pilate and craved the body, he eagerly seizes on what one of the narratives—that in the Gospel of Matthew—says of him as to his being a man of wealth. He says:—

"A rich man—these are the first words of the most ancient reporter, Matthew; he only adds incidentally that the rich man was also a disciple of Jesus. Luke and Mark" (for such is the order in which Strauss insists that their respective Gospels were written) "forget the rich man in the honourable councillor, and whatever else they make of Joseph;
while John seizes on the discipleship, and in his favourite style makes it a secret one, from fear of the Jews. But in other cases wealth, in a good sense, is not of so much importance to the Evangelists: why does the first reporter so industriously put it forward here? The rich man had a tomb which he had hewn out for himself in the rock, and in which he now laid the dead Messiah."—Vol. ii. p. 395-6.

Now surely there is nothing in the narrative, as given either by Matthew or by any other of the Evangelists, which, under the alleged circumstances, should excite even surprise, and far less doubt. There is nothing miraculous here, at least. Everything seems perfectly natural. It was surely not impossible that there should be living at that time a man of Arimathea called Joseph; that he should happen to be a rich man, a good man and just, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and a disciple of Jesus—a disciple only secretly at first from fear of the Jews; nor is there anything unnatural in the statement that such a man had a portion of ground near to Jerusalem belonging to him, and, if so, that he had hewn out for himself a tomb in that portion of it which is described as a rock. Supposing, further, that all these things were real, was it not the most natural thing possible that this man—a man of influence, character, and wealth—should, at such a crisis, feel irresistibly impelled by his belief, although hitherto secret, or more probably only partially so, that Jesus, though now hanging on the cross, was really the Messiah, to avail himself of the permission granted by the Roman law to crave and obtain the body of his Lord, and that he should lay this body in the tomb which he possessed, and in which as yet no man had lain? As we have
repeatedly said, all the narratives, however varied, are consistent with each other, and bear the impress of historical truth. But Strauss, you will observe, does not inquire whether these narratives are true or false. He assumes that they are false; and though he maintains a determined silence on the very fundamental parts of the narratives, he will endeavour to show how, as he imagines, some of the details may be accounted for. And thus, as we have said, he eagerly seizes on the detail given only by Matthew, whose report he considers as presenting the most ancient form of the assumed mythical story, that it was a rich man who paid honour to the dead body of Jesus.

Observe now how Strauss will account for the idea of a rich man having entered into "the earliest Christian consciousness," and consequently into the most ancient version of the story in which the idea of the whole matter became embodied. He says:—

"But it was in his death that the Messiah was brought into connection with the rich in Isaiah. With the rich indeed in a bad sense, as it would appear, when it is said (liii. 9), 'He made his grave indeed with the wicked, and with the rich in his death,' in which words, the rich being taken as synonymous with the wicked, a prophecy of a dishonourable burial might be proved. But the association with the wicked, the being numbered with the transgressors, was considered to have been already fulfilled in Jesus by his apprehension and crucifixion (Luke xxiii. 37; Mark xv. 28): thus the rich remained for his burial, he must have been laid in the tomb of a rich man, and this rich man not a godless but a God-fearing man, who, believing in the Messiah, gave up his tomb to the murdered Christ."—Vol. ii. p. 396.
Such, according to Strauss, is a satisfactory account of the origin in "the earliest Christian consciousness" of the idea and the belief that the body of Jesus was laid in a rich man's tomb. 'Although the earliest Christians knew the real facts of the case, which were, according to Strauss, that the body of Jesus was not laid in such a tomb, but was dishonourably buried; yet naturally deeming it of great importance that the honour of a burial should have been paid to His body, they remembered the words of Isaiah, which, according to the prevailing belief, referred to the Messiah, and which foretold that the Messiah would in His death be brought into connection with the rich; and although they misinterpreted these words, which identify the rich with the wicked, yet as Jesus in His death so far fulfilled the prophecy in being numbered with transgressors, they thought that they might reserve the rich for his burial, and change the predicted character of these rich men into that of a rich man who feared God.'

Apart, then, from this supposed misinterpretation of the latter part of Isaiah's prophecy, let us calmly consider the process by means of which these earliest Christians persuaded themselves that the body of Jesus was laid in a rich man's tomb. These Christians knew—for if it was the case they could not but know—that the body of Jesus was thrown into the place where the bodies of other criminals were buried. They knew this fact, if fact it was, but they naturally and ardently wished that it had been otherwise. And in some way or other, which Strauss does not explain, the prophetic words of Isaiah occurred to them, which words foretold that the Messiah would
be with the rich in His death; and they, believing that Jesus was the Messiah, immediately inferred that, contrary to what they knew to have been the case, His body must have been laid in a rich man's tomb. The principle in this process of reasoning is this—and it is exceedingly important for you clearly to understand it, for it is in virtue of this assumed principle that Strauss throughout his work undertakes to explain all, or nearly all, the so-called mythical stories in the Gospels—the principle is this, that whatever the first Christians believed to have been foretold by the prophets respecting the Messiah, they immediately concluded to have been fulfilled in Jesus, whom they looked upon as the Messiah, whether that fulfilment was a reality or not; or rather, according to Strauss's assumption, even though no fulfilment whatever took place, and, as in the case before us, even when, as he alleges, the very contrary to what was predicted took place. Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would be with the rich in His death: therefore, argued these first Christians, Jesus, whom we believe to have been the Messiah, must have been with the rich in His death. It was not, you will carefully observe, because ancient prophecies respecting the Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus, that on this and other grounds the first disciples believed Jesus to be the Messiah. To suppose that such was one ground of their belief would be to admit the possibility of a miracle; for the fulfilment of prophecy involves, as you must at once perceive, miraculous knowledge, the knowledge of future contingent events. But Strauss rejects the possibility of the miraculous under any form. According to him, the first disciples, without any miracu-
lous evidence whatever, for of such there was and could be none, believed Jesus to be the Messiah; and then, after His death, they applied to Him all the prophecies, or rather pretended prophecies, which were understood, erroneously understood, to refer to the Messiah, actually believing in their own minds, and openly declaring to others, that these prophecies were really fulfilled in Jesus—when, as Strauss assumes, they knew perfectly that no such fulfilment had taken place.

Is it possible, we may now ask, to conceive that any man or any number of men, not wholly void of understanding, could have proceeded in such a manner as Strauss here assumes? Were these first Christians so utterly deprived of the power of our common reason, that, contrary to their personal knowledge of the facts, they could thus convince themselves of the reality of the very opposite of those facts? Were they so utterly blind to the distinction between truth and falsehood, that when they knew the former they persuaded themselves to believe the latter? And not only to believe that which they could not but know to be false, but actually to spend their lives in bearing testimony to it, and to endure every species of persecution in support of their testimony? Surely we may suppose that among the earliest Christians there were some besides St Paul who believed that unless Jesus was really the Messiah, and that unless this belief was grounded on the evidence of facts which had happened, they, in submitting to persecution for the sake of their belief, were of all men most miserable, because they were submitting to such persecution in the knowledge that their faith was vain.
It is, however, a pure assumption to represent these Christian men as reasoning in the manner which Strauss ascribes to them. The assumption is necessary to his purpose, but it is wholly baseless; and the very opposite is that which all existing evidence attests. How any man can believe that the first Christians so reasoned and so convinced themselves of the reality of what they knew had not happened, we can only explain by referring to those awful words which Jesus on one occasion uttered, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" What a power unbelief exerts on the mind in which it dwells! It gains an entire ascendency over the man's whole nature. He will adopt any supposition, however childish and absurd, in order that he may resist the evidence presented to him; and I believe that no kind of evidence, or any amount of it, can produce the slightest effect on such a mind. It is so deluded as to believe a lie; and nothing but the special working of divine grace can affect it. Let us wish and pray that even this man's mind may yet experience the power of that grace.

With respect to the particular prophecy to a misinterpretation of which, as Strauss alleges, he would trace the idea and belief of the burial of Jesus in a rich man's tomb, I would remark in passing that the correct interpretation seems to be this: "And one— they—appointed His grave to be with wicked men, yet was He with a rich man in His death." The parallelism in the verse is that of contrast, not of identity; and this prophecy, though the fulfilment of it is not mentioned by any of the Evangelists, was literally fulfilled in the death and burial of Jesus.
They—the Jewish rulers—did intend that His grave should be with the wicked; but the overruling providence of God frustrated their intention, and caused His body to be laid in a rich man's tomb—the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

But supposing that "the earliest Christian consciousness" demanded, in opposition to what, according to Strauss, was publicly known to have been the case, that the body of Jesus should be honourably buried, and that for this reason, and in conformity with the misinterpreted prophecy of Isaiah, "a rich man" must be introduced into the same consciousness as having paid this honour to Jesus, how did it enter that consciousness that the sepulchre or tomb must be hewn out in a rock, and that it must be one recently formed—a new tomb, in short, wherein never man was yet laid? These are essential parts of the story as first believed by the earliest Christians, and afterwards recorded by those who embodied it in their narratives. How, then, are we to account for these features of the story? Strauss will easily do so; for it is to be assumed that "the Christian consciousness" having got hold of the idea of "a rich man," would instinctively perceive that "the tomb of the rich man must have corresponded to his wealth on the one hand, to its lofty purpose on the other;"* and that consciousness would once more be instinctively reminded, by the very idea of what was thus required, of another passage to be found in the prophetic book of Isaiah. "A man in high position is addressed thus in Isaiah (xxii. 16): 'What hast thou here, and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed

thee out a sepulchre here, as he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?" There is, however, an obvious difficulty in applying this passage to the case before us; but this also is easily removed. "This, indeed," says Strauss, "was said rebukingly to a proud-minded man; but of the righteous man also it was said in the same Isaiah (xxxiii. 16), that he shall dwell on high in munitions of rocks, or, according to the Greek translation, in caves of rocks; then, consequently, even a God-fearing rich man might have hewn out for himself a tomb in a rock, and the question as to whom he has here that he does this, might be answered by a reference to the body of the Messiah, for whom he was there preparing a resting-place.”* Is not this an admirable specimen of reasoning—of that "higher criticism" which is to lay open to us the very process of mythical creations? Have we here, then, the promised more accurate discussion of the burial of Jesus? Is it not a mystery—a thing that almost surpasses comprehension—how men possessed of common sense can venture gravely to propose such absolute nonsense for our belief? But you will ever find it to be a characteristic of unbelief in God and in Christ, that it is marked by the most extraordinary degree of credulity in any supposition or in any process of reasoning, which, however absurd, tends to strengthen itself. Such unbelief actually seems to feed upon the imaginary, and grows until it overpowers all that reason—man's common sense—would suggest to the mind.

But we must proceed. The tomb must, in the view

of "the earliest Christian consciousness," not only be hewn out in a rock, to correspond to the wealth of the rich man; it "must also, in order to correspond to its lofty purpose, be a new one, not as yet polluted by any corpse, as it was not considered right that any man should have previously ridden on the ass which the Messiah used on His entrance into the capital."* Although it is in the Gospel of Luke alone that we find this latter fact mentioned, and although therefore, according to Strauss, such a fact did not enter into the most ancient report of the mode in which Jesus made His public entry into Jerusalem, yet we see no valid reason why both facts may not have been real, merely because a kind of resemblance may be discovered between them. And we at once admit that, if it could be proved that the belief that the body of Jesus was laid in a rich man's tomb, which had been hewn out in a rock, had its origin, not in the knowledge of what had really happened, but in the excited imaginations of the earliest Christians, we should experience little difficulty in ascribing to the same power of imagination the idea and the belief that this tomb was a new one—a tomb "wherein never man before was laid." But until the former is established by valid evidence, we must adhere to the unshaken testimony of the Evangelists to the reality of the latter fact also. "In the two other synoptics," continues Strauss—that is, in Mark and Luke—"both the 'wealth' of the man, mentioned in the passage in the Prophet, as well as his relation with regard to the tomb—namely, that he himself had had it hewn for him in the rock—is omitted, still their meaning undoubtedly is," Strauss allows, "that it was

his property." But now he detects a discrepancy; for "in John the connection is completely broken, and the new tomb in which Jesus is to be laid is selected" (selected, you will observe, by "the Christian consciousness" only at a later stage of the myth or legend), "selected, not because it belonged to Joseph, but because it was near to the place of execution, and a burying-place close at hand was desirable on account of the near approach of the festal Sabbath."

Now, let us observe the recorded facts of the case. If there was a man of Arimathea, Joseph by name, who was wealthy and a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, surely it need excite no surprise that such a man possessed a small piece of property nigh to the city, and also nigh to the place of execution; and if he possessed such a piece of property, it need as little surprise us that he had prepared a tomb for himself, and hewn it out in a rocky part of the garden or ground belonging to him. If this man was, moreover, a disciple of Jesus, although hitherto, for the reason assigned, only a secret disciple, what was more natural than that he, rather than any other disciple, should think of craving the body of Jesus and laying it in his own new tomb, and that he should have been led to think of this by the very circumstance that the tomb which was his own was nigh at hand? The other narratives imply that such was the case—that the tomb was nigh at hand; and John's narrative only supplements their narratives by telling that it was so. Instead of discrepancy, there exists perfect agreement among the four narratives; and it is only a capricious and suspicious scepticism which can detect the slightest disagreement. Strauss,
however, who is never at a loss to discover some deep purpose, especially in the mind of the fourth Evangelist, adds:—"Thus this feature"—namely, the nearness of the tomb to the place of crucifixion—"serves the purpose of the fourth Evangelist, enabling him, as it does, to make still more palpable the pressure of time on that evening of the burial, which furnishes him with a reason for what is so important to him—the breaking of the bones in reference to the wound with the spear." The fourth Evangelist, we may simply say, satisfactorily accounts for the pressure of time when he tells us that the Jewish rulers were anxious to have the crucified bodies removed before the Sabbath-day came on—that is, before the setting of that day's sun.

Strauss next discusses the various statements in the Gospel narratives which refer to the embalming of the body of Jesus; but his remarks on this subject are so utterly frivolous that it would be worse than tedious to subject them to detailed criticism. We pass on, then, to consider what he has to say on a matter of greater moment, so far as our main subject is concerned. We allude to the watch or guard which, as Matthew affirms, the chief priests and Pharisees, with the sanction of Pilate, stationed at the sepulchre. On a former occasion we stated what appears to us a highly probable reason why this fact was introduced by Matthew into his narrative. We cannot say for certain why none of the other Evangelists mentions this fact; but we know that their Gospels were mainly intended for Gentile Churches, whilst that of Matthew was specially written for the Jewish Churches; and we also perceive that the fact was re-
corded by Matthew expressly to meet a false report which was purposely spread abroad among the Jews, whether in Judea or elsewhere. Let us then patiently listen to what Strauss has to say in reference to this matter.

Strauss begins the discussion of this important point by referring to the statement of each Evangelist as to the manner in which the sepulchre was closed:—

"All the Evangelists agree in stating that the sepulchre in the rock, in which the body of Jesus was laid, was closed with a stone rolled to the entrance. According to Matthew, it was a large stone; in Mark, the women going out take counsel as to who will roll away the stone for them from the mouth of the sepulchre; consequently they assume it as a difficult thing to do. While, however, the other Evangelists are satisfied with this closure, Matthew represents the stone as being, in addition, sealed by the high-priests, and the sepulchre as being guarded by a watch stationed there by Pilate at their request (xxvii. 62-66)."—Vol. ii. p. 399.

You will observe that, though not expressly stated, it is assumed in this last sentence that the statement about the sealing of the stone and the stationing of the watch is wholly fictitious. Without the slightest attempt to prove his assumption, Strauss proceeds, in his usual manner, to account for the origin of what he regards as a pure fiction. We must now make a long extract.

"For when, in the earliest times of Christendom, the preaching about the resurrection of Jesus had taken the form that his sepulchre was found empty on the second morning after his burial, it was met by the unbelieving Jews with the allegation that it was found in this condition, not because its inmate had come out of it restored to life, but be-
cause his corpse had been stolen out of it by his disciples. This Jewish legend, in opposition to the Christian, gave rise to a second Christian legend in opposition to the Jewish. If the Christian solution was to satisfy the problem, it must, on the one hand, make the stealing of the body impossible, and, on the other, account for the denial of the resurrection on the part of the Jews. The stealing away of the body was impossible if the sepulchre was watched. Consequently the high-priests and Pharisees must go to the Roman procurator and beg him to secure the sepulchre. But what in the world could move them to make such a request? What could the sepulchre signify to them, so long as they knew that he who had been laid in it was dead? They remember, they say, that that crucified deceiver did in his lifetime predict his resurrection after three days; they do not believe in a fulfilment of this prediction, but they are afraid lest his disciples should steal the body, and in connection with the prophecy give out that he has arisen. So the high-priests must have remembered speeches of Jesus of which his disciples, at the time of his death, can have known nothing whatever (else how could they have been so despairing?); they must have foreseen the rising up of the faith in the resurrection of Jesus, which is absolutely inconceivable: the Christian legend attributed to them the Christian belief of later times, only in the form of unbelief.”—Vol. ii. p. 399, 400.

Now, you will observe that Strauss begins by assuming that the first preachers of the resurrection of Jesus proclaimed their testimony to this fact in the particular form of an assertion, that His sepulchre was found empty on the second morning after His death; and though this assumption may seem at first a harmless, if not an allowable one, yet it is in reality a baseless assumption, and adopted by Strauss on purpose to give a colour to the supposed origin of the false story spread among the Jews. It is true that
the women who first visited the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection found it empty, and that Mary Magdalene, inferring from the removal of the stone that the body had been taken away, ran to the Apostles Peter and John with a report to that effect. But when the Apostles proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus they did so in express terms. They did not declare this fact in the form of a conclusion drawn by them from the mere circumstance that the sepulchre of Jesus was found empty on the second morning after His death. They testified the fact on the ground that they had seen Jesus alive after His death. We have the earliest form of their testimony thus given us: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it" (Acts ii. 22-24). Again, "Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (Acts iii. 14, 15).

Such was the form in which the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus was from the first made. And how was this proclamation met by the Jewish rulers? Did they meet it by affirming either that the body of Jesus was still in the tomb of Joseph; or—as they might have done, had Strauss's assump-
tion of the place of burial been true—that that body had been thrown into the burying-place of condemned criminals, where it still lay? In neither of these ways did they meet the testimony of the Apostles. They met it by affirming that the disciples had come to the sepulchre by night and stolen the body. And where was it that they had recourse to such a story as this? Not at Jerusalem, so far as we know, but at a distance from Jerusalem, where the facts of the case were not likely to be so well known. The story was spread chiefly among the foreign Jews; and Matthew, knowing that such was the case, inserted the true account of the matter in his Gospel, which, as has repeatedly been said, was written purposely for the instruction of the Jewish converts. Strauss, then, erroneously represents the question as if stood between the first Christians and the Jews. He represents the former as only saying that on the morning of the second day after the death of Jesus His sepulchre was found empty, and as stating merely by way of inference from this that Jesus must have been restored to life; and he represents the Jews as meeting this inference by the counter-assertion: True, the sepulchre was found empty, as you allege; but it was so found, not because its inmate had come out of it restored to life, but because His dead body had been stolen out of it by His disciples. In this way Strauss accounts for the Jewish legend; but as his representation of the manner in which the first Christians preached the resurrection is erroneous, so his explanation of the origin of the Jewish legend falls to the ground.

Having thus accounted for the origin of the Jewish
legend, he thinks he can now easily explain the origin of what he calls the second Christian legend—the first being, of course, that which reported that the tomb of Jesus had been found empty, and which alleged on that ground that Jesus had returned to life. He will demonstrate first the conditions of this second Christian legend, and then its absurdity. These earliest Christians, observe, had now to contrive—consciously to contrive—how they could meet the assertion of their Jewish enemies, that the body of Jesus had been stolen from the sepulchre by His disciples. The conditions of the problem to be solved were, on the one hand, to make the stealing of the body impossible; and, on the other, to account for the denial of the resurrection on the part of the Jews—that is, of the Jewish rulers. These conditions rendered the problem rather a difficult one for "the Christian consciousness;" and here theories about the formation of myths or even legends must fail. The problem demanded thought, ingenuity, falsehood. In order to solve it, "the Christian consciousness" must act with conscious fraud.

Strauss, accordingly, abandons the theory which he had so laboriously maintained in his first work. He must now introduce the opposite theory—that of conscious falsehood. Let us see, then, how "the Christian consciousness," now abandoning all regard to truth, succeeds in solving the problem. We shall, said the first Christians to themselves, render the charge of stealing the body impossible, if we set a watch around the sepulchre. But, then, this watch must be stationed by the enemies of Jesus—by those men who caused His death. We must therefore in-
troduce the high-priests and Pharisees as going to the Roman procurator and begging him to secure the sepulchre. But is it not awkward to represent them as at all concerned about this matter? Jesus is now dead, and what can now excite their fears, and move them to make such a request? Here was a manifest difficulty, yet not sufficient to baffle the ingenuity of "the earliest Christian consciousness." We shall make these high-priests and Pharisees remember certain words, whether uttered by Jesus or not is of no moment—words which we can elsewhere in our stories affirm were uttered by Him—to the effect that He—we must here call Him "that Deceiver"—said in His lifetime, "After three days I will rise again." We must introduce them as saying these words before Pilate, and begging of him to "command that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; for then the last error shall be worse than the first."

Such was the solution of the problem which "the Christian consciousness" contrived in order to meet the assertion of the Jews that the body had been stolen away by the disciples of Jesus. And now see the absurdity of this solution, argues Strauss—who alone, be it observed, is the author of it, as a solution contrived by the first Christians. The high-priests are made to remember a prophecy of Jesus, in the fulfilment of which they do not believe; but they are afraid lest the disciples should steal the body, and then, in connection with the prophecy, give out that Jesus had risen. So far there is nothing absurd in the supposition. If the high-priests either heard, or
in any way knew, that Jesus in His lifetime had uttered such words, even although they disbelieved them, they might have suspected that His disciples would remember them, and might attempt to steal the body, and, if successful in this, give out in connection with that prophecy that their Master had risen from the dead. If Jesus had been a deceiver, and if the disciples were deceivers, however unaccountable it may be that He should have uttered such words—still, assuming the case to have been as it was represented by the high-priests to Pilate, there is nothing unreasonable in their conduct; on the contrary, they acted wisely in taking steps to prevent the further progress of the error which had commenced to spread.

But here is what appears to Strauss to be so absurd: these enemies of Jesus are represented as remembering words—most remarkable words, beyond all question—uttered by Him; and the first disciples, as they are presented to us in the narratives of the resurrection, know nothing of these words, else how could they have been in such despair after His death as they are said to have been? Had the story been true, “these high-priests must have foreseen the rising up of the faith in the resurrection of Jesus, which is absolutely inconceivable: the Christian legend attributed to them the Christian belief of later times, only in the form of unbelief.” These last statements are scarcely correct, even on his own hypothesis. All that the story implies respecting the high-priests is, that it represents them as foreseeing in certain circumstances the rise, not of faith in the resurrection of Jesus, but of an additional error worse than the first
—namely, the rise of a false report by the disciples of His resurrection. The legend, if legend it was, only attributed to them an alarm that such a false report, being spread in connection with a pretended prophecy, might be believed, and cause greater evils than as yet had happened.

But whilst we view the case correctly even on Strauss's hypothesis, there is one thing stated by him in connection with this subject which demands special notice, although we have before remarked upon it. It is the forgetfulness by the disciples of Jesus of His repeated predictions respecting His own resurrection. They did not remember His words, whilst His enemies did. That the words remembered by the chief priests and Pharisees were spoken by Jesus, we have abundant testimony. Here is, then, at first sight, a difficulty of no ordinary kind. But I need first only remind you of what I endeavoured to make clear when treating of this very subject—that it was the intimation of His death which confounded the minds of His disciples, and that they were wholly unable to see why He who as the Messiah was to abide for ever should need to be raised again. Why the disciples were so perplexed and cast down by the fact of His death that they did not remember His assurance that He would rise again, we cannot tell; but so it was, and the fact proves only the depth of despair into which they sank at His death, and also the extraordinary power which preconceived notions exerted over their minds.

Again, we have the fact attested, that the enemies of Jesus did remember His words—not that they believed them, but merely that they remembered them,
and deemed it prudent to adopt measures to prevent them receiving a pretended fulfilment. Their remembrance of the words of Jesus is, I think, to be easily accounted for. Enmity quickens the intellect in such a case. These rulers hated Jesus with extreme hatred; and I am convinced that they were not altogether easy in their minds with respect to Him. They had seen much that ought to have convinced them of the truth of His claims; but they rejected Him in the face of evidence, and were judicially given over to believe a lie. Until that third day was over of which they had heard, they could not, with all their unbelief and hatred, be at ease. Their minds were not thrown into despair by His death, like the minds of the disciples. No; they no doubt triumphed when He expired upon the cross. But after their momentary feeling of triumph a dark shadow would pass across their minds; for there were events which happened even as He hung upon the tree calculated to excite terror in their hearts. I am persuaded that it was not altogether suspicion of fraud on the part of the disciples that moved them to go to Pilate, and to beg that he would make the sepulchre secure. There was also, I doubt not, deep anxiety, though perhaps not expressed by any of them, in their inmost souls. They could not withdraw their thoughts for three days at least, and till they had assurance that His words had failed, from that sepulchre in which the lifeless body of one who gave such marvellous proofs of His claims, and whom they had pursued with relentless hatred to the very death, was now lying, and in which they hoped, not without a mixture of fear, it would lie for ever. Un-
belief of the truth is an awful mystery. Who can fathom it?

But we must proceed. "Pilate," says Strauss, "immediately grants them the watch, and orders them in addition to guard the grave as well as they can." Observe that all this is, according to Strauss, part of the solution framed by "the Christian consciousness." "He is right in doing so," he continues; "a watch may be bribed, deceived, and what they ought to protect be carried off. So they seal the stone that closes the mouth of the sepulchre, as formerly Darius had sealed the stone at the mouth of the lions' den into which he caused Daniel to be thrown, to prove whether his God would save him from the lions (Dan. vi. 18). Were they not, then, antitypes of Christ in the sepulchre—on the one hand, Jonas in the belly of the whale; on the other, Daniel in the lions' den?" I need only remark on this passage that you have here another specimen of the manner in which, according to Strauss, the first Christians applied prophecies and events recorded in the ancient Scriptures to Jesus as the Messiah. The idea of the sealing of the stone at the entrance of the sepulchre was suggested to their minds by what was done by Darius when Daniel was thrown into the lions' den; and the idea of being three days in the sepulchre was suggested by reference to what happened to Jonah. Whether myths or conscious fictions, they were generally, if not always, based on some words or events which were to be found in their Scriptures, and which were imagined by them to have some reference or other to the Messiah, and therefore to Jesus as such.

In this way, then, was the Christian legend formed.
It was formed on purpose, according to Strauss, to meet the charge brought by the Jews against the Christians of having stolen the body of Jesus. It did, he allows, meet that charge. But then another question arises, "How, under the circumstances, could this Jewish legend originate?" Strauss now discusses this question; and we must follow him in his discussion of it, for he evidently considers it as a question bearing closely upon that of the resurrection itself. We know upon good authority how this "legend," as the false report spread abroad by the Jewish rulers among their countrymen is called, did originate. But Strauss rejects that authority, and must trace the legend to a different source. He says:—

"It was a matter of course for the Christian legend "—that is, the legend about setting the watch and sealing the stone—"to assert that when the resurrection of Jesus occurred, an angel descended from heaven, and, shining like lightning, rolled away the stone from the sepulchre with a violent earthquake, that seals and watches availed nothing, and that the latter in particular fell down like dead men (Matt. xxviii. 4). And, according to that legend, the watch reported the fact truly to the high-priests (ver. 11)."—Vol. ii. p. 400-1.

All this, according to Strauss, was quite naturally to be found in the Christian legend—in the false story contrived by the earliest Christians to meet the Jewish assertion that the body of Jesus had been stolen from the tomb. And he proceeds to expose the absurdity of this false story. For, on the supposition that the story was not false, but true, he affirms that

"The real high-priests and elders would have considered
such a report”—the report of the watch—“to be false, and have insisted upon an investigation, which must have elucidated the truth that the watchmen had slept, or had allowed themselves to be bribed, and the body to be stolen.”

This, Strauss affirms, is what, under the circumstances, these rulers would have done. But it is clear that he is warranted only in affirming that this is what they ought to have done, for it not unfrequently happens that men do not always adopt the course which they ought to adopt—that men are restrained by certain considerations from doing the very thing which they ought to do. It was incumbent on Strauss to show that there were no considerations which could have influenced the Jewish rulers to abstain from all investigation into the truth or falsehood of the alleged report. But it suited his purpose better to assume what he ought to have proved, and therefore to affirm at once that these real rulers, believing such a report to be false, would have insisted upon an investigation. He should, however, have also told us what he thinks the same rulers would have done, had they, on the other hand, dreaded that the report was true. This, however, the essential point in the matter, he passes over in silence; and he goes on to expose, as he imagines, the absurdity of the Christian legend.

“The high-priests and elders” (not, you will observe, the real high-priests and elders, but the high-priests and elders) “of the Christian legend, on the contrary, look upon the report of the miraculous resurrection of Jesus as true, and give them money to declare that to be false which the real dignitaries must have considered the truth, which the watchmen
had motives for concealing, and they for elucidating by an investigation. The fact is, therefore, as stated above: the Christian legend attributes to the Jewish authorities the Christian belief, leaving them, at the same time, as enemies of Christ, their unbelief; that is, they believe in silence that Jesus returned miraculously to life, but still they would not recognise him as the Messiah, but persevere in their opposition to his cause. Thus the origin of the Jewish legend was indeed explained, but awkwardly enough, and only for the Christians, who, starting from the same assumptions, did not notice the contradictions involved in the attempt at explanation."—Vol. ii. p. 401.

Strauss evidently regards his argument on this particular subject as unanswerable, and he has laboured to present it in all its force. Now, we beg your special attention to the following facts, facts which even Strauss himself must admit. These high-priests and Pharisees persecuted Jesus to death on the sole ground that He claimed to be the Messiah—the Son of God. Whatever evidence He gave in support of this claim they rejected; and whether that evidence was valid or not, they not only rejected it, but pursued Him with a hatred so intense and relentless that they did not rest until they had succeeded in having Him publicly condemned and openly put to death as one of the greatest criminals. They declared Him to be a deceiver of no ordinary stamp, and hated Him as such. Even Strauss must admit all this statement of the case. We feel ourselves entitled to go farther than this, and to say, that they had all along rejected valid evidence, and had wilfully blinded their minds and hardened their hearts in respect to that evidence. But even stopping short with that view of the case which Strauss cannot refuse to take, we ask whether,
on the supposition that the watch did make the report in question, these men were in that state of mind which would lead them to investigate the truth or falsehood of the report, or whether, receiving such a report from those whom they themselves had employed, they would not feel some alarm lest it might be true, and would not, therefore, employ such means as were within their power to check, as they would imagine, the spread of the truth. The watch, you will observe, did not testify that Jesus had risen, for Him they had not seen. They only testified to the appearance of the angel, to the shock of the ground, and to the removal of the stone—phenomena marvellous indeed in themselves, and calculated to strike them with terror. It was a report of these things which they made to the Jewish rulers; and although these rulers could not but infer that these phenomena had a special reference to Him whose body had been laid within the tomb, and that therefore, in all probability, the words which they had so well remembered were now fulfilled, still they, who had so often withstood former evidence, were not likely to yield to this new evidence, but would persist in their unbelief, and use their utmost efforts to suppress a testimony which only awakened afresh their former hatred. Would not even Strauss allow that the moral state of the heart exerts a powerful influence over the intellect in regard to all such matters, and that there may be a feeling of hatred which will move the intellect to reject the clearest testimony? We have in the conduct of these Jewish rulers a proof of the most decided character that such is the case; and therefore his argument, keeping out of view the essential cir-
cumstances of the case, falls to the ground. It is easy for him so to construct the case that it shall contain a contradiction in itself. But the contradiction is due to the framer of the argument, not to the case itself. The Christian legend, as he terms the story recorded by Matthew, does not attribute to the Jewish authorities belief and unbelief at one and the same time. It is Strauss who, by misrepresenting the case, introduces this contradiction. The Jewish authorities did not believe that Jesus had risen, and yet remain enemies to Him. They continued in their unbelief, and as they could not but be startled by the report of the watch, they, still unbelieving, bribed the men to give out a different report. And would those, think you, who had employed the most nefarious means to get Jesus into their power, hesitate to employ similar means to suppress a report which, however true, only filled their minds with alarm at the same time that it added fuel to their hatred? We may also remark here that an objection has been often raised to the reality of Christ's resurrection, on the ground that He when risen did not appear to the Jewish rulers. This special objection will come to be discussed on another occasion. Meanwhile, we see that these rulers were not left without witness even on the very day that Jesus rose. They received unexpected testimony, and they rejected it. These men were indeed given over to believe a lie.

In the remarks with which Strauss concludes his discussion of the burial of Jesus there is only one thing stated that calls for special notice. It refers to "the intention of the women to embalm the body of Jesus after the Sabbath had elapsed." This circum-
stance he considers inconsistent with the story about the watch; and therefore Matthew, who gives this story, omits all mention of the embalming, whilst the two middle Evangelists record the latter and omit the former; and as for the fourth Evangelist, as he places the embalming on the Friday evening, he might, had he so pleased, have introduced the other story, but that legend was too far removed from his whole point of view for him to adopt it. All this supposed profound criticism rests upon the assumption that—

"If the sepulchre was sealed by authority, and watched by Roman soldiers, and the women knew it, as all Jerusalem, and especially all the nearest connections of Jesus must have known of a measure so remarkable and so publicly taken, they could not hope to get there with their spices."—Vol. ii. p. 402.

Now, it is easy to assert that "all Jerusalem, and especially all the connections of Jesus," and therefore that these women, knew of this measure which the rulers had adopted; but Strauss gives no evidence that such was the case, nor is there the slightest evidence in the narrative of Matthew that it was the case, at least that these women were at all aware of what the rulers had done. It is manifestly implied in the narrative that the women had no knowledge of it whatever; and in all probability no one except the rulers themselves and others who were officially cognisant of the matter, was aware that such means for guarding the sepulchre had been adopted. Matthew tells us plainly that it was on "the next day that followed the day of the preparation, that the chief priests and Pharisees came to-
gether unto Pilate” (ch. xxvii. 62). That next day was the Jewish Sabbath, and as the words of Jesus which they remembered pointed to the third day after His death, the probability is that they did not go to Pilate until the Sabbath was either over or wellnigh over. If this was the case, it would follow that few, if any, beyond those immediately concerned in the measure, had any knowledge of it; and thus the whole criticism about the reasons why Mark and Luke and John omitted the story of the watch falls to the ground. It is, like all the rest of the author's critical discussions, built on an assumption which is not only not proved, but the opposite of which is either proved or at least supported by probable evidence.

We have thus endeavoured to follow our objector in his long and tedious discussion respecting the burial of Jesus. You may rely upon it that he saw how important a bearing this subject has on his main object of attack—the Resurrection itself. Hence the reason is manifest why he has laboured so hard to set aside the unanimous testimony of the four Evangelists that Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph. He knew perfectly that if he admitted the truth of this testimony, he would have a difficult task indeed before him in attempting to disprove the reality of the resurrection; and he also knew that it would be something in his favour even could he only throw doubts on this matter. He has evaded, as we have seen, the main point in the narratives, and directed his whole argument against certain details. He has assumed that the body of Jesus was thrown into the usual burying-place of condemned criminals. The
Evangelists, with one voice, bear witness that this sacred body was now taken out of the hands of the enemies of Jesus, and laid in the tomb of a disciple—of a man of Arimathea, Joseph by name. And as heretofore, so to the end of time will the testimony of these Evangelists be held by all impartial judges as worthy of credit, whilst the groundless conjecture of Strauss will be accepted only by those who have previously made up their minds that Christianity is and can be nothing else than a cunningly-devised fable.
LECTURE XII.

STRAUSS ON THE EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

We now proceed to consider what Strauss has to allege against the unanimous testimony of all the writers of the New Testament that Jesus rose again from the dead. I need not repeat that, as we must allow him to speak for himself, and therefore to state his objections in his own way, so we must, however tedious and irksome the task may be to us, submit with patience to follow him in this great discussion, and endeavour to examine with all possible fairness whatever he has to object to our belief in the reality of that fact, which is at once the crowning evidence of the divine claims of Jesus and the sure pledge of our resurrection to eternal life and glory. We cannot but be anxious to ascertain whether this foundation of our faith and hope remains firm and steadfast notwithstanding his assault, probably the greatest and most determined which has been or can be made to remove it; or whether that foundation is successfully undermined, and we are left without Christ and without hope.

Strauss has two separate, though inseparably connected, discussions on this subject. In the first
discussion, which forms the concluding portion of his first book, he endeavours to expose the unsatisfactory character of the accounts contained in the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament of the resurrection of Jesus, and to show how, as he thinks, belief in this fact originated. In the second discussion, which forms the conclusion of his second book, he purposes to show that this myth grew up gradually—that is, that the accounts of the appearances of the risen Jesus form a series which is continually progressing from the visionary to the palpable, “from the subjective to the objective.” It is evidently his first discussion that demands our special and minute attention; for if he should succeed in throwing discredit on the accounts which present to us the testimony of the first or earliest disciples, we shall feel but little interest in tracing the gradual or sudden growth of a fable in which we once believed, but which we are now compelled to abandon as the product of delusion or imposture. Such an inquiry may possess a literary or historical interest, but can have no real or practical value.

Strauss enters on the first discussion in the following manner:

“According to all the Gospels, Jesus, after having been buried on the Friday evening, and lain during the Sabbath in the grave, came out of it restored to life at daybreak on Sunday (Matt. xxviii. 1, ff.; Mark xvi. 1, ff.; Luke xxiv. 1, ff.; John xx. 1, ff.) It is not said that any one participated in the sight of this occurrence. Even Matthew, who places watchmen at the grave, represents them as being blinded by the brilliance of the angel who descends from heaven to roll away the stone, and falling down dead, consequently as being incapable of seeing how the angel per-
formed his task and Jesus issued from the sepulchre. But soon after, according to all the Evangelists, more or fewer women came to the sepulchre, where they find the stone already rolled away, and upon this are made acquainted by one or more angels with the resurrection of Jesus, which is soon after proved by several appearances of Jesus himself.” —Vol. i. p. 396-7.

Now, knowing as we do that Strauss enters on this discussion with a foregone conclusion in his mind—for such a fact as that of the resurrection of Jesus, being a real miracle, is, in his view, a priori impossible—we are not to expect that his unbelief in this alleged fact shall not appear, even when he is professedly stating only the circumstances of the case as these are presented to us in the Gospel narratives. Whilst we would most anxiously avoid all hypercritical remarks, yet we are entitled to notice, if not the spirit, at least the manner in which he puts the case before us. Is it altogether fair to represent Matthew as “placing watchmen at the grave”? That is a point which, to say the least, is not as yet determined by him the one way or the other. Further, on what ground does he assume that the angel descended to roll away the stone in order that Jesus might issue from the tomb; and that, although He then did so, the watchmen did not see Him? That Jesus raised His body from the tomb early on the morning of the first day of the week, is indeed clearly implied in all the Evangelic narratives, but not one of them says that this great event took place when the angel descended and rolled away the stone. Let us adhere strictly to what the Evangelists say, and where they are silent, let us not add to their statements.
The next passage is one which we quoted before, and in the general sentiments of which we thoroughly agree.

"Here, then, we stand on that decisive point where, in the presence of the accounts of the miraculous resurrection of Jesus, we either acknowledge the inadmissibility of the natural and historical view of the life of Jesus, and must consequently retract all that precedes, and so give up our whole undertaking, or pledge ourselves to make out the possibility of the result of these accounts—i.e., the origin of the belief in the resurrection of Jesus without any corresponding miraculous fact. The more immediately this question touches all Christianity to the quick, the more regard we must pay to the sensibility with which every unprejudiced word that is uttered about it is received, and even to the sensible effect which such words may have upon him who pronounces them; but the more important the point is, and the more decisive on the other side for the whole view of Christianity, the more pressing is the demand upon the investigator to set aside all these considerations and pronounce upon it in a perfectly unprejudiced, perfectly decided spirit, without ambiguity and without reserve."—Vol. i. p. 397.

We have said that we thoroughly agree in the general sentiments expressed in this passage. The resurrection of Jesus is indeed that fact which touches Christianity to the quick—that one fact on which the whole of Christianity really rests as its very basis. If this fact cannot be established by adequate proof, Christianity, so far as its divine claims are concerned, falls to the ground. If it can be so established, then Christianity in all its divine character stands secure as on a rock. But how, may we ask, can that man fairly investigate the evidence presented in the Gospels in support of this fact in a spirit "perfectly unprejudiced,"
who assumes, at the outset of his investigation, that no such fact is possible? Such a man is, by his very assumption, pledged to make out, not whether the accounts in the Gospels are worthy or unworthy of credit, but "the possibility of the result of these accounts—that is, the origin of the belief in the resurrection of Jesus without any corresponding miraculous fact." The man who admits the possibility of a miracle such as this alleged fact implies, is not a priori pledged to make out the reality of this fact. His conclusion will depend on the nature and value of the evidence; and this evidence he is bound and entitled to examine in the strictest possible manner, and with all impartiality. But Strauss cannot, consistently with his own assumption, conduct this examination in such a spirit. He has already settled the question in his own mind, and we can therefore anticipate only the utmost exercise of ingenuity in order to establish his foregone conclusion.

The next long passage refers to the treatment of this subject by others, especially by Hase and Ewald and Baur. It is only necessary to allude to what he says of Baur, who, in his work on 'The Christianity of the First Three Centuries,' "declares that the real nature of the resurrection of Jesus lies outside the limits of historical investigation," and accordingly, as Strauss says, "avoids, at least in words, the burning question." Strauss avows himself as dissatisfied with this declaration by Baur.

"For his words," says he, "appear to mean that it cannot be historically discovered, and that it is not even a problem for historical investigation to find out, whether the resurrection of Jesus was an objective occurrence, either miraculous
or natural, or whether it was only the belief of his disciples. But of this much at any rate,” he adds, “Baur was convinced, that in no respect was the first of these alternatives the case—that in no respect was the resurrection of Jesus an objective occurrence; consequently the second resulted as a matter of course.”

Strauss further expresses his dissatisfaction with Baur’s statement.

“The saving clause that he (Baur) was convinced of this not as an historian, but as a philosopher, was in part irrelevant, in part sophistry. For, traced only historically,” affirms Strauss, in direct opposition to what Baur’s statement implied, “he must acknowledge that the accounts of the resurrection given in the New Testament are insufficient to prove a real resuscitation of the crucified Jesus.”—Vol. i. p. 398.

The ground of this insufficiency, you will now observe, is not an historical ground, which, according to Baur’s confession, does not exist, but a so-called philosophical ground, which Baur, with his sceptical tendency, was, equally with Strauss, ready to admit. But then Strauss insists that so much of philosophy as will at least deny the possibility of a miracle is an indispensable requisite in an historian, and that Baur himself had on other occasions given proof of his possessing this qualification.

“But so much of philosophy as is required here and elsewhere to disprove a miracle is indispensable for the historian, and has been everywhere applied by Baur especially as an historian.”

The only thing worthy of our notice in these remarks is, first, that Baur’s statement implies that the reality of the resurrection of Jesus cannot be
historically disproved; and, secondly, that this alleged fact, which cannot be disproved on historical grounds, is disproved on a philosophical ground—namely, on the ground that a miracle is impossible; in other words, is disproved only by an assumption which involves the disproof—is disproved by a begging of the question. History and philosophy are thus antagonistic; and a reconciliation of the two can take place only when the historian introduces into his own sphere a principle which compels him to interpret the accounts of events not according to their real character, but as they are affected by the assumed principle. It is so far satisfactory to know that an avowed opponent of the Gospel would not pronounce the accounts of the resurrection insufficient but for a so-called principle which assumes that they cannot be sufficient.

Strauss next refers to another statement by Baur, which he praises very highly—namely,

"That the necessary historical hypothesis for all that follows is not so much the real element in the resurrection of Jesus as the faith in it." "That is a hint," adds Strauss, "for the apologists, who would like to persuade the world that if the reality of the resurrection is not recognised, the origin and rise of the Christian Church cannot be explained. No, says the historian, and rightly, only thus much need be acknowledged, that the disciples firmly believed that Jesus had arisen; this is perfectly sufficient to make their further progress and operations intelligible: what that belief rested upon, what there was real in the resurrection of Jesus, is an open question, which the investigator may answer one way or another, without the origin of Christianity being thereby made more or less conceivable."—Vol. i. p. 398-9.

Whether the belief of the disciples in the reality of the resurrection could, under the circumstances, have
existed had that resurrection not been real; and whether, viewed abstractly, their belief is sufficient to account for the remarkable change which took place in their views and character, and also to account for all that followed in the spread of the Gospel throughout the world, are questions which cannot be discussed except in connection with all the facts of the case. But is it not absurd in Strauss to represent as "an open question" the determining of what that belief rested upon, when he, as a professed investigator, has pledged himself to determine it only in one way? According to his assumed principle of the impossibility of a miracle, there can be only one answer to the proposed question.

The great question, then, before us, respects the origin of that belief, which Strauss as well as Baur admits the disciples to have firmly held, in the resurrection of Jesus. Of this question there can be only two possible solutions. The belief must have been grounded on an objective fact, or it must have been only a subjective impression without any corresponding objective reality.

"The origin of that faith in the disciples," says Strauss, "is fully accounted for if we look upon the resurrection of Jesus as the Evangelists describe it, as an external miraculous occurrence; that is, if we suppose that Jesus really died, was recalled to life by God by an act of his omnipotence, or rather transported by him into a new and higher kind of existence, in which he could indeed exercise his influence in a material and perceptible manner on his followers on earth, but, being no longer subject to death, was soon taken up into heaven into the immediate neighbourhood of God. But," he adds, "we are prevented by
various reasons from adopting this view as our own. Whether we consider miracles in general as possible or not, if we are to consider a miracle of so unheard-of a description as having really occurred, it must be proved to us by evidence in such a manner that the untruth of such evidence would be more difficult to conceive than the reality of that which it was intended to prove. Now, the assumption that any one of our Gospels had for its author either an Apostle or any eyewitness at all of the life of Jesus, is one which was not proved in what has gone before. The only book in the New Testament, the authorship of which by any one of the twelve Apostles we found to be at all events possible, the Revelation of John, does not carry us further than the general belief that Jesus was put to death, and is now living in immortality" (i. 5-18; ii. 8, &c.)—Vol. i. p. 399.

Strauss professes in this passage to be prevented by various reasons from adopting the view given by the Evangelists; and waiving, for the moment, his principle that a miracle is impossible, he demands that such a miracle as that of the resurrection should "be proved to us by evidence in such a manner that the untruth of such evidence would be more difficult to conceive than the reality of that which it was intended to prove." Now, there can be no objection to this demand, rightly understood. The evidence for the reality of such a fact must be of a most satisfactory nature. It must be such as corresponds to the extraordinary character of the fact—such evidence as will prove to us that the persons giving it were not deceived themselves, and were competent to bear valid testimony to others. For such a fact we must unquestionably have the evidence of eyewitnesses; and we are entitled to examine and cross-examine these witnesses, in order to satisfy us that they were not
labouring under delusion, or were not deceived by others. They must not only assert their own belief in the fact of the resurrection, but tell us plainly the circumstances which impressed them with this belief, so that, placing ourselves in their room, we may determine whether, under the circumstances presented to them, we also would have believed.

Admitting, then, when rightly understood, Strauss's demand in respect to the character of the evidence required, we cannot but object to his assertion respecting the authorship of the Gospels. True it is that he regards it as an assumption to admit the commonly acknowledged authorship of these Gospels, and he says that this assumption was not proved in his dissertations on that subject; but the fact is that it is he who is chargeable with assumption on this subject, for these Gospels have from their very origin been received and acknowledged by all sections of the Christian Church as the writings of two Apostles and of two companions of Apostles. All existing external testimony is in favour of this authorship. There is not a single fact which either Strauss or any one else has been able to bring forward and establish against this authorship; and the writings themselves, though they do not all tell us who were their authors, bear a testimony which is in perfect harmony with the external evidence. Further, Strauss's chief objection to the received authorship of the Gospels is drawn from the supposition that Jesus did not and could not work miracles, and that therefore no eyewitness of the life of Jesus, and no person who had learned about Jesus from an eyewitness, could have described Him as the Gospels do—
that is, as working miracles. Strauss reasons, therefore, about the authorship of the Gospels in a vicious circle; and, indeed, all his arguments, from first to last, are vitiated by his one grand assumption that a miracle is impossible.

He would allow that the Apocalypse or Revelation of St John is an Apostolic writing—the work of one who was an eyewitness of Jesus; but whilst he would allow this, he asserts that in that book we find only an assertion of the general belief that Jesus, who had been put to death, was now living in immortality; that is, an assertion of the belief, not that Jesus was raised from the dead, but that without such a real resurrection as the Gospels affirm He was merely believed to be alive in heaven. In proof of this assertion he refers us to Chap. i. 5-18, and to other passages. Now, the first passage referred to clearly points to the resurrection of Jesus, so that, even according to Strauss himself, we have the testimony of at least one eyewitness to this fact. In the fifth verse the Apostle John, who is allowed by Strauss to have been the author of this book, designates Jesus as the Faithful Witness, and as the First-begotten—the First-born—of the dead; an expression which clearly refers to His having been dead and buried—as having been in the womb of death, and as having risen from the dead, born of this womb, in a pre-eminent manner, so that He, the risen Jesus, is the first-born of all who, through union with Him, shall rise to life everlasting. The phrase, "First-born of the dead," cannot possibly refer to His being raised to a higher life in heaven, apart from an actual resurrection from the tomb in which His body was laid; and to give such an inter-
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pretation to the phrase is merely to force it to uphold an hypothesis. Again, in this same passage (ver. 10), the Apostle says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," ἐν τῷ θυμῷ Ἑβραίων ἡμέρα, an expression which manifestly means on the day commemorative of the Lord—that is, the first day of the week, which was held sacred to the Lord, as commemorative of His resurrection—the Apostle by this very expression confirming the testimony of all the Evangelists, that on the first day of the week Jesus rose from the dead. We have thus the testimony of at least one, whom Strauss himself is willing to regard as an eyewitness of the life of Jesus, to the fact of the resurrection.

Strauss now professedly enters on the examination of the evidence in support of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, and, as he has already intimated, his purpose is to show that this evidence is wholly insufficient. He examines, first, the statements of the Apostle Paul bearing on this subject.

"The earliest writer," he says, "who gives us any accurate information as to how the belief in the resurrection of Jesus arose among his disciples is the Apostle Paul, who was not an eyewitness of the original phenomena which were the ground of this belief, but, as he himself says, relates what he had heard from others. He tells them (1 Cor. xv. 3-7) how he had 'received' that Jesus, who had died and been buried according to the Scriptures, had risen again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he had appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve, then to more than five hundred brethren at once, then to James, then to all the Apostles. There is no occasion to doubt that the Apostle Paul had heard this from Peter, James, and perhaps from others concerned (comp. Gal. i. 18 ff., ii. 9), and that all of these, even the five hundred, were firmly convinced that
they had seen Jesus, who had been dead, and was alive again."—Vol. i. p. 399, 400.

Before we quote further, let us carefully notice the admissions here made by Strauss. "There is no occasion to doubt," he says, "that the Apostle Paul had heard this"—namely, "that they had seen Jesus, who had been dead and was alive again"—"from Peter, James, and perhaps from others concerned;" and further, "there is no occasion to doubt that all of these, even the five hundred, were firmly convinced that they had so seen Jesus." Here, then, is an admission that all these persons believed in the resurrection of Jesus, and that they professed to believe in this fact on the evidence of sight. Peter believed that he had seen Him; so did James; so did the twelve Apostles as a body; and so did the more than five hundred brethren, who said that they had all seen Him at one and the same time. It is not doubted by Strauss that all these—Apostles and brethren—told what they believed to be true. He admits that they were all firmly convinced of the fact. Can such evidence, then, be lightly set aside? Granting the possibility of delusion on the part of a single person, can we imagine that eleven or twelve men would all be deluded on more than one occasion in a matter of sensible perception at one and the same time? Still more, can we imagine that five hundred men should all be simultaneously convinced that they saw a Living Man whom they did not see? Five hundred men believe that Jesus, who had been put to death, stands before them. Not one of the whole crowd doubts the fact. The eleven disciples, according to Paul, assert that they had also seen Him on two different occa-
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sions. Peter asserts that he also, when alone, had seen Him; and James bears the same testimony. Now, let us candidly estimate all this evidence, and ask ourselves whether it is not evidence of the highest order. It is the evidence of eyewitnesses—of hundreds of eyewitnesses. Unless we maintain as an abstract fixed principle that such a fact as the resurrection of Jesus is in itself impossible, how can we get over such evidence? Is it not more difficult to conceive the untruth of such evidence than the reality of the resurrection itself? We apprehend that it is so, and that we must feel it to be so, when we endeavour fairly to realise in our minds this varied and extensive evidence. We have as yet taken no account of the evidence of Paul himself. We have merely regarded him as honestly reporting what he had heard, and heard from the first sources. Paul's testimony, being undoubted by Strauss, places before us all these eyewitnesses; and we hear them, one and all, relating as a fact of sensible perception that they had seen Jesus alive again. We hear them telling us this fact, and that they believed it on the evidence of their own eyes. They saw Him alive again.

Let us now hear what Strauss has to say in order to weaken the force of this apparently most sufficient evidence; and we shall see another remarkable specimen of that ingenuity with which he labours so persistently to close his eyes to what must appear to us the clearest light.

"If, however, we ask, as we must be allowed to do, the question referring to this belief in something so unheard of, how these men convinced themselves that their supposed sight did not rest on a delusion, our voucher"—that is, the
Apostle Paul—"leaves us in the lurch. He only says simply that the Jesus who was alive again, had 'appeared' (ἀπε之道) to them; that is, that they thought they perceived him, and perceived him in a visible form; but he does not tell us how they arrived at this belief, what grounds they had for considering the appearance as something real, and indeed as the appearance of their Master, who was dead."—Vol. i. p. 400.

We formerly remarked on this subject, and endeavoured to show the main design of the Apostle's argument in this chapter; and we will not repeat our remarks upon it. But we must again observe that, though the Apostle is led to state the evidence for the reality of Christ's resurrection, his main design is to expose and suppress the erroneous view which some of the professing Christians at Corinth, misled by their false philosophical opinions, had adopted and were spreading; namely, that there will be no resurrection of the body at the last day. The Apostle, as we showed, builds his whole argument against this error, which he deemed a most grievous one, on the basis of the reality of Christ's resurrection—a fact which these speculative Christians professed to admit. Now, Strauss would have had the Apostle not only state the evidence which he does in attestation of this admitted fact, but also enter on a discussion respecting the validity of that evidence. I remarked before that had the Apostle done this, Strauss's ingenuity would have probably suggested a suspicion that all was not right when the Apostle deemed such a discussion necessary. But, apart from this, what does Strauss mean when he says that Paul "leaves us in the lurch," because he does not tell us
"how these men convinced themselves that their supposed sight did not rest on a delusion?" Paul does not indeed tell us all that took place on the several occasions on which these men saw the risen Jesus. But have we no other accounts besides this of Paul's? And do not these accounts tell us that the senses of hearing and touch confirmed the testimony of sight? Paul does not profess to discuss the evidence of the persons to whom he refers in a formal manner. He regards the evidence of sight as under the circumstances valid and sufficient; and he is right; for it is not the evidence of one man or of two men, but the evidence also of eleven men twice given; yea, the evidence of five hundred men all at once. We maintain that the evidence of sight thus repeated and thus given cannot but be trustworthy, and that, therefore, our voucher does not "leave us in the lurch." These men could not but believe what they saw; and who ever heard of a multitude of men being all at one time led to suppose that they saw a person standing before them whom they did not see?

But our objector, perfectly satisfied with his own reasoning, goes a little farther. He doubts "whether Paul had investigated this point for himself." Let us hear the whole of his estimate of Paul's state of mind. Only let us remember that in the passage referred to in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, we have remarkable expressions which clearly show how self-possessed Paul was, and how anxiously he had thought about this very subject. "If Christ be not risen," he says, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; yea," he adds in most solemn words, "yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have
testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not" (ver. 14, 15). Remembering the solemnity, earnestness, and perfect self-possession of the Apostle, let us patiently, however sorrowfully, listen to the manner in which Strauss detracts from the value of his testimony.

After expressing his doubt whether Paul had investigated for himself the grounds on which the belief of those, whom he mentions as having seen the risen Jesus, rested, he proceeds thus:—

"After he had himself witnessed that apparition of Christ which we shall have to discuss further on, he was so sure of his case, so satisfied in his own behalf, and so sufficiently instructed, that he let three years go by, before he started from Damascus, in the neighbourhood of which he had had the vision, to go for the first time to Jerusalem, to get more accurate information about Jesus in general, and in particular about those appearances of him after his death which others also professed to have had (Gal. i. 18, ff.) We must assume that he had heard in many ways of these appearances even at an earlier period, while he was persecuting the confessors of the new Christ; but it is quite as clear that in his then impassioned state of mind he was not qualified calmly to investigate what was real in them. And after his conversion he felt no impulse leading him to such an investigation; on the contrary, he could satisfy himself for three whole years with what he thought he had himself seen and heard. Now this proves sufficiently the pure subjectivity of the whole turn his mind had taken, how little adapted he was, generally, to undertake the historical investigation of an objective fact. Indeed, he regularly boasts that he looked for nothing beyond that apparition; that even in Jerusalem he conversed with none of the Apostles excepting Peter, and James the brother of the Lord. These may have told him of the appearances which they could boast of having wit-
nessed, perhaps even one or two of the five hundred brethren may have spoken to him of what they thought they had observed. But that he should have instituted a more accurate investigation with regard to these statements, have tested the foundations of them, their consistency with themselves and with each other, is not to be expected of a man who, already convinced to superfluity by the supposed apparition which he had seen himself, was also to a certain degree jealous as to the admissibility of this subjective conviction.”—Vol. i. p. 400-1.

If ever there was a specimen of what is termed special pleading in support of a preconceived conclusion, I humbly think we may fairly say that here is one. The conclusion, assumed at the outset, and to be supported by some kind of argument or other, is, that the Apostle Paul, either from indisposition of mind or from incapacity, abstained from investigating the grounds on which the belief of those who said that they had seen Jesus alive after His death, rested. This conclusion is manifestly assumed, and Strauss sets himself to the task of framing an argument in support of the assumption. He does not deny, you will observe, that Paul also believed that he himself had seen the Lord; but though he postpones the discussion as to the nature of this asserted fact, he in the mean time assumes and reasons upon the assumption that this alleged appearance had no corresponding objective reality, but was a pure subjective impression in the Apostle's mind; and he even represents Paul as being himself "to a certain degree jealous as to the admissibility of this subjective conviction."

In respect to this last assertion Strauss, neither here s
nor in his special discussion on "the appearance of Christ to this Apostle," produces the slightest evidence. That Paul was jealous of his claim to the Apostleship, and of the freedom of believers in Christ from the ritual observances of the Jewish law, there is abundant proof. But there is nothing to show that he was in any degree jealous as to the admissibility of what Strauss terms his "subjective conviction." As it was an essential qualification for the office of an Apostle that the person holding this office should be able to testify to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus, Paul on one occasion appeals to his having seen the Lord as one of the essential proofs of his Apostleship; but so far is such an appeal from exhibiting the state of mind with which Strauss charges him, that it furnishes a proof of the very contrary, for he appeals to the fact as one which admitted of no dispute. "Am I not an Apostle?" he says; "Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an Apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord" (1 Cor. ix. 1, 2). Here it is most manifest that he is vindicating not "the admissibility of a subjective conviction" as to his having seen the Lord, but the claim of his Apostleship on this, as one ground, that he had actually seen Him. And yet Strauss assumes, as if it were a matter beyond all dispute, that it was the former of which Paul was to a certain extent manifesting jealousy.

Let us now observe the manner in which Strauss misrepresents the Apostle's conduct immediately after his conversion, and also the reasons which induced
him to visit Jerusalem. The Apostle himself in another epistle, which also the school of Strauss admits to be genuine, most clearly informs the Churches of Galatia (which he had been instrumental in planting, and among which great efforts were being made by Judaising missionaries to throw discredit on his Apostolic authority) in respect to both these matters, so that it is inexcusable in any one to give, as Strauss has done, a misrepresentation of them for any purpose whatever, and especially in order to uphold an hypothesis adopted to discredit that Apostle's own clear statement of the objective reality of Christ's appearance to him. Whatever information as to facts, connected with the life and ministry of Jesus, Paul may have heard before his conversion, or may have received after his conversion from Ananias and other disciples at Damascus, he tells us plainly in the epistle referred to, that in addition to the miraculous appearance of Christ to him when he was nigh unto Damascus, he received a special revelation from God respecting the Lord Jesus, to enable him to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles; and that it was because of this special revelation, and not merely because he had seen the risen Jesus, that he did not require to be taught by man—even by those who were Apostles before him. Strauss, in direct opposition to the Apostle's words, limits the whole matter of the Gospel to the fact bearing on the existence and therefore the appearance of Christ; whereas in addition to this fact, fundamental as it was, there was a knowledge of Christ which constituted the substance of the Gospel, and which that appearance could not of itself impart. Paul needed to be instructed respecting this Jesus of
Nazareth, who had so marvellously appeared to him, and apprehended him when he was pursuing his mad career. And it was God, as he tells us, who, after this appearance, revealed His Son in him—made known to him, by special revelation, those great truths respecting Jesus, the Son of God, which constitute the glad tidings of salvation. Strauss confounds these two distinct things, the appearance of Jesus and the subjective revelation which Paul afterwards received; and the whole of his argument rests on the assumption that these two things were one and the same thing.

He also charges Paul with being, after the appearance of Christ to him, "so sure of his case, so satisfied in his own behalf, and so sufficiently instructed, that he let three years go by, before he started from Damascus, in the neighbourhood of which he had had the vision, to go for the first time to Jerusalem to get more accurate information about Jesus in general, and in particular about those appearances of Him after His death which others also professed to have had' (Gal. i. 18, ff.)" Now, this charge manifestly proceeds on the assumption that Paul received no other than human instruction respecting Jesus, and that he at length, after so unaccountable a delay, went to Jerusalem on purpose to obtain fuller or more accurate information, and specially to investigate reports which had reached him that others had been favoured with appearances of Jesus after His death. In support of these grounds on which the charge is founded, Strauss appeals to a passage in the Epistle to the Galatians which tells us the very contrary. What were all the Apostle's reasons for not visiting Jerusalem until after a period of three years
from his conversion, we are not informed; but after stating that he had been taught respecting Jesus by a special revelation from God, he mentions that he passed some time, how long is not stated, in Arabia; that he returned thence to Damascus; and that after three years—that is, three years after his conversion—he went up to Jerusalem to see—to visit—Peter, with whom he abode fifteen days. He also tells us that Peter was the only one of the twelve then in Jerusalem, for that "he saw no other of the Apostles, save James the Lord's brother."

This is, in all probability, the visit related in the Acts ix. 26, ff.; and we there learn that when he arrived in Jerusalem the disciples were afraid of him, and refused to admit him into their fellowship, until "Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles"—that is, to Peter, and also to James, who, though not one of the twelve, was reckoned an Apostle—"and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that He, the Lord, had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." And then "he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem." The true state of the case, then, as respects this first visit, is this. It was not the Apostle Paul who investigated, or needed to investigate, the nature of the appearances of Jesus to the Apostles and others, but they who required to be assured of the reality of the alleged appearance of Jesus to him; and it was only after Barnabas rehearsed the sensible evidence of sight and hearing, that they were convinced of the reality of that appearance. Here we have a remarkable proof that the first disciples were not so ready, as Strauss and others would have us to
believe, to listen to mere rumours, or to arrive at conclusions without thorough and legitimate evidence.

Again, Paul does not in his epistle tell us expressly what was the subject that engaged his attention in his interviews with Peter and James. We learn from the passage referred to in the Acts, that after the Apostles and disciples were satisfied that he had seen and heard the Lord, “he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians; but that they went about to slay him.” There is not the slightest probability that he felt it necessary to engage in any such investigation as Strauss insists upon. It was not, we may rely upon it, any doubt as to the reality of the Lord's resurrection and subsequent appearances that occupied the mind of Paul. These were settled matters. The probability is, that he would consult with them as to the sphere of his future labours in the Gospel. But whatever may have been the case as to this, we know for certain that the result of that short visit was, that the report concerning his conversion and his efforts in preaching the Gospel was confirmed, not only to the disciples in Jerusalem, but also to the Churches beyond Jerusalem—to the Churches of Judæa, to the members of which he had formerly been personally unknown, and who “had heard only, that he who had persecuted them in times past was now preaching the faith which once he destroyed;” and that “they glorified God in him” (Gal. i. 23, 24).

In the same epistle Paul mentions another visit which, along with Barnabas and Titus, he paid to Jerusalem about fourteen years after his conversion, and distinctly tells us what was the great subject then discussed between him and such of the Apostles and
brethren as were in the city. James, Peter, and John were present at the council which was then held, and the question affecting the relation of the Gentile Churches to the ritual law was determined. These Apostles, who were among the chief rulers of the Church, "perceiving the grace that was given unto Paul," recognised him as an Apostle, and gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; and it was arranged that these two should go specially to the Gentiles, whilst they themselves were to labour chiefly among the Jews (Gal. ii. 1-9).

Such having been the real state of the case, we think we have completely established our statement, that the whole of this theory of Strauss as to the indifference of Paul to the question affecting the historical reality of what he had heard about the appearances of Jesus to others, and his incapacity, from the impassioned state of his mind, to investigate such a subject, proceeds from a misconception, and consequently a misrepresentation, of the manner in which Paul received his knowledge about Jesus, and of the main reasons which induced him to visit Jerusalem, whether on the first occasion after his conversion or at any subsequent time. The whole passage is, as we have said, a mere specimen of special pleading in support of a foregone conclusion.

Strauss next sums up the conclusions which he imagines he has established:

"As regards the first point, therefore, the statement of an eyewitness with regard to the appearances upon which the belief in the resurrection of Jesus originally rested, we have it not. In the second place, the witness with regard to whom we might assume that he drew his information
from the lips of eyewitnesses, the Apostle Paul, does not lead us beyond the fact that these eyewitnesses firmly believed that they had seen Jesus returned to life."—Vol. i. p. 401.

It is evident from what we have already said in respect to Strauss's arguments in support of these conclusions, that neither of them has been established. But, you will observe, it was deemed by Strauss of the greatest importance to show that we have no evidence, either at first or at second hand, in support of the resurrection of Jesus. He is forced to admit that the first disciples firmly believed in the fact of the resurrection; but assuming, as he does, that this belief had no other ground than a mere subjective impression, he cannot allow that we have any authentic statement of the circumstances which produced this belief.

Not one of the Gospels must be allowed to have been written by an Apostle, for then we should have a "statement of an eyewitness with regard to the appearances upon which the belief in the resurrection of Jesus originally rested." Nay, it must not be allowed that any one of the Gospels was written even by a companion of Apostles, for in that case we should have a similar statement from one who had received his information from eyewitnesses. The only book in the New Testament for the Apostolic authorship of which it is conceded there is some evidence is that of "the Revelation of St John;" and though an appeal is made to a passage in that book which clearly implies the fact of the resurrection, yet we must understand the Apostle not as really testifying such a fact, but as only expressing the belief,
common to all the Apostles and disciples, that Jesus, “who had been put to death, was now alive, and in a state of exaltation with God.” Any assumption or any interpretation of passages must be adopted, which will support the foregone conclusion, that Jesus in reality did not rise from the dead.

As for the Apostle Paul, “we might have assumed that he drew his information from the lips of eyewitnesses,” and that he would have given us statements of circumstances which would have enabled us to determine whether the first disciples really saw Jesus, or only thought that they saw Him when they did not. But, unfortunately, he tells us simply that Jesus was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, then of above five hundred brethren at once, then of James, then of all the Apostles, and lastly of himself. And then, postponing the discussion of the appearance to himself, and assuming in the mean time that it was a mere subjective impression without any corresponding objective fact, we must find fault with him for not having investigated the grounds on which the others were led to consider the appearances to them as something real. Indeed, when we consider the highly impassioned state of his mind, we may cease to wonder why he neglected such an investigation. He was so satisfied as respects his own case, that he did not go to Jerusalem until after the lapse of three years to make inquiries on this subject, as is evident from what he writes in his Epistle to the Churches of Galatia—although, when we interpret the passage as it presents itself to us, it would appear he went to Jerusalem for a quite different purpose. As for the appearance to himself, it will be afterwards shown
that there was no real appearance of Jesus to him.

Thus we have, concludes Strauss after such reasoning as we have endeavoured to expose, no evidence either from a first or a second hand to convince us that the belief of the first disciples rested on any real fact. Is it not amazing that any man, pretending to investigate a subject in an unprejudiced state of mind, can have satisfied himself with such childish and absurd reasoning as we have been compelled to examine? The whole reasoning is frivolous in the extreme. But we must exercise patience, and listen to what he has yet to say.

Having stated his two conclusions, apparently with all the satisfaction which one might feel on having reached the conclusion of a mathematical theorem, Strauss proceeds to the Evangelic narratives themselves, such as in his estimation they are.

"If we would learn anything more accurate, we must turn to the Evangelists, and they are witnesses in regard to not one of whom we can unhesitatingly assume that, like the Apostle Paul, he received his information from the lips of eyewitnesses. Their evidence, therefore, has not, a priori, the weight which it must have to counterbalance that of the improbability of the fact to which it testifies."—Vol. i. p. 401-2.

Observe the summary manner in which the evidence of these Evangelists is set aside. The manner exhibits a slight degree of ingenuity. We are not entitled unhesitatingly to assume, says Strauss, that any one of the Evangelists received his information from the lips of eyewitnesses. But the Apostle Paul
did receive his information from such witnesses. Now, having shown that his testimony is insufficient, we cannot possibly look upon the testimony of the Evangelists, whatever it may be, as even equal to his, and therefore as sufficient to counterbalance the improbability of the fact to which he testifies—the "improbability," you will observe—that being a more plausible term to employ here, although the main argument against Paul's testimony, and against the acknowledged authorship of the Gospels, rests, not on the mere improbability, but on the assumed absolute impossibility, of the fact in question. We need not, however, again specially point out the vicious character of such reasoning. We have arrived at a different class of arguments, and we shall have to follow our objector very closely, and with the utmost watchfulness. He is now to show that the Evangelists contradict Paul and one another. If he fairly makes out such a result, then we admit that whoever wrote the Gospels, their trustworthiness is gone, and we shall have no other alternative than that which Strauss would have us to receive. Such, then, being the issue at stake, let us, as we have said, hear our objector with patience, and at the same time with all possible watchfulness.

"Add to this," says Strauss—that is, to the a priori argument stated above—"that the narratives of the Evangelists contradict in many ways, not only the accounts of the Apostle Paul, but also each other. This Apostle says nothing of the appearances of Jesus before women, who in the Evangelists, Luke excepted, stand in the foreground (Matt. xxviii. 9; Mark xvi. 9; John xx. 14, ff.) This may be explained upon the supposition that he only wished to appeal
to the testimony of men, in the same way as the author of the supplement to the fourth Gospel does not take in the appearance of Jesus before Mary Magdalene, which is mentioned in this Gospel. Luke (xxiv. 34) as well as Paul states Peter to have been the first (man, if we will have it so) to whom an appearance of the newly-risen Jesus was accorded. But neither Matthew nor even John knew anything of such an appearance having been accorded to Peter, but speak only of that before the Apostles collectively (Matt. xxviii. 16; Mark xvi. 16; comp. John xx. 19, 26), which Paul separates from the appearance to Peter. He says nothing of the appearance to the two disciples going into the country, of which Luke (xxiv. 13, ff.) and Mark (xvi. 12) give an account. This may be supposed to be accounted for by the fact that, as compared with the appearance to the Apostles on the one hand, and the five hundred brethren on the other, this seemed to him to be of but little importance. But this last again is unknown to the Evangelists, as is also a special appearance to James, of which Paul makes mention, but which is found only elsewhere in the Gospel of the Hebrews. Finally, a second appearance before the Apostles collectively, with which Paul concludes his enumeration, is not found, at all events, in the first three Evangelists; but in John, where, on the first occasion, Thomas being absent, only ten Apostles were present, Jesus appears eight days later, once to the full College of eleven; and in the introduction to the Acts of the Apostles, where for the first time the presence of the risen Jesus upon earth is extended to forty days, time is indeed given for all possible appearances, but at the price of a complete contradiction with the earlier account of the same author in the Gospel, where the last appearance of Jesus after his resurrection takes place, unmistakably, on the day of the resurrection itself.”—Vol. i. p. 402-3.

Such is the first portion of Strauss's statement to prove that "the narratives of the Evangelists contra-
dict in many ways not only the accounts of the Apostle Paul, but also each other.” As we formerly considered Paul's account, and also compared the accounts in the Gospels with each other, it is not necessary for us to go over this ground again. A very few remarks will be sufficient to show that Strauss entirely fails, so far as he has yet gone, to establish his grave assertion. First of all, what is a contradiction? Is it not when one account expressly states that something took place which, according to the equally express statement in another account, did not take place? "Paul says nothing of the appearance of Jesus before women, who in the Evangelists, Luke excepted, stand in the foreground." Is there any contradiction here between Paul and these Evangelists? Does he say that Jesus did not appear before women? What the reasons were which led Paul and the Evangelists to mention the particular appearances which they record, is an entirely different question, and one which, assuming that there were several appearances, we are not entitled seriously to ask. Every historian of an event which is accompanied with a variety of details may, in recording that event, give more or fewer of these details, as he deems suitable to his purpose. It is most unreasonable to assert that diversity in the statement of such details implies real contradiction in the writers of the several narratives; and it is unwarrantable in Strauss, whatever may be his view of the Gospel narratives and of Paul's account, to employ the term "contradiction" in the case before him. He has pointed out considerable diversity; but with all his keen-sightedness he has not put his finger on a single "contradic-
tion." Like some others, he infers most unfairly that because Paul or an Evangelist does not mention something which another does, therefore he was ignorant of it. Such a mode of argument would not be tolerated in any other case. Why, then, should it be for a moment tolerated here? If these writers do really contradict one another, let the contradiction be pointed out, and then we shall know how to estimate their statements. But let us not deal with these writers as if the most perverted forms of argument were justly applicable to them. In order to have secured their narratives against Strauss's charge of contradiction, they ought to have been the same in every detail. Had this been the case, it requires no ingenuity to discover what Strauss and others would then have said. But we formerly showed that these accounts, substantially one, yet diversified in details, throw great light on each other, and that the result of a fair comparison of all their contents establishes the truth of their several narratives.

As to that "complete contradiction" which Strauss discovers between two separate accounts given by the same writer, it exists solely in his own mind, not in the narratives of St Luke. He does not say in his Gospel that the last appearance of Jesus after His resurrection took place on the day of the resurrection itself. We showed, when discussing his Gospel narrative, that it was his manner to combine different details. After recording one which took place on the evening of the day of the resurrection, Luke only records the last appearance of the risen Jesus; and having further detailed information from the same author in the Acts of the Apostles, we are bound in
all fairness to avail ourselves of this additional information to clear up what was left obscure in the briefer account. We do not believe, as some defenders of Luke have alleged, that he knew more details when he wrote his second treatise than he did when he wrote the first. We believe that he had the second treatise in view at the time when he wrote his Gospel, and that he purposely concluded his Gospel as he has done.

So far, then, as we have yet heard Strauss, we unhesitatingly conclude that he has completely failed to make out his charge, and that if he has no stronger proofs of contradiction to bring forward, his failure will constitute a remarkable testimony to the truth of the Gospel narratives as well as to that of the Apostle Paul's account.

Strauss proceeds thus:—

"Up to this point an opponent might maintain that neither Paul nor any one of the Evangelists undertakes to mention all the appearances after the resurrection. But this defence is not available for the fourth Evangelist, as regards the author of the 21st chapter, who particularises the appearances up to the third (xxi. 14). There would be, then, that before the eleven (xx. 19, ff.; the absence of Thomas may be considered as unimportant), consequently the second of St Paul, the first; that before the full College of the Apostles (xx. 26, ff.), therefore the fifth of Paul, the second; the appearances to Peter and James, the first and fourth in Paul, are omitted, it might be said because only concerning one Apostle; but why that before five hundred brethren, among whom, in all probability, the eleven also were? while that to the seven Apostles on the Sea of Galilee (xxi. 1, ff.) is not considered too unimportant to be mentioned as the third appearance, though nothing corresponding to it is
found either in Paul or in any of the other Evangelists. The author does not say that this was the last appearance, and, moreover, what he represents Jesus as saying on the occasion of it is not such that a later appearance is thereby absolutely excluded. But, on the other hand, in the three other Evangelists the last meeting of Jesus with his disciples, mentioned in every one of them, is obviously meant to be the last that ever took place, as it contains the last arrangements and promises of Jesus, and besides this concludes, in Mark and Luke, with the ascension. And this last appearance is by Matthew (who knows no more than John anything about an ascension) as decidedly placed in Galilee, and by Luke, and obviously also by Mark, in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Of these two accounts, therefore, one in any case must rest upon a mistake."—Vol. i. p. 403-4.

This long passage really brings nothing new before us, and we must again avoid repeating remarks which we formerly made, especially in respect to the concluding chapter of John's Gospel. That chapter, as was formerly stated, is an appendix which the Apostle seems to have added to his narrative, in order to meet a misinterpretation of certain words which Jesus, on the occasion referred to, uttered respecting himself. He had in his former narrative recorded two appearances of Jesus to the disciples when assembled together, and therefore, having added this other chapter, he mentions the appearance recorded in it as the third appearance to a number of the disciples. It was evidently not his design to record all the appearances of Jesus; and as his Gospel was unquestionably supplementary to the other three, he does not detail the circumstances of the ascension, already stated more or less briefly by other Evangelists; but that he
knew about the ascension, who can possibly deny with any measure of fairness, who remembers the frequent allusions recorded in this Gospel to the Lord's departure to the Father, and in particular His message to the disciples through Mary Magdalene, "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God" (xx. 17)?

As to the comparison between John's account and that of Paul, these are shown by Strauss himself to agree so far; but why in any one of the accounts we have certain details given, and not others, is really a question which it is unreasonable to ask, as we have already said. A special reason seems assigned by John for introducing the account of the appearance at the Sea of Galilee; and it was manifestly his original design to record only the two appearances to the disciples which took place in Jerusalem on two successive first days of the week. No contradiction, in the slightest matter, is brought out between him and Paul.

But Strauss insists that Matthew places the last appearance in Galilee, while Luke and Mark place the same in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and that therefore one of these accounts must, in any case, rest upon a mistake. But there is no mistake. The meeting of Jesus with His disciples in Galilee was, as we showed before, a public meeting promised before His death, and also brought to the remembrance of the disciples through the women by the angel at the tomb, and by Jesus Himself, who afterwards, on the same day, met them on the road. At this great meeting Jesus proclaimed His sove-
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Reign over all, whether in heaven or on earth, and also gave His disciples a commission to preach the Gospel to all nations. The same or similar words were afterwards addressed by Him to His disciples at His last appearance near to Jerusalem immediately before His ascension. If we would only deal fairly with the accounts, we should see that whilst all is not told us so as to enable us to clear up every difficulty which may be suggested, there is no difficulty in perceiving that, so far as we are informed of the various appearances, no contradiction will emerge, unless we draw such conclusions from the brief accounts as shall necessarily involve contradiction. To draw such conclusions is evidently unwarrantable, and to treat the Gospels in this way is to set ourselves to the task of creating contradiction where, under a fair treatment of them, we should see that none exists. But to such a fair treatment of these Gospels Strauss's assumed principle of the impossibility of a miracle will not allow him to consent. He must treat them in such a manner as will not oblige him to "give up his whole undertaking," and to "acknowledge the inadmissibility of" what he calls "the natural and historical view of the life of Jesus." And therefore we must follow him a little longer whilst he brings to view more contradictions of the nature last adverted to.

"But the contradiction in respect of locality," he says, "does not attach merely to this last meeting, but penetrates the whole history of the appearances after the resurrection. The Apostle Paul does not define the place of the appearances mentioned by him; in Matthew, Jesus shows himself only to the two Marys on the morning of the resurrection, on the way from the sepulchre to the town, consequently near Jeru-
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salem; through them he gives the same directions to the disciples as they had received from him during his lifetime (xxvi. 32), and also from an angel (xxviii. 7), to go to Galilee, where he immediately appears to them also (xxviii. 9 ff., 16 ff.), according to the opinion of the Evangelist, undoubtedly for the first and last time. In direct contradiction with this, Luke represents Jesus on the day of the resurrection as appearing not merely to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and to Peter, and then immediately after to all the eleven, with some few others (probably the brothers of Jesus and the women, Acts i. 14) in Jerusalem, but also as giving them the express direction to remain here in the city until power shall be given them from above. This the author of the Acts represents as not taking place until Pentecost, that is, seven weeks after (xxiv. 49; Acts i. 4). It will not do to reconcile this contradiction, as Mark does, by saying that the angel first commissioned the women to direct the disciples to Galilee as the place where they were to see him, and that then, we know not why, Jesus showed himself to them in and near Jerusalem (xvi. 7, ff.) ; but if Luke is correct in the statement that Jesus on the day of the resurrection directed the disciples to remain in Jerusalem, he cannot, as Matthew says, have told them on the very same morning to go to Galilee; and as they would not have gone there against his express directions, they cannot have seen the appearances there of which Matthew and the author of the supplementary chapter in John give an account. Conversely, if Jesus had defined Galilee to the disciples as the place where they were to see him, it is impossible to imagine what could have induced him to show himself to them on the same day in Jerusalem; if, therefore, Matthew is correct, all the three other appearances to the disciples, which took place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, vanish into nothing."—Vol. i. p. 404-5.

It is evident that Strauss regards his reasoning in the above passage as unanswerable—as bring-
ing out a complete contradiction in the accounts of the several Evangelists. We formerly compared these accounts with reference to the very point here noticed by Strauss, and showed that, when fairly viewed, they perfectly harmonise with one another. Without, therefore, again entering into a full discussion of the subject, we would remark, first, that when we have several independent accounts of any complex series of events, the fair way of dealing with such accounts is to see whether they can be brought into harmony. Unless we have other reasons to induce the belief that the writers of such accounts are not trustworthy, we ought to begin with the assumption that, however varied in the details, the accounts may all be at one; and even when a difficulty appears which the accounts do not enable us thoroughly to remove, we are not entitled to charge the accounts with containing contradictory statements, inasmuch as a little more information, had it been given us, might have cleared up the difficulty. A mere difficulty in the way of reconciling two different accounts of a fact attended with a number of details, does not amount to a contradiction.

True it is that, as Strauss represents the accounts, he does make them contradict one another. But the question is, Does he represent the accounts fairly? Or does he not draw unauthorised conclusions from statements in them, on purpose to make out a contradiction? The latter we believe to be the case. Matthew, for example, although he records only the appearance of Jesus to the disciples in Galilee, does not say that He did not appear to the disciples in Jerusalem. Nor does Luke, on the other hand, who records only appearances
in or near Jerusalem, say that Jesus did not appear to the disciples in Galilee. Mark, in his narrative, whilst he records only the appearances in or near Jerusalem, evidently implies, in recording the message through the women, that there was an appearance in Galilee; whilst John expressly records appearances in both places—one in Galilee and two in Jerusalem—besides the appearance to Mary Magdalene. Why these accounts present us with such varied details—why they do not all give identical statements—is an entirely different question; but one thing is clear, that the diversified nature of the details proves the independence of the accounts, and therefore presents their authors as so many independent witnesses. As we have said, in comparing these accounts with one another, we are bound to treat them with all fairness. If they really contradict one another, such contradiction must impair their credit; but should the apparent discrepancy be only a difficulty, and not a real contradiction, we are not entitled to call it such, and to reject the testimony of the witnesses.

We would, in the second place, specially remark, what indeed has formerly been stated, that the appearance of Jesus in Galilee after His resurrection was evidently of a public nature, whilst His appearances in Jerusalem partook rather of a private character. Matthew and Mark both record the promise which, on the evening before His death, Jesus gave to the disciples, that He would meet them again in Galilee—that He would go before them thither, as a shepherd before his flock. "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall
be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee” (Matt. xxvi. 31; Mark xiv. 27, 28). Such was His promise, and it is perfectly clear that that promise implied a solemn public appearance there to the disciples. It is indeed marvellous to us how the disciples could have either forgotten or distrusted this promise; but, as we formerly showed, their minds were in such a state that they could not enter into His statements regarding His resurrection; for they could not conceive it possible that He, the Messiah, should die—should be betrayed and condemned, and put to death as a malefactor. We understand these things, and therefore wonder at what we read of these disciples. But in order to judge fairly about the narratives, we must endeavour to forget our knowledge, and to realise, as far as we can, the state of mind then prevailing among the disciples. There can be no doubt that the death of Jesus confounded their views of Him as the Messiah of God. They still maintained their belief, but their minds were completely perplexed; and His very words, such as expressed His promise to meet them in Galilee, vanished entirely from their memory. As we have said, it is extremely difficult for us to conceive such a state of mind; but such it was—a state which no fiction would, or, we may rather say, could have ventured to assume, yet which, from its very nature, bears on itself the feature of historical reality.

Remembering, as we do, that great promise, we cannot wonder at the message given to the women, first by the angel, and then by Jesus Himself, for the disciples, reminding them of the promise, and assur-
ing them that He would meet them in Galilee. But this promise did not exclude other appearances; and knowing, as we are informed, that the disciples were slow of heart to believe the testimony of the women, can we be surprised when we are told that Jesus Himself appeared to them whilst they were yet in Jerusalem, in order to convince them of the reality of His resurrection, and to prepare them for the solemn meeting which was to take place in Galilee? Matthew indeed tells us that the women received the message from the angel who appeared to them in the sepulchre, and that the women carried this message to the disciples; but he does not tell us in what spirit the message was received. We learn elsewhere that the testimony of the women was not believed. Matthew also records an appearance of Jesus to these women; and the correct reading of the text (which omits the first clause of the Textus Receptus) allows us to infer that this appearance took place, not before, but after, they had been with the disciples. Matthew also records the departure of the disciples for Galilee, and the appearance of Jesus to them there. But he does not tell us when this departure took place; he does not say that it was either the first or the last appearance of Jesus to them. Had we no more information than he gives us, we might have inferred that such may have been, although not that it was, the case; but having more information, we know that it was not the case. Strauss thinks himself at liberty to draw certain conclusions, and then to represent the Evangelist as expressly stating his conclusions—a mode of reasoning which surely is not allowable. Mark, Luke, and John record one or more appearances to the disciples
in Jerusalem. Who knows but that such appearances were absolutely necessary to induce the disciples to repair to Galilee, and there to meet Jesus, according to His promise?

In short, the whole question in respect to these various appearances just comes to this,—Are we to allow the several accounts to throw light on one another? Or are we to regard each account as containing all that each Evangelist believed had happened, and in this way to set the accounts one against another? Are we to look upon each account as a partial or as a complete account? If we take the one view, we shall discern unity amidst diversity; if we take the other, we shall discover contradiction. It rests with every man to say for himself which view he will take. As for ourselves, we believe that these accounts were not designed to be severally complete; and therefore, instead of being contradictory, which Strauss insists upon, we maintain that they combine in bearing one and the same testimony to the risen Lord, who in various ways gave to His disciples, during forty days, clear and decided proofs of the reality of His resurrection.

Dismissing, then, these objections, on which Strauss insists so keenly, let us hear what further he has to say on the same head:—

"We have, besides, the following secondary contradictions. According to Luke (xxiv. 1, ff.), Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Joanna, and some few other women, go to the sepulchre, see in it two angels, and after their return proclaim to the Apostles and all the others what they had seen and heard; according to Mark (xvi. 1. ff.), only three women, among them Salome instead of Joanna,
take this course, see one angel in the sepulchre, and afterwards, from fear, say nothing to any one; according to Matthew (xxviii. 1, ff.), only the two first-named women find an angel sitting on the stone of the sepulchre that had been rolled away, and afterwards on their return meet with Jesus himself; while according to John (xx. 1, ff.), it was Mary Magdalene, single and alone, who went out, and on the first occasion saw only the sepulchre empty; and then, not until she went for the second time, saw two angels sitting in the sepulchre, and Jesus himself standing behind her. Again, Matthew and Mark know nothing of Luke's account (xxiv. 12) of Peter having gone to the sepulchre on hearing the statement of the women, and finding it empty, while, according to John (xx. 2, ff.), the other disciple also went with him. These and some other subordinate discrepancies," adds Strauss, "we do not bring prominently forward, as even without them it is sufficiently clear that in the Evangelical accounts of the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection, we have no evidence of such a character as to compel us to assume that the unheard-of facts to which they relate must really have taken place, rather than to suppose that the accounts themselves rest upon error."—Vol. i. p. 405.

With respect to these so-called secondary or subordinate contradictions, a very few remarks will be all that is necessary. The different Evangelists do indeed mention more or fewer of the women who went to the sepulchre; but such a difference in a detail of this kind creates no contradiction, whether primary or secondary. None of them professes to give a full account. John mentions only Mary Magdalene; but from an incidental expression uttered by her—"We know not where they have laid Him"—it is evident that there had been others with her.

As to the number of angels alleged to have been
seen by the women, this is truly a minor matter; for whilst Matthew and Mark mention only one, Luke and John mention two, as being in the sepulchre. The difference may be accounted for by the fair supposition that one only addressed the women, and that there is special reference to him in the first two Evangelists. Luke and John, indeed, represent both angels as speaking; but even if one only spoke, such a mode of expressing the fact is by no means unusual. All the Evangelists agree in bearing testimony that one or two angels did appear within the sepulchre on that wondrous occasion. But Strauss draws an unwarrantable conclusion when he affirms that Matthew represents the women as finding the angel sitting upon the stone, and then on their return meeting with Jesus Himself. Matthew does not assert either of these particulars. He states as a fact that "an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." But he does not say that when the women came to the sepulchre the angel was still sitting there; on the contrary, from what he says to the women, we may fairly conclude that when they came up he was within the sepulchre.

Again, as we have oftener than once stated, Matthew does not say that Jesus appeared to the women as they were returning from the sepulchre with the angelic message; but, on the contrary, he first mentions the delivery of this message, and then records His appearance, from which again we may infer that this appearance took place subsequently to the delivery of that message. Further, John does not say that Mary Magdalene, on first coming to the sepulchre, found it empty; on the contrary, he only
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says that she saw that the stone was rolled away; from which we may infer that she immediately concluded that the body of Jesus had been taken away, and instantly—without even looking into the sepulchre—started off to inform Peter and the other disciple. On her return, we are told that she stooped down into the sepulchre, and that it was then that she saw two angels within it. Luke mentions that Peter, on hearing the report—he does not expressly say whether from Mary Magdalene alone or from her and the other women—"arose, and ran unto the sepulchre." John mentions that it was Mary Magdalene who brought the report to Peter and to the other disciple, and that both immediately ran to the sepulchre. There is additional information given by John, which enables us to understand more clearly what took place; but there is no contradiction between him and Luke.

Without dwelling further on these details, we think we are entitled to conclude that Strauss fails in establishing these secondary contradictions, just as he failed in establishing the primary ones; and that we are warranted in still regarding the Evangelical accounts of the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection as presenting to us evidence sufficient, not indeed to compel us to believe in the reality of these marvellous facts, but to secure our belief, unless we are predetermined, on the ground of some assumption, not to believe.

We now come to the chief argument by means of which Strauss concludes against the Evangelical accounts as not furnishing satisfactory evidence of the
reality of the resurrection. On this argument, then, we must bestow the most careful attention. That we may enter thoroughly into its scope, we must remember that Strauss admits that "the first disciples firmly believed that Jesus had risen." This point, then, is not in question. The question is, On what did that belief rest? Did it rest on an objective fact? or was it a mere subjective impression? Strauss, you will remember, finds fault with the Apostle Paul for not having, as he thinks, investigated the origin of the belief of Cephas and the others whom he mentions as having seen the Lord. Paul himself had also seen and believed; and he evidently deemed it sufficient when he said that these others too had seen. But Strauss will not admit such a statement to be sufficient. The Apostle Paul, we know, had not only seen but also heard the Lord; and the same may be affirmed of all the others. In addition to the sensible evidence of sight, they all had the sensible evidence of hearing; and the belief of all of them thus rested on facts which appealed to their senses. But Strauss maintains that they only thought that they saw (for he dwells almost exclusively on the supposed evidence of sight) Jesus, whilst all the time they did not see Him, but were deluded by an excited imagination. And as he set aside Paul's testimony respecting others, and will by-and-by set aside Paul's testimony respecting himself as having seen the Lord—because Paul merely states, in the passage referred to and formerly discussed, the fact itself, and does not enter into a detail of what happened when the several appearances are said to have occurred—so now he will endeavour to set aside the narratives of the Evangelists which do
enter more or less into such details; and having done this, he will conclude that we have no reliable evidence whatever in support of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus. You will also have to observe that the argument which Strauss is now to employ is in no way affected by the question as to the authorship of the Gospels; for it is from the contents of the several accounts that he is to draw the substance or material of this argument. These contents are of course altogether independent of any view taken of the authorship. Let us, then, endeavour to see thoroughly, first, what his argument is; and, secondly, whether the conclusion he would establish by means of it, is valid or otherwise. I shall set both before you in his own words, although the passage in which he states them is somewhat long. It is as follows:—

“But we have only entered upon these Evangelical accounts of the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection, in order to discover what means those persons, to whom they are supposed to have been imparted, had and applied to convince themselves of the reality of these appearances. All the accounts endeavour to show how the eleven, if not to the credit of their faith in believing, but at all events for the satisfaction of those who were afterwards to trust to their testimony, were anything but hasty in their belief. According to Luke, they considered the account given by the women of what they had seen, and the message of the angel, as empty talk (xxiv. 11); according to Mark, they gave no credit to the disciples who had gone into the country, who declared they had seen Jesus himself (xvi. 12); according to Matthew, some even were unbelievers on the occasion of the final appearance of Jesus in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 17), at which we cannot be surprised if he appeared to them, as, according to Mark, he did to the disciples in the country, in a
changed form. The means, however, by which at last the doubts of the disciples were satisfied, and they brought to believe, were, according to Matthew and Mark, simply these. Jesus appeared to them themselves, approached them, and spoke to them. In Luke, he finds it necessary to go much farther, and the most thorough sceptic whom he has to satisfy is John. There the two who went to Emmaus had just come in to the eleven, and been by them received with the intelligence of His resurrection and the appearance imparted to Peter, before they had time to tell of their own meeting with Jesus, when, all at once, Jesus stood in the midst of them. As they were still afraid, notwithstanding that information, and thought they had seen a spirit, Jesus showed them his hands and his feet, calling upon them to touch him and convince themselves that he has bone and flesh, and consequently is not a spirit; and as they cannot believe for joy, he asked whether they had there any food, and immediately partook before their eyes of a piece of fried fish and some honeycomb (xxiv. 36, ff.) These were proofs which in themselves might lead to the supposition of a natural return to life on the part of Jesus; but he had immediately before vanished from table before the eyes of the Emmaus disciples, and his sudden appearance on this occasion in the room in the midst of the disciples points to a supernatural entrance. But here, what Luke had only implied, John undoubtedly declares more definitely, when he says that Jesus came and stood in the middle of the room, when the doors were shut (xx. 19, 20). On the first occasion he shows his hands and his side, only, as it seems, to be looked at; on the second, he makes Thomas put his fingers and hand in the marks of his wounds. To this, in the supplement to the Gospel, is further added the proof by eating the fried fish and bread (xxi. 5, 9, 12)."—Vol. i. p. 405-7.

Such is his summary of the contents of the several accounts as showing the means by which the disciples
were convinced of the reality of the presence of Jesus, and therefore of His resurrection. Before remarking on this summary, let us hear the argument founded on these contents, and the conclusion which in his view is thus established:—

"Now, in this case, if the eating and the touching were historically true, it could not be doubtful that what appeared to the disciples was a human body [of being], endowed with natural life and a natural body: if the showing and feeling of the marks of the wounds were so, there could be as little doubt that the human being was the Jesus who died upon the cross: finally, if the entrance with closed doors were true, there could be no question that the natural corporeality and life of this human being was of a very peculiar, a perfectly supernatural order. But then we have two things coexisting in absolute contradiction with each other. A body which can be touched, consequently has power of resistance, cannot penetrate through closed doors—that is, cannot have at the same time that power of resistance; as, conversely, a body which penetrates through boards without opposition can have no bones, nor any organ by which to digest bread and fish. These are not conditions which can exist together in a real being, but such as only a fantastic imagination can combine together. The Evangelical testimony in favour of the resurrection of Jesus endeavours to bring forward the most convincing of all proofs; in doing so it breaks to pieces, and shows itself to be the mere result of a wish to give support to a dogmatical conception, which, so soon as the wish ceases to exist, collapses for want of any support at all."—Vol. i. p. 407-8.

Such, then, is the great argument, and such is the conclusion which Strauss founds upon it—a conclusion which subverts all rational faith in the reality of the
resurrection of Jesus. It is abundantly evident that all the previous discussions, as Strauss himself expressly allows, were only preparatory to this main, this final argument, by means of which he manifestly thinks he has for ever annihilated all belief in that event. With what anxiety, then, should we examine every part of this argument, that we may see whether it really possesses that force which it unquestionably appears to him to possess!

First, then, as to the summary which Strauss gives of the contents of the different narratives in respect to the grounds on which, according to them, the disciples became convinced of the reality of the presence, and therefore of the resurrection, of Jesus, we have no desire to be hypercritical. But we think that it would have become Strauss to have abstained from blending with that summary any insinuations of artifice on the part of the Evangelists. It was his duty to present that summary fairly and fully, whatever argument he might have already in his mind in order to be founded upon it; but most evident it is that the statements in the different accounts are brought together in such a manner, and with such insinuations of artifice on the part of the Evangelists, as tend to impress the mind of the reader with a prejudged conclusion. These accounts are, according to him, purposely constructed to show that the disciples were not hasty in their belief. What would Strauss have said if the accounts had really represented them as hasty in their belief? Would he not then have found ground for an argument against the credit to be ascribed to the accounts? Nothing is more clear than that it is utterly impossible to satisfy a sceptical spirit. Let a
narrative give what statement the author of it pleases—that spirit will ever find some ground or other on which to fasten a charge. Paul is blamed for only affirming as a fact that Jesus was seen by Cephas and others. He ought, it is said, to have investigated and stated the grounds on which these persons believed that what they saw was real. The Evangelists do state the circumstances which occurred on different occasions when Jesus appeared to the disciples; and their accounts are summed up in a spirit which sees only in this, marks of artifice, and of an artifice that outwits itself. Why could not Strauss, having, as he all along thought, so triumphant an argument before him—an argument which was to settle the matter beyond the possibility of dispute—have abstained for a few moments from manifesting his sceptical and ironical spirit?

He dwells first on the unbelief which the accounts attribute to the disciples. They reject the testimony of the women; they are not convinced by the testimony of the two who had gone to Emmaus; some even doubted when Jesus appeared to the assembled disciples in Galilee; nay, the eleven hardly believe when Jesus appears in the midst of them; and one rejects the testimony of all the rest. Matthew and Mark represent them as convinced by rather simple means. Jesus appears to them, approaches them, and speaks to them. But Luke represents them as needing stronger proofs to produce conviction. Jesus requires to show His hands and His feet, to ask them to touch Him, and to feel that His body has flesh and bones; and as now they are unbelieving for joy (how true to human nature is the
Evangelist’s account!), He must eat before them, and thus remove every doubt. But John, whom Strauss dares to call the most thorough sceptic of all, cannot allow conviction of the reality of the fact to seem to be produced except by supposing one who resisted the combined testimony of his fellow-disciples, to attain to conviction by actually putting his finger and his hand in the marks of the wounds which the body of Jesus had received upon the cross. All this is mere artifice, according to Strauss; and he presents the summary of the contents in the different accounts as if he had proved, instead of having merely assumed, in virtue of his own scepticism, that such was the case. Why demand accounts of circumstances, and then assail these accounts in such a spirit? Prove them to be the result of artifice, and then assail them as they would merit to be assailed. Again, how does Strauss know that those who doubted when Jesus appeared in Galilee were of the eleven, and not some others who had not seen Him before? Matthew, from whom alone we have any knowledge of the circumstance, makes no such assertion. It is only fair to let the Evangelists speak for themselves, and to draw nothing from their statements but what these expressly affirm.

It is next to be observed that Strauss himself admits that if the Evangelical accounts contain real facts, the belief of the disciples in the reality of the resurrection of Jesus was well founded. These accounts show that the disciples had the evidence not only of sight but of hearing and touch—and that not merely on one, but on several occasions—so that no possible room for doubt existed as to the reality of
the appearances. The disciples were indeed blamable for manifesting such a spirit of unbelief as they did when valid testimony was given them of the resurrection of Jesus; but this circumstance only brings out more fully to us the grounds on which their belief was at length secured. Nothing can be more natural —more true to the workings of human nature placed in such extraordinary circumstances—than the manner in which the Evangelists describe the transition on the part of the disciples from doubts and unbelief to the fulness of belief. No ingenuity, we maintain, could have contrived such a description. No imagination would have dreamed of such a scene. Everything is life-like. All exaggeration is absent; and the account given by each Evangelist bears truth on its very face. What can possibly be more according to nature than the description given of the conduct and feelings of the women who went early on the morning of the first day of the week to anoint the body of their crucified Lord? How true to nature is the account of Mary Magdalene, who, the moment she saw the stone rolled away, immediately concluded that the body had been removed, and started off to convey the intelligence to Peter and John! How true to nature the description given of the feelings of the two to whom, on their way to Emmaus, Jesus appeared, after they came to the knowledge that it was indeed He who had joined their company and opened to them the Scriptures! Nay, how true to nature is the conduct, blamable as it was, of the unbelieving Thomas, who refused to believe unless he also should receive sensible evidence! In short, every scene described in these accounts is such as to convince us
that we have here no product of fraud or of fiction, but descriptions of events which actually took place.

There are also omissions of things which it is easy to conceive would have been introduced in some way or other, had these accounts been framed by artifice or produced by imagination. Is it possible to conceive that no mention of one in particular—of her whom He addressed when hanging on the cross, and whom He then commended to the care of the beloved disciple—would have been found in any of the accounts? She is not mentioned among the women. No doubt she is abiding in silence and sorrow in the home of that disciple; and there can surely be as little doubt that she once again saw alive Him to whom in His human nature she gave birth. Yet her name never occurs in these narratives. We only read of her as being present in the meeting of the disciples after His ascension.

But to return to the main subject. These narratives state the grounds on which the belief of the first disciples rested that they had seen Jesus alive after He was put to death. Strauss deemed the account of the Apostle Paul unsatisfactory for the very reason that it contains a mere affirmation that Jesus had been seen by Cephas, by the twelve, by the more than five hundred, by James, and by the Apostles. And now he has accounts which not merely affirm that Jesus was seen on various occasions and by disciples, both singly and collectively, but also minutely detail what occurred at these appearances, so as to convince the eyewitnesses that He whom they saw stood really before them, and that He was the very Jesus who had died upon the cross. Is Strauss now satisfied? Does
he now admit that what was wanting in Paul's account is amply given in these accounts? Does he now proclaim his belief in the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, and, like Thomas, acknowledge Him to be his Lord and his God? Or does his former scepticism still prevail, and discover some method of evading the force of the very evidence which he professed to demand? The latter, we regret to say, is the case. He is in search of some ground on which to rest his unbelief, and, as will ever happen in such a case, he thinks that he detects, in the very accounts themselves, a ground for unbelief which it is impossible to remove. He discovers what he terms an absolute contradiction in what these accounts say respecting the body of the risen Jesus.

There can be no doubt that Strauss really regards the statements in the Evangelical narratives respecting the body of Jesus as presenting such a contradiction as he terms absolute, and that all his previous discussions were conducted with an eye ever looking forward to his concluding argument on this head. He states this argument in the most formal manner, and, viewing it as he states it, the conclusion seems irresistible. This conclusion is expressed in the most triumphant manner:—

"The Evangelical testimony in favour of the resurrection of Jesus endeavours to bring forward the most convincing of all proofs; in doing so it breaks to pieces and shows itself to be the mere result of a wish to give support to a dogmatical conception, which, so soon as the wish ceases to exist, collapses for want of any support at all."

Here, then, we are brought to a decisive point. Let us calmly and impartially weigh the argument, and
see whether it is valid or not—whether we must, like Strauss, reject the Evangelical testimony as containing in itself evidence of its own worthlessness, or whether that testimony still remains valid and sufficient.

The alleged contradiction, you must have observed from the passage which we quoted, consists in the representations given by the Evangelists respecting the risen body of Jesus. At one time that body is represented as a natural body, as capable of being seen and touched, even of eating food; at another time it is represented as of a perfectly supernatural order, as penetrating through closed doors, as suddenly appearing and suddenly vanishing. Such representations of the same body contain an absolute contradiction, for they suppose "conditions which cannot exist together in a real being, but such as only a fantastic imagination can combine together." Such is Strauss's argument.

Now, be it observed that we regard all attempts to explain away the literal interpretation of the Evangelical accounts on this subject as wholly futile. Jesus did suddenly appear in the midst of the disciples when they were assembled in a room, the doors of which were shut. Jesus did suddenly withdraw Himself when, after breaking the bread, He made Himself known to the two who reclined with Him at the table. Although it is not expressly stated, Jesus, we believe, rose from the tomb before the stone was rolled away from its entrance. Jesus appeared in the body when He pleased, and when He pleased He disappeared from all mortal view. Yet when He appeared, that body in which He appeared was the very body which had been nailed to the cross, and laid in
Joseph's tomb; and He spoke and ate, and was visible to the sight and palpable to the touch. His body, thus seen and touched, was a real body. Finally, He disappeared bodily, and ascended to the Father's right hand.

We must not evade the force, whatever it be, of Strauss's argument, by fastening untenable interpretations on the statements in the Evangelical testimony. We must take these statements exactly as they are presented to us. Where, then, is the defect, if defect there be, in our objector's argument? Or, what amounts to the same, what is it that imparts to it all its apparent force? The argument is based on that assumption which from the outset has been avowed by him, and has never been lost sight of—an assumption which contains in itself the very conclusion which all the subsequent reasoning is professedly meant to establish—the assumption that Jesus was only a man; that Jesus is not the Christ, the Son of God; that the life of Jesus must in all essential respects resemble the life of any ordinary man; that, therefore, He could do nothing but what any such man may do. This is the one assumption with which Strauss sets out in the task which he undertook; and it is this assumption that is the very foundation of this, the great argument with which he, in apparent triumph, closes his elaborate discussion of the evidence in support of the resurrection of Jesus. If Jesus was only a man, the argument is unassailable; but, indeed, no argument at all was required; for if He were only a man, then the whole Gospel is based on a falsehood, for it emphatically proclaims Him to be the Son of God as well as the Son of Man.
Now, it is surely evident that, in reasoning about the evidence in support of the claims of Jesus, we are bound, not indeed to assume that these claims are established, but to look at the evidence in the light of these claims. The evidence supposes these claims to be valid, and is given in order to sustain their validity. We must, therefore, unquestionably, in all fairness, remember these claims when we are looking at and weighing the evidence. If we discover aught inconsistent with these claims, this will militate against them; but we are not entitled to set aside evidence in support of these claims merely because this evidence presents what is in harmony with them. This is the fundamental error which pervades the whole of Strauss's work; and it is the error which lies at the basis of this argument against the reality of the resurrection. He insists on viewing Jesus in His advent, His ministry, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension, merely as a human being; and upon this supposition he very easily constructs arguments against His miracles, His sinlessness, His resurrection, and His ascension. He supposes a mere human being. Now, it needs no elaborate reasoning to prove that these things cannot be predicated of any mere human being, and therefore, according to him, cannot be predicated of the man called Jesus. But it is surely manifest that such a mode of reasoning is merely an attempt to evade the solemn question which the claims of Jesus, be they good or be they bad, present to our consideration. That question is, Does the evidence furnished to us support these claims or not? Jesus claims to be the Son of God. Does His life—do His works—does all that He says and does and suffers—
correspond with such a high claim, or do they not? That, and that alone, is the question; and we repeat, that from the beginning to the end of his work Strauss evades it, never touches it; but reasons all along to support a foregone conclusion—an assumption prior to all proof—that Jesus is not the Son of God.

Now, to come to the argument before us, we fully admit that Jesus, who claims to be the Son of God, was truly Man—that His body was a real, a natural body—and also that He had a rational soul. But according to His claim, He had also a divine, a really divine nature. We are not required to comprehend this alleged union of the divine and human natures which coexisted in Jesus; but we must not forget His claim to possess such a union of these natures when we contemplate Him as presented to us in the Gospels. Now, is there aught inconsistent with this claim, when we find in these Gospels that He had a power over His human body which no ordinary man possesses? Is the alleged possession of such a power inconsistent with His claims? That it is inconsistent with the supposition that He was only a man, needs no proof. But, we repeat, that is not the question. The real question before us is this: Is the alleged possession of such a power over His body inconsistent with His claim to be the Son of God as well as the Son of Man? Who can tell what power such a being, if Jesus was such, could exert over His human frame? Not, indeed, a power to work contradictions with that body—that is, to make it visible and invisible at one and the same moment; but to allow it to be visible at one moment and invisible at another: not to make it palpable and impalpable at one and the same moment,
but to render it palpable on one occasion, and to withdraw it from mortal touch on another; not that this body should at one and the same time have the power of resistance and be without that power, but that at one time it should exert such a power, and at another cease to exert it at His will. Even during His ministry we find that Jesus possessed such a power over His body, and that on certain occasions He proved His possession of this power. He could withdraw Himself miraculously from the presence of His enemies. He could walk on the waves of the sea. His body on one occasion was transfigured, and shone forth in glorious brightness. No mere man could exhibit such a power; but in Jesus the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily; and the exertion of such divine power must be viewed as only consistent with His wondrous claims.

That Jesus at His resurrection and after His resurrection, during the period when He appeared to His disciples, should manifest in greater measure this divine power, seems to us to be only consistent with His claims and with the great purpose which He, having at His death finished His work upon earth, had now in view. This purpose evidently was to establish the faith of the disciples in the reality of His resurrection, to raise their conceptions of His exalted nature, and to prepare them for the work in which He was now to employ them. How He could raise His body, as He did, from the tomb; how He could appear in that raised body, and withdraw Himself from mortal sight as He did; how He could suddenly stand before His disciples when assembled, and submit His body to be handled as He did; and then,
as suddenly, in all probability, disappear from their presence; how He held intercourse with the disciples during the forty days, and yet maintained that solemn reserve, if we may use such a term, as to His habitual presence, as to where, in short, He was, when not actually present before them—all this we know not; and is it not wonderful that these accounts make no attempt to inform us on these points? The Evangelists are silent on all such matters, and yet they could not but have thought about them, for the very statements in their accounts suggest them to us, and must have suggested them to their own minds. Their silence in respect to all such inscrutable matters is to us no slight proof of the truth of their narratives, as it is also no slight proof that in writing these narratives they were restrained from all attempts to explain what the human mind cannot comprehend, by a power and a wisdom higher than their own.

We meet, then, the triumphant argument of Strauss, first, by the remark that he builds it on the assumption that Jesus was a mere human being, which, according to His claims, He was not; and, secondly, by the affirmation that Jesus, contemplated according to His claims, exerted a power over His body both during His ministry, and specially at and after His resurrection, which, though not possessed by any mere man, is perfectly consistent with His claim of being the Son of God. The absolute contradiction with which Strauss charges the Evangelical testimony is based on an assumption; and when this assumption ceases to exist, the contradiction vanishes, and the Evangelical testimony stands forth in all its clearness, validity, and force.
LECTURE XIII.

STRAUSS ON THE APPEARANCE OF CHRIST TO ST PAUL.

In his next section, Strauss proceeds to refute the theory which has been advanced by some professed friends of the Gospel, that the alleged resurrection of Jesus was a natural revival. This theory, which is indeed so obviously opposed to the clear testimony of Jesus Himself and of His Apostles that it is scarcely worthy of notice, not to say of serious refutation, has been and still is propounded by some who are willing to acknowledge Jesus as a great moral and religious Teacher, but at the same time desire to explain away all that is recorded of a miraculous nature in His life, death, and resurrection. These persons attempt to ground their theory on the assumption, which is so far true, that crucifixion was a mode of punishment which killed very slowly, and that as Jesus was taken down from the cross after He had hung there only for a few hours, "there is every probability of His supposed death having been only a death-like swoon, from which, after the descent from the cross, He recovered again in the cool cavern, covered as He was with healing ointments and strongly-scented spices."* Strauss, whilst he maintains, as we have

* Vol. i. p. 410.
seen, that the Evangelical accounts do not afford satisfactory evidence of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, rejects the theory of a natural revival on the part of Jesus, on the ground that there is no certain proof contained in these accounts that Jesus showed Himself alive after His crucifixion. Strauss saw clearly enough, that were he to admit, as a fact attested by the Evangelists, that Jesus did show Himself alive after that event, he would be compelled by the same testimony to admit the reality of the resurrection, inasmuch as the attempt is manifestly futile to explain the origin of the belief of the disciples in the resurrection by means of the theory of a mere revival from a death-like swoon.

"It is quite evident," he says, "that this view of the resurrection of Jesus, apart from the difficulties in which it is involved, does not even solve the problem which is here under consideration: the origin, that is, of the Christian Church by faith in the miraculous resurrection of the Messiah. It is impossible," he justly adds, "that a being who had stolen half-dead out of the sepulchre, who crept about weak and ill, wanting medical treatment, who required bandaging, strengthening, and indulgence, and who still, at last, yielded to his sufferings, could have given to the disciples the impression that he was a Conqueror over death and the grave, the Prince of Life—an impression which lay at the bottom of their future ministry. Such a resuscitation could only have weakened the impression which he had made upon them in life and in death—at the most could only have given it an elegiac voice, but could by no possibility have changed their sorrow into enthusiasm, have elevated their reverence into worship."—Vol. i. p. 412.

Strauss thus refutes the theory of these so-called
Rationalists; and whilst we do not admit every argument which he employs in his refutation, yet most assuredly we agree in his conclusion that such a theory is altogether baseless. We pass on, then, to the consideration of his succeeding section, in which a matter of deep importance is subjected to discussion.

This section is entitled "The Appearance of Christ to the Apostle Paul." You will remember that Strauss formerly considered the testimony of this Apostle to the resurrection of Jesus as given in his First Epistle to the Church at Corinth, and that he laboured hard to deprive that clear and decided testimony of all its weight. He found fault with the Apostle, you will remember, for having only stated that Jesus was seen alive after His death by Cephas, by the twelve, by the more than five hundred brethren at once, by James, and then by all the Apostles, and for not having investigated the grounds on which these persons rested their belief that they had seen Jesus. He even, you will also remember, questioned if Paul was inclined or able to make such an investigation; and he purposely reserved for future discussion Paul's statement respecting himself, that he also had seen Jesus. We formerly remarked on Strauss's capricious and frivolous dealing with this Apostle's testimony respecting those whom he specially mentions. We need not repeat our remarks, and we therefore now proceed to the consideration of what Strauss has to say against the Apostle's testimony respecting the great event of which he himself was an eyewitness, and which had been the means of his own conversion to the faith of
Christ. The subject is one of the highest moment in various respects, and therefore we entreat your patient attention, whilst we shall first allow Strauss to speak for himself, and then endeavour to form a due estimate of what he alleges. This is, we confess, a tedious task; but, on the whole, it is the only mode of procedure which can be thoroughly satisfactory. Let us patiently hear all that our objector has to say, and then we shall be in full possession of his arguments, and in circumstances which will enable us duly to appreciate them.

Strauss thus begins this part of his dissertation:—

"In what was said above, after stating what we learn from the Apostle Paul, speaking in the main, presumably, on the authority of eyewitnesses, about the appearance of Jesus after his resurrection, we turned to the narratives of the Evangelists upon the same subject, in order to discover more accurately what was not to be gathered from the short notices of the Apostle, upon what the conviction of these eyewitnesses may have rested, that they had really seen Jesus after he had risen again. But we did not find what we sought for. Independent of the fact of which we were already aware, that we had no certainty in the case of any one of the Evangelists that he tells what he had learned from either the oral statements or the notes of eyewitnesses, we may say that they do indeed go more into detail than Paul; but their accounts stand, in the first place, in direct contradiction with each other, and, in the next place, what they tell us is so inconsistent with itself that we cannot trust it, but find ourselves referred back to the Apostle Paul."—Vol. i. p. 412-3.

These assertions on the part of Strauss we have, we think, sufficiently confuted. We have shown that the Evangelical accounts contain the testimony of eye-
witnesses—that these accounts do not contradict one another—and that what they tell us is not inconsistent with itself when we take all the data of the Christian problem into view; but that, on the contrary, there is such an agreement in these independent accounts, that they support one another, and that the alleged inconsistency springs entirely from the fact that Strauss leaves altogether out of view the main element of the question—the claim of Jesus to be the Son of God. Strauss begs the very point in dispute, and then brings the charge of inconsistency; whereas we, not indeed assuming that point as proved, but only taking it into consideration as an element in the question, perceive that what is related is only in harmony with such a claim. The principle on which we proceed is this, that Jesus, claiming to be the Son of God, must be viewed in relation to such a claim; whilst Strauss proceeds on the opposite principle, that Jesus, though claiming to be the Son of God, must yet act as only the Son of Man. These are the two opposed principles, on the one or other of which the whole discussion must proceed. It is for every man to decide for himself whether he will adopt the one or the other. We have already stated our reasons for regarding the one principle as the only fair one to guide our discussion. That principle is, that Jesus cannot be regarded as acting inconsistently, when what He does is only consistent with what He claims to be. The other principle assumes that He is not what He claims to be, and therefore involves the conclusion which it is sought to establish. You cannot too thoroughly understand this preliminary point, for upon it hangs the whole result. Assume that Jesus is only a
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man, and the whole inquiry into the truth of His claims becomes useless. Assume, not as proved, but as an element in the problem to be solved, that He is the Son of God, and then you will see whether what He does is inconsistent with such a claim or not. The inquiry is still open. No conclusion is assumed as established; and we are able, without prejudice, to investigate the whole question. The importance of this point is constantly present to us, and we are therefore forced to recall it at every step to your special notice.

Strauss now goes back to complete his discussion of the testimony of St Paul.

"If we look more closely," says he, "at what he says, we see that we turned away from his statements with so little satisfaction from them, because we did not allow the Apostle to speak out. He speaks, indeed, not merely of the appearances of Christ, which Cephas and James, the twelve and the five hundred saw, but, 'and last of all,' he adds, 'he was seen of me, too, as of one born out of due time' (1 Cor. xv. 8). With regard to the appearance which he witnessed, he uses the same expression as with regard to the others; he places it in the same category with them, only in the last place, as he names himself the last of the apostles, but in exactly the same rank with the others. Thus much, therefore, Paul knew or supposed—that the appearances which the elder disciples had seen soon after the resurrection of Jesus had been of the same kind as that which had been, only later, vouchsafed to himself. Of what sort, then, was this?"—Vol. i. p. 413.

Now, there can be no objection to this statement of the case, provided we remember what the accounts plainly tell us, that the circumstances in which Jesus appeared to the elder disciples were quite different from
those in which He appeared to Saul the persecutor. The former appearances took place before His ascension to the Father; the latter took place after that event. They agreed in this, that they were all real appearances, but in several respects they were necessarily different. The main point, however, at present is, as Strauss has stated it, to determine the nature of the appearance to him who, from being a persecutor, became the great Apostle to the Gentile world.

"It is well known," continues Strauss, "that we have of it, in the Acts of the Apostles, a detailed, indeed a threefold account (ix. 1-30, xii. 1-21, xxvi. 4-23), which certainly tells of an external, sensible appearance, of a light from heaven, which threw Paul to the ground and blinded him for some days, a voice from heaven which spoke to him intelligible words, and was heard by those who accompanied him."—Vol. i. p. 414.

Strauss here admits that this detailed, this threefold account does tell of an external, sensible appearance; and he mentions the circumstances that proved the externality of the appearance—the light which dazzled Saul and his companions, and the voice which spoke to him intelligible words, and was heard by the others. One would suppose that here satisfactory proof was given that the appearance was really such as is described, and that this proof, being in itself satisfactory, is not to be called in question merely because the eye and the ear were in this case the organs which received the testimony, whilst in the appearances to the elder disciples the sense of touch was also employed to testify their reality. But Strauss will now exert his ingenuity to show that the proof referred to was anything but satisfactory; and
scepticism is never at a loss to detect what it supposes or wishes to be flaws in any proof, whatever details it may embrace.

"But," says Strauss, "there is no proof here of the objective reality of the appearance, like that which, according to the third and fourth Evangelists, Jesus is said to have vouchsafed to the elder disciples, when he allowed himself to be touched by them, and partook of food before their eyes."—Vol. i. p. 414.

Because the two proofs, given under very different circumstances, of which difference it did not suit Strauss's purpose to take the slightest notice, are not composed of exactly the same elements, therefore the value of the one, as compared with that of the other, which also in its turn is depreciated, is to be questioned. Unless different witnesses state exactly the same things, their testimony is to be rejected. What, we might ask, would have been Strauss's estimate of that testimony, had it in both cases been exactly identical? Such a mode of argument is truly absurd. But a sceptic is always blind to any absurdity that lurks in his argument, however visible it may be to any other inquirer. His object is simply to depreciate, by any means, the value of every proof, however legitimate and strong.

"Apart," says Strauss, "from the blindness, and its removal by Ananias, as also the phenomena seen by the attendants, we might look upon all as a vision which Paul attributed indeed to an external cause, but which nevertheless took place in his own mind."—Ibid.

Such is the theory on this subject which he is now to support. He admits the reality of certain external phenomena—the excessive light, and perhaps the
great sound; but as we may suppose that all the rest which is recorded took place solely in Paul's own mind, so we are to conclude that such was in reality the case. The possibility of the supposition is to be to us a sufficient reason for inferring such a conclusion. We wish the case to be so and so, and therefore it was so and so. And now let us go in quest of something to support us in this mode of reasoning.

"That we are not bound," says Strauss, "to the individual features of the account in the Acts, is shown by comparing with it the substance of the statement twice repeated in the language of Paul himself; for there we find that the author's own account is not accurate—that he attributed no importance to a few variations more or less."—Vol. i. p. 414.

The accuracy of the account given by the author of the whole book of the Acts is now to be disproved, and this is to be done by comparing his account with statements made by St Paul himself on two different occasions, and recorded in his book by the same author. Now, whoever that author was—and on this head we think there can be no reasonable doubt—there is surely a strong presumption, prior to all inquiry into details, that he would be sufficiently careful to avoid, not indeed variation, but real inaccuracy, in recording such an event as this. The author or compiler of the Book of the Acts was manifestly not a person of mean talent, or one who felt but slight interest in his record. He was evidently a man who carefully inquired into the details of events, and was capable of narrating them in a clear and most interesting manner. There are few books which have come down to us from antiquity that exhibit so much anxiety to present details before us in all their
minuteness, or that bear so vividly the stamp of historical truth. It is a work which of itself contains clear and ample evidence of the real origin of Christianity. It is indeed par excellence the treatise which proves the divine origin of the Gospel; for it shows how this Gospel began to be preached and to prevail through the power of the Holy Spirit and the instrumentality of those to whom this Spirit was given in an extraordinary measure. We need not be afraid that Strauss or any other sceptic will gain a triumph over the author of this book, whose praise was in all the Churches. Petty, frivolous objections may be conjured up; but their very frivolity will be their sufficient—their strongest—refutation. Let us, then, see what Strauss has to allege in support of his grave charge of inaccuracy.

"Not only is it said," he alleges, "as has been already remarked in passing, that on one occasion the attendants stood dumbfounded, on another, that they fell with Paul to the ground; that on one occasion they heard the voice, but saw no one, on another, that they saw the light, but did not hear the voice of him who spake with Paul; but also the speech of Jesus himself, in the third repetition, gets the well-known addition about ‘kicking against the pricks;’ to say nothing of the fact that the appointment to the apostleship of the Gentiles, which, according to the two earlier accounts, was made partly by Ananias, partly on the occasion of a subsequent vision in the Temple at Jerusalem, is in this last account incorporated in the speech of Jesus on the occasion of the first appearance. There is no occasion," he adds, "to derive the three accounts of this occurrence in the Acts from different sources, and even in this case one must suppose that the author must have remarked and reconciled the discrepancies; that he did not do so, or rather that, without following his own earlier narrative, he repeated it in an arbi-
trary form, proves to us how careless the New Testament writers are about details of that kind, important as they are to one who strives after strict historical accuracy."—Vol. i. p. 414-5.

Such is the charge which Strauss brings against the author of this book, and which he extends to all the New Testament writers. It is not our business at present to defend the other writers from this charge of carelessness as to the details of the events which they severally record. It is sufficient to remark that variations in respect to details always characterise independent accounts of substantially the same events, and that even the same author, should he have occasion to repeat his account of an event which was marked by a variety of details, will not always repeat it in exactly the same manner, but may have good reasons for mentioning at one time some of those details which he may have omitted to notice at another time. As to the three different accounts of the great event referred to, which we find in the Acts, two of them are given as proceeding directly from Paul himself, and one—the first account—is that which comes from the author, and was in all probability received by him from the Apostle. If we compare these three accounts in that spirit of fairness in which we ought always to examine historical narratives, we shall discern, not indeed a literal agreement in the statement of some of the details, but a perfect agreement as to the event itself which is recorded, and also a consistency between the very statements which are by Strauss alleged to be at variance. Let us briefly notice these accounts.

1. In the first, which is that given by the author
(ix. 1-30), it is recorded that when Saul was approaching Damascus, there suddenly shone round about him a light from heaven; and that he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" and that Saul said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" whereupon the Lord said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; but arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do;" further, that the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one; and that Saul arose from the earth, and when his eyes were opened he saw no man, but that those who were with him led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. There are certain clauses in the fifth and sixth verses of the received text which seem to have been introduced into this account from the other accounts, and which we have therefore omitted.

2. Let us now hear the first of the two recorded accounts given by the Apostle himself when he spoke in his own defence before a vast assembly of Jews in the city of Jerusalem (xxii. 1-21). After briefly telling them what he was by descent, and how he had been trained from his youth, and specially of his zeal for the Jewish law and his efforts to arrest the progress of the new faith, he informs them that he had set out with authority to Damascus, on purpose to bring the converts to this faith in bonds to Jerusalem, that they might be punished. "And it came to pass," he goes on to say, "that as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus, about noon suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And I
answered, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said unto me, I am Jesus the Nazarene whom thou art persecuting. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of Him that spake unto me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus."

The differences between this and the former account may be noticed before we proceed to examine the remaining one. The author did not mention the time of the day when the event occurred. Paul tells us here that it was about noon. Both accounts agree as to the place where the event took place, also as to the sudden burst of light, as to Paul's falling to the ground and hearing the voice which addressed him in words which he understood, and which are exactly the same in both accounts, with the single exception that in Paul's own account Jesus calls Himself "the Nazarene," whereas the author of the Acts omits this appellation in his account. There is, however, an apparent discrepancy between these two accounts in what is related respecting the men who were accompanying Saul. The author says that "they stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one;" whilst the Apostle in his account says that 'those who were with him saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but that they heard not the voice of Him that spake to him.' Now, apart from the consideration that the word "voice" is in the Greek differently
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governed in these two passages*—a circumstance which we consider not so immaterial as some represent it—
the simple question is, whether the phrase “to hear
the voice” may not legitimately be understood in two
different senses. A person may be said to hear a
voice when he hears merely the sound, yet does not
catch or understand the words conveyed by that sound.
Such a person may be said to hear of the voice—
to hear something—the sound—of the voice; and this
is the exact translation of the words in the author’s
account. Again, a person may be said not to hear a
voice, when he does not hear or does not understand
the words conveyed by the sound; and this seems to be
the exact meaning of the words used by the Apostle
in his account.† But, apart from the mere gram-
matical structure of the two phrases, it seems clear
that the author and the Apostle did attach different
senses to the phrase. The author contrasts what the
men did hear, with what they did not see. They
heard the sound of the voice, but they saw no one—
did not see Him from whom the voice proceeded.
The Apostle contrasts two different things—his own
hearing the words spoken by the voice, with their not
hearing the words thus spoken to him: “They heard
not,” he says, “the voice of Him that spake to me.”
It is thus evident that the two accounts are in perfect
agreement with each other in respect to this point;
and that Strauss’s attempt to place them in oppo-
tion arises from carelessness on his own part, or
rather, we should say, from a determination to set
them in opposition. The difference in the accounts,

* ἀκούοντες τῆς φωνῆς. || τὴν φωνὴν οὐκ ἦκουσαν τοῦ λαλοῦντος μοι.
† Comp. Mark iv. 33; 1 Cor. xiv. 2; Gal. iv. 21; Gen. (LXX.) xi. 7.
when these are fairly treated, corroborates the accuracy of each. The accounts throw light on each other, just as we found to be the case with the different narratives of the Resurrection itself. We would only further observe, in respect to both these accounts, that they inform us how Ananias, a disciple at Damascus, was sent to Saul to restore his sight, to receive him into the Christian Church, and to tell him, as the Lord had said, "the things which were appointed for him to do;" and that the two accounts are, in reference to this matter also, substantially at one.

In this account, which the Apostle himself gives, he also mentions a vision with which he was favoured when he was on a visit to Jerusalem, and was engaged in prayer in the Temple. It is important to observe that he expressly distinguishes this vision of Jesus as one of a different order from that appearance which took place when he was nigh to Damascus. He tells us plainly that he was then in a trance—in an ecstasy. This vision was a reality: still it was different in its nature from that event which occurred when he first saw the glorified Jesus and heard His voice. The one, though real, may, for the sake of distinction, be termed subjective, whilst the other was an objective appearance, and could therefore be the subject of ordinary testimony. It is important, we have said, to notice that the Apostle was fully aware of the distinction between these two kinds of appearance, and that he has himself expressly pointed out the distinction. Strauss, you will find, rests his whole theory on the supposition that there was no such distinction—a supposition directly opposed to the Apostle's own statements.
3. And now let us consider the second account which Paul gave of what occurred when he was on the way to Damascus (xxvi. 4-23). This was given by him in his address before King Agrippa, after he had appealed from the tribunal of Festus to that of the Emperor himself. He begins his speech with a reference to his former life, which, he says, was well known to all the Jews, and to the hope which, in common with his Jewish brethren, he had cherished, namely, the hope of the promise given by God unto the Fathers. This was evidently the great promise of the Messiah and His kingdom. It was, says Paul, because he believed that this promise had been fulfilled in One whom God had raised from the dead that he was now accused by the Jews; and he pointedly asks, "Why, if God does raise persons who are dead, it should be judged a thing not to be believed?" Paul here exposes the absurdity of want of belief in the fact of a resurrection, if it is admitted that God has power to raise the dead, and actually does so. His words, viewed in connection with the context, manifestly imply that the great proof that Jesus was the Messiah was afforded in the fact that God had raised Him from the dead. He then mentions how he had formerly opposed the claims of Jesus, and persecuted His followers by every means in his power. "I verily thought," he says, "with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue,
and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.” Such was, according to his own confession, his furious hatred of the very name of Jesus. And now he relates what happened. “Whereupon, as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at mid-day, O King, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared to thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me. Whereupon,” adds the Apostle, “O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.”

Now, in this narrative there are certain variations, both from Paul's former account and also from that
given by the author of the Acts, but in the main particulars there is perfect agreement in the three accounts. Paul here also states the time of day when the event occurred, and he describes the light which burst forth as exceeding the brightness of the sun. In his former account he says nothing as to the effect which this sudden burst of light had on his companions, beyond that when they saw the light they became afraid, whilst he speaks of himself as having fallen to the ground. The author, in his account, represents Saul as having fallen to the ground, and, after recording the words uttered by Jesus, and Saul's reply, he describes the men as standing speechless. But Paul, in his speech before Agrippa, says that these men fell along with himself to the earth. Here, then, is one of those variations or discrepancies which Strauss adduces in support of his charge of carelessness against the author of the Acts. That author, according to Strauss, was so careless as to details, which are so important to one who strives after historical accuracy, that he makes no attempt to reconcile this and other discrepancies, but repeats his own earlier narrative in an arbitrary form.

Now, let it be observed that the two last accounts proceed directly from Paul himself, and that the author's duty was to record them just as they were stated by Paul. His own account, the first one, was no doubt derived by him from Paul also; but it belonged to the author to state more or fewer of the details which he had learned, as might seem to him to be necessary for his immediate purpose. And when we examine the three accounts and compare them fairly, we find no difficulty in reconciling them
as far as the discrepancy before us is concerned. The author, you will observe, records the position of the men whilst the voice was speaking. They were standing, as the word really means, speechless, hearing the voice—the mere sound of the voice—but seeing no one. Paul, however, in his second account, says that when the great light burst forth, he and the men fell to the ground; and then he mentions the voice. It is therefore clear that, on the bursting forth of the light, they were so dazzled and amazed that they all instantly fell to the ground, but that whilst Paul was actually blinded and remained prostrate on the earth, his companions were not blinded, but immediately rose up and stood speechless, hearing the sound of that voice, the words uttered by which were understood by Paul alone. That these men were not blinded as Paul was, is evident from what is said, that though they heard the voice they saw no one, and that when Paul rose up and opened his eyes, he was found to be blind, and was therefore led by his companions by the hand into Damascus. There is thus no discrepancy whatever in respect to this matter affecting the men who were with Paul; and the removal of the apparent difference only corroborates the historical accuracy of the several accounts.

There is, however, in the latter account, an addition to the words addressed by Jesus to Paul, not found in his former account, nor, when the text is corrected, in the author's own account. Paul tells Agrippa that Jesus, after putting the question, "Why persecutest thou Me?" added these startling words, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." This proverbial expression, intimating the utter hopeless-
ness and utter ruin of an enterprise, was employed by Jesus to show the infuriated persecutor that, let him rage as he might, he was engaged in a hopeless task, and would, should he persist, only bring ruin upon himself. These words, as well as all the rest spoken on this occasion, were no doubt indelibly impressed on Paul's mind, but he mentions them only in his speech before Agrippa. I doubt not that as he described in that speech his own furious zeal in stronger terms than he used in the speech before the assembled Jews at Jerusalem, so he had also some special reason for relating words which showed the utter impotency of that zeal, and the ultimately ruinous consequences to himself, if he should persist in his mad career. I doubt not that he desired, by repeating these words before Agrippa, to convince him that he, Paul, had no other alternative than to yield obedience to the heavenly vision, and also to impress Agrippa himself with the danger of resisting the testimony now delivered to him concerning Jesus. The addition of these words constitutes, in fact, no real difficulty.

We now come, however, to what indeed, at first sight, presents a difficulty, although it also will disappear when we examine the matter with fairness and candour. That we may bring this apparent difficulty fully before you, we would observe that, according to the author's account, Jesus commanded Paul to arise and go into the city, where he would receive further information as to what he was to do, and that then we have an account of the mission to Paul of Ananias, who gave him this further information. We next observe that, according to Paul's own account, given in his speech at Jerusalem, we have a
statement substantially the same as that given by the author, Paul also adding that when he was on a visit to Jerusalem, and whilst he was praying in the Temple, he received in a supernatural vision direct instruction from Jesus, especially as to his mission to the Gentiles. Now, in his speech before Agrippa, Paul represents Jesus as addressing him thus:—"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me." In this speech he omits all mention of Ananias, and also of the vision with which he was favoured on his visit to Jerusalem. Strauss adduces the difference in the three accounts of this whole matter as substantiating his charge of carelessness against the author. Now, let it be well observed that this difference lies between the last account and the two former accounts. In the first two we have all or the principal details as to the manner in which Paul received his instructions. He received these partly through Ananias and partly from Jesus Himself. In his last account Paul evidently wishes to be as brief as possible, and therefore, without mentioning Ananias and the subsequent vision, he represents Jesus as imparting all the instructions at once. Paul, in short, sums up all, whether proceeding from Ananias or afterwards received in
the vision referred to, and lays before Agrippa in one view all that Jesus appointed him to do. Paul was fully justified in doing so; for all that he states did come from Jesus, and did constitute the special commission with which he was entrusted. Strictly speaking, these words were not addressed to him at the very time when Jesus commanded him to arise and go into the city, where he would be told what he must do. But as they contained a summary of his commission, as they were connected with the appearance of Jesus to him on that occasion, and as he wished to sum up all in one brief sentence, he thereby stated to Agrippa in few words all that Jesus appointed him to be and to do; and consequently his statement, though not literally exact, was in its import perfectly correct. Paul had before him only the alternative of a comparatively long detail of the time when, and circumstances in which, these instructions were imparted, or of avoiding details on these points, which were not necessary for his immediate purpose, and summing up all the instructions in the manner he adopted; and it is only a spirit of hypercriticism which, overlooking the immediate purpose of a speaker or a narrator, finds fault with such a mode of procedure. It is clear, then, that the accounts, when fairly and candidly viewed, do not clash with one another in regard to this matter. By comparing them, we learn in what way the details succeeded one another, and we also see that what Paul sums up in the form of one address delivered to him by Jesus, consisted of detailed instructions given to him on several occasions. The main point before him was to inform Agrippa of what Jesus did in reality commission him to do; and it is
evident that the whole of this commission was included in what took place when Jesus apprehended him on the way to Damascus, and turned him from being a persecutor of His name to be a witness of what he had seen and heard, and a preacher of the faith among all nations.

These remarks are, we believe, sufficient to show that there is no discord whatever among these accounts, and also to free the author of the Acts from the charge of carelessness about details. They are sufficient also, we think, to prove that these three accounts, varied although they are in certain respects, do support one another—a result which can be expected to take place only when different accounts are, so far as they go, historically correct. Further, these accounts do unquestionably represent what took place near to Damascus as objective occurrences. Paul knew perfectly the distinction between what is termed a subjective vision, although produced in a supernatural manner, and an external appearance such as that which then occurred. The author of the book also shows that he too was fully aware of this distinction. It is impossible to have clearer and more decided testimony than that which the Apostle Paul gives to the objective character of the appearance of Jesus, when he was on the way to Damascus as the infuriated persecutor of all who called upon His name. He therefore could justly say, and he solemnly testified, "Last of all, He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." And when his authority as an Apostle was called in question by some Judaising teachers, he could ask with the fullest confidence, "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?"
It was the exalted, the glorified Jesus who appeared to St Paul in the way. The circumstances under which he saw Jesus were undoubtedly different from those in which the elder Apostles had seen Him after His resurrection. These Apostles could say, as one of them did, that they had been witnesses of the sufferings of Jesus as well as of His resurrection. The Apostle Paul had not witnessed His sufferings, but he was a witness of the glory of Jesus. As Ananias said to him, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of His mouth: for thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." The objective nature, then, of the appearance of Jesus to Paul, is that which these accounts, so diversified in some details, yet so thoroughly at one, clearly and decidedly establish; and Luke's accuracy as an historian stands, we think, perfectly intact.

But Strauss has not yet finished his attack on these accounts. Even had they been found free from all the supposed inaccuracies, why must we allow these accounts to have proceeded either from an eyewitness, or from one who received his information from an eyewitness? Why may we not attempt to lessen the credit due to the supposed author of this book? Strauss proceeds to do so in the following manner; and his reasoning will furnish you with another remarkable specimen of that "higher criticism" of which we hear so much in our day:—

"But even," says he, "if the narrator in the Acts had gone more accurately to work, still he would not be an eyewitness, scarcely even a writer who took the history from
the narrative of an eyewitness. Even if we consider the
person who in different places of the Acts comprehends
himself and the Apostle Paul under the word 'we' or 'us'
to have been the composer of the whole work, that person
was not, on the occasion of the occurrence before Damascus,
as yet in the company of the Apostle. Into this he did not
enter until much later, in the Troad, on the Apostle's
second missionary journey (Acts xvi. 10). But that hypo-
thesis with regard to the author of the Acts of the Apostles
is, moreover, as we have seen above, erroneous. He only
worked up into different passages of his composition the
memoranda of a temporary companion of the Apostle about
the journeys performed in his company, and we are there-
fore not justified in considering the narrator in these pas-
sages and sections in which the 'we' is wanting as an eye-
itness. Now among these is found the very section in
which appear the two accounts of his conversion which
Paul gives, first to the Jewish people in Jerusalem,
secondly to Agrippa and Festus in Cæsarea. The last
occasion on which the 'we' was found was xxi. 18, that
of the visit of Paul to James, and it does not appear again
until xxvii. 1, when the subject is the Apostle's embarka-
tion for Italy. Nothing, therefore, compels us externally
to assume that we have in the report of these speeches the
account of any one who had been a party to the hearing of
them, and, in them, Paul's own narrative of the occurrences
that took place on his conversion. Moreover, the history
in its internal character, with its shining light and falling-
down, its miraculous blinding and healing; its dreams and
visions dovetailing into each other, is so completely in the
fashion of the tales of appearances and miracles current
among the Jews and the original Christians, and so espe-
cially resembles the manner in which the author of the
Acts of the Apostles and the third Gospel loves to arrange
scenes of this kind (comp., e.g., the history of Cornelius and
Peter, Acts x. 11; of Zachariah and the angel, Luke i. 8,
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ff.), that we look upon this appearance of Christ to Paul as exactly on the same footing as those witnessed by the earlier disciples. That is, we find ourselves in this case also thrown back from evidence of the third rank upon that of the Apostle; which, moreover, is not in this instance evidence of the second, but of the first rank."—Vol. i. p. 415-16.

A very few remarks will suffice to show how entirely arbitrary is the theory which Strauss, following Baur and others, attempts to establish respecting the authorship of the Acts of the Apostles. It is admitted by them that the same person was the author of this book and of the third Gospel. Now, the author, although he does not mention his own name, tells us plainly in the introduction to his Gospel that he had received his information respecting Jesus from the first sources—from those who had been "eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word"—and that he had, with the utmost care, endeavoured to trace everything down from the very beginning, so as to present to Theophilus, and through him to other Christians, an exact narrative of those things which were certainly believed among them concerning Jesus. In the Book of the Acts we have the clearest testimony that the author did become the companion of the Apostle Paul during his second missionary journey, and went with him to Macedonia (xvi. 10). Whether Luke—for such, by unanimous testimony, was the name of the author—remained at Philippi when the Apostle left that city until his return thither at the end of his second visit to Greece, or went elsewhere, we are not expressly informed; but we learn (xx. 6) that he was in the company of Paul when the latter visited that city
a second time, and that he accompanied the Apostle to Asia and Jerusalem (xxi. 17); while from the fact, which is also expressly stated, that he sailed with the Apostle to Rome (xxvii. 1, xxviii. 16), we may reasonably conclude that he continued with the Apostle, or in his neighbourhood at least, during the imprisonment of the latter at Cæsarea. That the author does not mention himself as being present on certain occasions referred to, and especially that no mention of him occurs in the sections which consist chiefly of Paul's defences, is surely no reason for supposing that he was absent. The idea that the author of the Acts obtained possession of some memoranda of a temporary companion of the Apostle, and that he worked up these into different passages of his treatise in so blundering a manner as the theory supposes—the idea that this was done by the author of the third Gospel, and of this second remarkable treatise, is so absurd, that it could be entertained only by those who feel themselves compelled to abandon all fair criticism, and to have recourse to the most desperate measures in order to support their desired conclusion. Luke, "the beloved physician," and the devoted companion of the Apostle Paul—the man whose praise was in all the Churches, and who remained steadfast to the Apostle in his severest trials, even when others had forsaken him—was the undoubted author of this book, as well as of the Gospel which bears his name; and for his power of observation and skill in narration we need only appeal to his remarkable description of the voyage and shipwreck given towards the close of his work. The idea also that this treatise was composed by some unknown author during the first half of the
second century, in order to conciliate what those critics, to whom we are specially referring, call Petrine and Pauline Christianity, is disproved by the manifest design of the treatise, which unquestionably was to record the progress of the Gospel through the ministry of the Apostles, first among the Jews and then among the Gentiles. As to what Strauss says about "the manner" of the author, and his love for "arranging scenes" of a miraculous or supernatural character, we have only to state that he loved to arrange these and other scenes just as he knew for certain they had occurred. In the testimony of Luke, then, we have often that of an eyewitness of what he records; and where he was not himself an eyewitness, we have the testimony of one who had his information directly from eyewitnesses. In the recorded speeches of Paul we have, we need hardly say, the highest possible testimony as to the facts which occurred when Jesus appeared to him on his way to Damascus.

Having, as he imagines, deprived the Book of the Acts of all historical weight, Strauss returns to the expressions in the Epistles of Paul which inform us that Jesus had appeared to him; and his aim now is to show that these expressions do not compel us to conclude this appearance to have been anything else than one merely subjective.

"Now in this instance," he says, "we have to complain of the same thing as in others, that the Apostle, even in reference to the first appearance imparted to him, expresses himself so very briefly. In the passage already quoted (1 Cor. xv. 8), all that he says of himself is that the risen Christ had appeared, or been made visible to him. In
another passage he asks, 'Did I not see Jesus Christ our Lord?' (1 Cor. ix. 1), where, without doubt, he means the same appearance. In that passage, lastly, in which he enters more fully than elsewhere upon the description of all that he had done, and that had happened to him, he only says that it had pleased God (Gal. i. 13-17) to reveal His Son in him, that he might preach him among the heathen. Taking these different expressions together, we have on the one hand the conviction of the Apostle that he had seen Jesus; and we may add thus much from the narrative in the Acts, that he thought he had heard him—heard words proceeding from his lips. Paul thought that on other occasions also it had been vouchsafed to him to hear words of this kind from the upper regions. It cannot be the appearance we are now speaking of, but must have been another subsequently, when in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (xii. 1, ff.) he speaks of a man who fourteen years before was caught up into the third heaven, into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it was not lawful for a man to utter. But when he adds, 'whether in the body, he cannot tell; or whether out of the body, he cannot tell: God knoweth,' we see that he was not without consciousness of the difficulty of establishing the real nature of the fact in appearances of this kind. And when, on the other hand, in the passage of the Epistle to the Galatians, he describes what he had seen and done as the effect of revelation of God in him, he lays the main stress on the internal element, conceives of the seeing and hearing of Christ as accompanied by the rising up within his mind of the true knowledge of him as the Son of God. It is certain that in doing so he considered the ascended Christ as really and externally present, the appearance as in the full sense an objective one; but he is far from saying anything to prevent us (as certain features in the narrative of the Acts might do, if we were obliged to take them in the strictly historical sense) from being of a different opinion, and considering the
appearance as one merely subjective, as a fact of the inward life of his soul."—Vol. i. p. 416-17.

Now, in reference to the above passage, you will remember that Strauss formerly complained, as indeed he here reminds us, that Paul, when appealing to the fact that the risen Jesus had been seen by Cephas and others, only stated that he had been seen by them, but did not state what he calls "the grounds which these persons had for considering the appearance as something real, and indeed as the appearance of their Master, who was dead." You will also remember that we replied to this captious complaint by showing that the Apostle in his argument assumed as an indisputable fact the reality of the resurrection of Jesus; that his main design in that argument was to refute, by means of this fact, the erroneous doctrine which some were propagating in opposition to the reality of the resurrection of the bodies of believers in Jesus; and that he therefore stated briefly, but, we think, most sufficiently, the sensible evidence which had been given to the disciples of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus. That sensible evidence was mainly, though not exclusively, the evidence of sight; and that particular evidence is manifestly mentioned, inasmuch as it was, so to speak, the essential evidence, and further as it included whatever other sensible evidence was at the same time afforded. Jesus was seen alive after His death. This is what Paul affirms for the disciples, and what he also affirms for himself. And it is clear that an objective appearance is in each case affirmed to have taken place. Strauss's complaint is therefore wholly unreasonable, unless he can show by positive proof, and not in the way of
mere conjecture, that these disciples and Paul also were deceived by their own imaginations—that they mistook mere subjective impressions in each case for objective realities.

Strauss, then, proceeds to attempt such a proof; and the method he adopts is to confound what we may term pure, supernatural visions with these objective appearances. He confounds, in short, things which are distinct, and which the Apostle Paul knew and states to be distinct. Those supernatural visions which were vouchsafed to the Apostle, and some of which he records, were indeed realities—they were not mere dreams of an excited imagination. Still they were different from those appearances to which testimony was borne as constituting the main evidence of the reality of Christ's resurrection. And we must not, any more than the Apostle himself does, confound these distinct things. When Paul says, "And last of all He was seen of me also;" and when, in vindication of his Apostolic authority, he asks in a manner which really implies a strong affirmation, "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" he unquestionably refers to that appearance which took place near to Damascus; but when, in his Epistle to the Churches of Galatia, in vindication not exactly of his Apostolic authority, but of the Gospel which he as an Apostle had taught these Churches, he appeals to the fact that he had neither received this Gospel from man, nor had been taught it by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ; for that "it pleased God, who had separated him from his mother's womb and called him by His grace, to reveal His Son in him, that he might preach Him among the heathen," he
evidently refers not strictly to the objective appearance of the risen and exalted Jesus, but to the subsequent revelation of Jesus as the Son of God, which was given him in order that, being thus supernaturally taught, he might preach to the Gentiles the Gospel of God concerning His Son. Strauss entirely misrepresents the whole scope of the Apostle's argument in his Epistle to the Galatians, when he says, that in the passage referred to in that Epistle "Paul enters more fully than elsewhere upon the description of all that he had done and that had happened to him;" and that, therefore, Paul means the same thing when, in the Epistle to the Corinthians, he says that "the risen Jesus was seen by him," and when, in his Epistle to the Galatians, he speaks of God "revealing His Son in him." The same thing is evidently not meant in these different passages. In the one case the Apostle is distinctly referring to an external proof given him of the reality of Christ's resurrection; in the other he is as distinctly referring to an internal teaching by God respecting His Son Jesus, who had been seen by him. The two things were no doubt connected, but they are not for that reason to be identified; nay, there is abundant reason to believe that the revelation spoken of was subsequent to the appearance recorded. Strauss, then, makes out his supposed proof by a manifest misrepresentation of the Apostle's different statements.

Having confounded, for the sake of this imaginary proof, two things which are distinct, he goes on to strengthen it, as he thinks, by referring to other supernatural visions, and especially to one particularly mentioned by the Apostle in his Second Epistle
to the Corinthians—to visions which, though real, are by the Apostle himself manifestly distinguished from those appearances which were truly objective, and which were the subject of testimony as bearing on the reality of Christ's resurrection. In regard to that particular vision, to which reference is made in the Epistle last named, Strauss again misrepresents the Apostle's argument, for he looks upon the peculiar expression, "Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God know-eth," as indicating a "consciousness on the part of the Apostle of the difficulty of establishing the real nature of the fact in appearances of that kind." The Apostle's difficulty was manifestly not such as is here represented. He knew that it was a vision—a real, supernatural vision. He knew that such a vision was different in kind from that appearance of Jesus which was made to him through the senses of his body. The difficulty which he was unable to solve referred not to the nature of the vision, but solely to the relation in which his spirit, when thus favoured with that vision, stood, whilst the vision lasted, to his body. He was then, as he himself elsewhere describes his state, in an ecstasy; and he saw and heard things which were presented to his mind; but whether the body acted any part, and, if so, what part it did act on such an occasion, he plainly says he could not tell. There was no such difficulty as to what occurred when Jesus apprehended him on the way to Damascus. He was then, to use his mode of expression, "in the body," and with his eyes saw the light, and with his ears heard the words spoken to him from on high. But Strauss is pleased to confound these things, and by misinter-
pretation of expressions and of the argument in each case, he labours to make it appear that the Apostle also confounded them, at one time representing the appearance of Christ as a purely internal revelation, and at another time as an objective reality; and that, therefore, although Paul looked upon the appearances as objective, yet from his own representation of them we may differ from him in his opinion as to the objective reality, and conclude that "the appearance, the one which took place near Damascus, was merely subjective—a fact of the inward life of his soul.”

The untenable nature of Strauss's hypothesis is thus sufficiently shown by a fair representation of the Apostle's statements in the several passages alluded to; and not only is this hypothesis thus refuted, but the fact of the objective reality of that first appearance is clearly brought out by the consistency which is thus found to pervade the Apostle's statements when distinct though closely-allied things are spoken of by him.

Strauss next proceeds to trace these visions of Paul to the physical condition of his frame.

"The Apostle himself tells us," he says, "that certain ecstatic states of mind were not of rare occurrence with him. 'If it were expedient for him to glory,' he writes to the Christians in Corinth (2 Cor. xiii. 1, ff.), he could boast of a superabundance of visions and revelations with which he had been favoured; among which he then mentions especially the case just spoken of, about the catching up into the third heaven. 'But that, lest he should be exalted above measure, there had been given to him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him.' On reading these words, attacks of convulsion, perhaps of epilepsy, naturally occur to the
mind, and the probability of them is strengthened by what he says elsewhere of the weakness of his body, the unsightliness of his outward appearance (2 Cor. x. 10, Gal. iv. 13). The notion of a nervous constitution is suggested by the speaking with tongues, in which, as he says (1 Cor. xiv. 18), he surpassed all the members of the Corinthian Church; for it was an ecstatic sort of speaking, which no one could understand without an interpreter. Paul also ascribes to a revelation the impulse which he felt to take the journey to Jerusalem, which had for its object his communicating with the other Apostles (Gal. ii. 2); and here we may see quite clearly what Baur has already drawn attention to, how these supposed supernatural mental revelations occurred in him. Besides the revelation, he further brings forward a very rational ground for having undertaken the journey with Barnabas—namely, in order not to run the danger of all his previous apostolic labour being in vain. There was just at that time an awkward complication. The great success of the Apostle Paul among the heathen had begun to draw upon him the notice of the primal Church in Jerusalem. Suspicion was aroused in this metropolis of Jewish Christianity by the fact that in Antioch a centre of heathen Christianity was set up in opposition to it. Members of the metropolitan Church came to Antioch, where Paul was labouring, and appealing, as it would appear, to the Apostles who stood at the head of that Church, demanded that the heathen, in order to be adopted into participation in the salvation of the Messiah, should first be compelled to subject themselves to the law of Moses, and especially to circumcision. Paul could not conscientiously yield to such a demand; if the original Apostles really persevered in it, the division became inevitable, which threatened to destroy the effects of the work to which he had devoted his life. We may imagine how deeply his mind was moved by this circumstance—how it haunted him day and night; and considering the character of his mind, we cannot be sur-
prised that there resulted from it at last a revelation, an imaginary command of Christ revealing himself to him in a dream or waking moment."—Vol. i. p. 417-18.

The manifest design of Strauss in this passage is to show that the visions or revelations with which Paul was favoured had their origin in a peculiar constitution of mind, accompanied with or springing from a peculiar constitution of body. He endeavours to support this theory, first, by what Paul tells us of a certain bodily malady with which he came to be afflicted, and by what he says of the gift of tongues which was bestowed upon him; and, secondly, by what he assigns as his reason for going up to Jerusalem on the occasion referred to in his Epistle to the Galatians.

Now, first, as to the bodily weakness of which Paul repeatedly makes mention, and especially in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, it is evident from the words of the Apostle that the special malady which he in that Epistle emphatically calls "a thorn in the flesh," did not precede but follow the remarkable vision of which he there speaks. His words are, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." Whatever this thorn in the flesh was, it must have caused him excessive pain, and have been a hindrance to him in his efforts to preach the Gospel; and mainly, no doubt, for this second reason, "he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him." But the Lord answered his third petition by revealing to him that this "thorn" would not be removed, but
that sufficient grace would be bestowed upon him, so that in his weakness the power of Christ should rest upon him. Strauss's argument, then, falls to the ground, for it supposes that the malady referred to, whatever it was, preceded the vision and gave rise to the vision; whereas the Apostle distinctly affirms that the vision preceded the malady.

As to the gift of tongues, which Paul says he possessed in a higher measure than had been bestowed on the members of the Corinthian Church, there is no evidence to show that this was other than a supernatural gift bestowed at that time on believers by the Holy Spirit as a sign of the power of that Spirit, and that this gift sprang from a peculiar state of the body, any more than did the gift of prophecy or any other spiritual gift of an extraordinary kind then bestowed.

With respect to the cause of Paul's visit to Jerusalem on the occasion specially referred to, there can be no doubt that this visit was caused by the attempt of certain Judaising Christians who sought to bring the Gentile believers under the yoke of the Mosaic ritual law. This matter is fully explained to us in the Acts of the Apostles (xv. 1, ff.), and it seems evident that it is to the same visit there related, that Paul refers in his Epistle to the Galatians (ii. 1, ff.) Now, it is clear that Paul was intensely anxious about this matter. He had received the Gospel which he preached directly by revelation from God; and he knew for certain that submission to the ritual law was no longer obligatory. He therefore, along with Barnabas, resisted the attempts of those who came down to Antioch from Judea, and who taught, that "except the Gentile believers were circumcised after the manner of Moses, they
could not be saved." So vehement did the discussion of this subject become, that the Church at Antioch resolved to send Paul and Barnabas and some others to Jerusalem, to hold an interview with the Apostles and elders there about this question. Such is the information given by the author of the Acts. But Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians says that he, along with Barnabas and Titus, "went up by revelation,"—that is, in consequence of some revelation of the mind of God to that effect. Strauss evidently wishes to bring out a contradiction between this statement and what we learn from the Acts. Now, there is surely no contradiction here. The matter about which the dissension arose was one of the highest practical moment to the whole Church—to Jewish as well as to Gentile believers; and it also affected the very essence of the Gospel. Strauss allows that it was reasonable on the part of the Church at Antioch to send persons to Jerusalem to consult the Apostles and elders there. But was it not natural that he who had received the Gospel not from man, but from God, should hesitate to take such a step, lest any countenance should thereby be given to the idea that he had not been truly taught this Gospel? Is there anything, therefore, improbable in the idea that he did receive a divine intimation to agree to the proposed measure? If he received such, it behoved him to mention the fact expressly to the Galatians, in order that they might see that, even in taking such a step, he was not yielding to any doubts respecting the true nature of the Gospel which he had received, but was following special divine intimation in order that he might, in presence of the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem,
vindicate this Gospel, and obtain an authoritative declaration from those whom his opponents allowed to be the "pillars" of the Church, in support of the freedom of all believers in Christ, and especially of Gentile believers, from the bondage of the ceremonial law. Strauss's whole reasoning, then, falls to the ground, when we take a fair and complete view of all the circumstances of the case.

But he has now prepared the way, as he thinks, for giving his account of the appearance that took place near Damascus—to get rid of the objective reality of which is the great difficulty, and has all along been the end in view. Let us, then, hear how this is to be done.

"Let us now transport ourselves," he says, "back into the period before his conversion, and think of the excitement into which he, the zealot for the hereditary institutions of Judaism (Gal. i. 14), must have been brought by the threatening progress of the growing Christianity. He saw at that time what he held most dear and most holy endangered; a spiritual tendency appeared to be spreading unchecked, making of secondary consideration precisely that which was to him the most important thing of all, the strict observance of all Jewish laws and customs, and which opposed in the most hostile manner that party especially to which he had attached himself with all the fiery zeal of his nature. Now, we might indeed suppose that out of such mental emotions, a visionary Moses or Elias might at last have started, rather than an appearance of Christ; but only when the other side of the question is left out of consideration. The result showed that the satisfaction which Paul thought to find in his Pharisaic zeal for righteousness was not of a tranquillising character. This was evident, even at that time, from the passionate disquietude, the zealous pre-
cipitancy of his conduct. On the different occasions in which he came in contact with the new believers in the Messiah, when first, in the character, as we must suppose, of a disputatious dialectician as he was, he argued with them (comp. Acts ix. 29), then entered their assemblies, haled them away prisoners, and helped to bring them to trial, he could not fail to feel himself on a disadvantageous footing with them in two respects. The fact on which they relied, on which they built the whole of their faith, as differing from their hereditary Judaism, was the resurrection of Jesus. Had he been a Sadducee, it would have been easy for him to combat this asserted fact, for the Sadducees recognised no resurrection whatever (Acts xxiii. 7). But Paul was a Pharisee, believed therefore in the resurrection—not, indeed, to happen until the end of time; but that in a particular case, the case of a holy man, it might have happened exceptionally even earlier—this supposition, from the point of view of Jewish notions at that time, created no difficulty. He must, therefore, in the case of Jesus, have relied principally upon the fact that it could not be assumed to have happened to him, because he was not a holy man, but, on the contrary, a false teacher, an impostor. But, in the presence of the believers in Jesus, this must have become every day more doubtful to him. They considered it not only publicly honourable to be as convinced of his resurrection as they were of their own life, but they showed also a state of mind, a quiet peace, a tranquil cheerfulness, even under suffering, which put to shame the restless and joyless zeal of their persecutor. Could he have been a false teacher who had adherents such as these? Could that have been a mendacious pretence which gave such rest and security? On the one hand, he saw the new sect, in spite of all persecutions—nay, in consequence of them—extending their influence wider and wider around them; on the other, as their persecutor, he felt that inward tranquillity growing less and less which he could observe in so many ways in the per-
secuted. We cannot, therefore, be surprised if, in hours of despondency and inward unhappiness, he put to himself the question, 'Who, after all, is right—thou or the crucified Galilean about whom these men are so enthusiastic?' And when he had once got as far as this, the result, with his bodily and mental characteristics, naturally followed in an ecstasy, in which the very same Christ, whom up to this time he had so passionately persecuted, appeared to him in all the glory of which his adherents spoke so much, showed him the perversity and folly of his conduct, and called him to come over to his service.'—Vol. i. p. 419-20.

Such is the theory which Strauss has constructed to explain the origin of that belief which he admits the Apostle Paul entertained, that the risen Jesus had appeared to him. It is for us calmly to consider whether this account consists of facts historically attested, or of a series of conjectures framed by the inventor on purpose to make out a preconceived judgment.

First, as to the description which he gives of Paul's state of mind during his persecuting career, it is mainly correct, for it is taken from what we learn from the Apostle himself, and from what is recorded by Luke in his narrative of the Acts. Paul himself tells us that "beyond measure he persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it; and that he profited—made advance—in the Jews' religion above many his equals in his own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers." Paul never forgot how he had once persecuted the followers of the Lord Jesus; and at times he seems to labour for words sufficiently strong to express his zeal for Pharisaic Judaism on the one hand, and his hatred of the very
name of Jesus on the other. It is also evident that all the time he was so engaged in persecuting the Christians, he was cherishing the conviction that he was doing God service. Whether "his Pharisaic zeal for righteousness"—for that righteousness which he then imagined was all that the law required—"was of a tranquillising character," is a question which admits of a double answer, for in one respect we learn from himself that it was of such a character. He was then "without" a spiritual view of "the law," and was "alive." His supposed conformity to the law gave him the hope of the divine favour, and the more zealous he was, the higher did his hope rise. On the other hand, persecuting zeal can never be wholly of a tranquillising character; although the mental disturbance which such zeal, from its very nature, tends to produce, was in his case evidently allayed by the consideration that he was zealous for God.

There is not the slightest ground, we would next observe, for Strauss's assumption that any doubt ever entered the Apostle's mind as to the righteousness of the course which he was pursuing. On the contrary, he looked upon his zeal in persecuting the Christians as one of his strongest claims to the favour of his countrymen, and, in all probability, to the favour of God Himself. Persecutors generally grow in the conviction of the righteousness of their own cause. And Paul, the more he became inflamed with zeal against the Christians, cherished, no doubt, the more firmly the conviction that their cause was only one to be put down by every possible means. Whether he ventured to dispute with Stephen on the subject of the Christian faith, we are not told; but it is certain that those
who did dispute with him were only filled with increased hatred when they found themselves “unable to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.” But the real disproof of Strauss’s conjecture, that Paul began at last to doubt as to his views respecting the nature of the asserted claims of Jesus, is to be found in the entire absence of anything proceeding from the Apostle himself to countenance such a conjecture. He tells us, in an Epistle which Strauss, indeed, will not acknowledge as genuine, that he persecuted the Church in ignorance and in unbelief. But, apart from what he thus says, can we for a moment imagine that in his acknowledged Epistles to the Corinthians and to the Galatians, in which he expressly refers to what he once was—a persecutor of the Church of God—he would not have alluded in some way or other to the doubts that began to arise in his mind, had such doubts really arisen? So far, indeed, from his having come to entertain any such doubts, the fact is, as he himself said in the presence of Agrippa, that his fury against the Christians increased more and more, and was at its greatest height when he was on his way to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests to apprehend the Christians there, and to bring them bound to Jerusalem to be punished. Nor does the expression (to which Strauss, however, does not refer, because he wishes the Book of the Acts to be set aside as of no authority) which our Lord employed to show him the utter ruin he was by his mad career bringing on himself, at all countenance, as some have supposed, the idea that there was a struggle going on in the mind of Paul as to whether he was right or wrong in the course
he was pursuing. It is true, as Strauss says, that, being a Pharisee, Paul believed in the doctrine of a future resurrection, and that therefore he could not, as he might have done had he been a Sadducee, reject the testimony of the disciples concerning the resurrection of Jesus on the ground that a resurrection is impossible. It may also be true that, had Paul calmly reasoned respecting the conduct of the disciples who manifested such a firmness of faith and such a cheerfulness of soul under all the sufferings to which they were subjected, he might have been induced to reconsider his opinion concerning the character and claims of Jesus, and even led to renounce his former opinion, and to arrive at the conviction that this Jesus must have been no false teacher, no impostor, but a holy man, even the Messiah. But where is there the least evidence that Paul ever reasoned thus in his mind? Is not the whole existing evidence of an opposite character? Do we see him, when on the way to Damascus, hesitating and struggling with rising doubts? Do we not rather see him advancing with increasing fury against the Christians there, to suppress, as he hoped, this new sect which had risen up against the Law?

The state of the case, then, is this. If we form our views solely from the facts presented to us in the Epistles of St Paul as well as in the Acts of the Apostles, we must reject the theory of Strauss. If we abandon these authentic sources of information, and form in our minds the theory that Paul's conversion was the mere result of a mental struggle, we may adopt Strauss's conjecture, or any other that our imagination may suggest. In the former case we shall conclude without the slightest hesitation that
the risen Jesus was really seen by Paul. In the latter case we shall deny this fact, and account for Paul's belief in the reality of Christ's appearance to him as we best can. Only, be it observed, in the former case we are guided by authentic evidence, whilst in the latter we are guided solely by conjecture. Surely no unprejudiced mind can hesitate between these two kinds of guidance. Following, then, that of authentic evidence, we conclude that the appearance of Christ to Paul was a real, objective appearance, and that the Apostle said with truth, "LAST OF ALL HE WAS SEEN OF ME ALSO, AS OF ONE BORN OUT OF DUE TIME."
LECTURE XIV.

STRAUSS ON THE ORIGIN OF BELIEF IN THE
RESURRECTION.

Having, as he imagines, disproved the objective reality of the appearance of the risen Jesus to St Paul, Strauss proceeds to account for the origin of the belief of the first disciples in the supposed reality of His resurrection. Although we shall meet with arguments essentially like those which have already been refuted, yet, considering the vast importance of the subject, we must submit to follow our objector in his tedious repetition of mere conjectures manifestly framed to support a foregone conclusion. One result will be a feeling of surprise that any man professing to be in quest of truth, and possessing unquestionably the power of investigation, could so persistently blind himself to the utter absence of all real argument on a subject so awfully momentous. We have seen how Strauss laboured to misrepresent the case of the Apostle Paul, confounding things which that Apostle knew and declares to be distinct, and misinterpreting many of his statements in reference, directly or indirectly, to that marvellous appearance which the glorified Jesus accorded to him when He apprehended him in his persecuting career. Let us, then, endeavour to
consider as calmly as we can the explanation which Strauss attempts to give of the origin of that belief which, be it remembered, he admits the first disciples to have firmly held in the resurrection of Jesus. We know, on testimony of the highest order, how this belief did originate; but that testimony Strauss imagines he has set aside as unsatisfactory, and he proceeds to construct an explanation which he thinks ought to prove satisfactory to all. He begins thus:

“If, then, we are right in supposing that this appearance of Christ, which occasioned the conversion of the Apostle Paul from Pharisaic Judaism to the newly-founded Church of the Messiah, was of this character, and if those appearances which in the older disciples accompanied the rise of the faith in Jesus as the risen Messiah were of essentially the same kind as in the other case—then were these latter solely internal states of mind, which might indeed present themselves to the subjects of them as external sensible perceptions, but are to be considered by us only as results of mental excitement—as visions.”—Vol. i. p. 420-21.

As this is a purely hypothetical statement, we need not remark upon it any further than to say, that since the appearance of Christ to Paul was, as the whole evidence proves, a real, objective appearance, and since the appearances which Paul mentions as having been accorded to the first disciples were, though under different circumstances, of essentially the same kind as in his own case—these latter were unquestionably, as the particular evidence bearing on them also shows, real, objective appearances, which, when perceived by the disciples, produced, and could not but produce, in their minds that belief which they firmly held in the reality of the resurrection, and
which they maintained amidst all possible privations—even to the loss of life itself.

"The causes," says Strauss, "which produced these appearances, the conditions which made them possible, were in both cases of the same sort. The excitement occasioned in the mind of the later Apostle by the threatening progress of Christianity and his zeal in the persecution of its adherents, was produced, conversely, in the older Apostles by the persecution that broke out on the part of the Jews against Jesus and his adherents. The impression received by Paul from the first Christian Church, from their cheerfulness in faith and suffering, arose, in the case of the earlier disciples, from their recollection of the personality of Jesus himself, and their vivid conviction that he was the Messiah."

—Vol. i. p. 421.

This passage contains the basis of his theory in respect to both cases. Paul was inflamed with zeal against the Christians; but their cheerfulness in faith and suffering produced at last such an impression on his mind that he began to doubt whether they were not in the right and himself in the wrong; and a struggle was thus commenced in his mind, which became so vehement that at the very moment when he seemed most infuriated against the Christians, he imagined that Jesus appeared to him in all His glory, and "called him to come over to His service." Such, as we have seen, is Strauss's theory respecting the case of Paul; and we have, we think, sufficiently shown that the theory is entirely baseless, being opposed to the natural working of persecuting zeal, and having not the slightest evidence to rest upon. It is a theory purposely constructed to set aside all authentic evidence and to support a preconceived
opinion. We shall find the similar theory respecting the case of the older Apostles to be equally baseless, and to have its origin solely in the mind of the prejudiced and determined objector. That the Jewish rulers did persecute Jesus even to the death, there is no question; but there is no evidence to show that these rulers at first contemplated anything beyond cutting off the Head of the new sect. They no doubt expected that by the death of Jesus this sect would be for ever extinguished. When Jesus was seized, His disciples were allowed to go their own way: two of them at least were present at His trial, and only one of these was subjected to a little temporary reproach. Nor did the disciples of Jesus, although they loved Him, and believed that He was the Messiah, show themselves to be possessed of that courage which is necessary to face persecution and to run the risk of death. They indeed soon became entirely altered men, but Strauss has no right to appeal to the documents which tell us that some time after the death of Jesus they openly and bravely encountered persecution for His sake, and at the same time to set aside these documents when they tell us, with equal clearness, that at the time of the apprehension and trial of Jesus they, as a body, forsook Him and fled, and that one of the two who ventured into the judgment-hall openly and repeatedly denied Him. Strauss unfairly applies to the disciples what was true of them at a later date, but not true of them at the date which his theory supposes. Their belief in the resurrection was prior to the persecution that arose against themselves, and could not therefore be owing to that persecution as one of the main causes which pro-
duced it. It was, we repeat, their belief in the resurrection of Jesus which armed their minds to meet this persecution, and it was because they published this belief that this persecution arose. Strauss's theory, then, falls to the ground in the case of these older Apostles, just as it fell to the ground in the case of the later Apostle. The excitement to which he traces their belief in the resurrection of Jesus, and which he says was occasioned "by the persecution that broke out on the part of the Jews against Jesus and His adherents," did not exist in the peculiar form which his theory supposes until this persecution against them actually arose; and that persecution was itself occasioned by their proclaiming in Jerusalem that Jesus who had been put to death was risen from the dead. Hence, according to Strauss, the effect—their belief in the resurrection—was prior to the cause by which, in his view, it was produced—the persecution raised against them by the Jewish rulers.

As to the impression which Strauss parallels to that which (in opposition, as we have already shown, to all the evidence bearing on the subject) he alleges Paul to have received from the cheerfulness of the first Christians in faith and suffering, it is no doubt true that the earlier disciples did cherish in their minds "a recollection of the personality of Jesus Himself, and a vivid"—more or less vivid, we would rather say—"conviction that He was the Messiah." In reference to this point, the state of mind on the part of these disciples was exactly the reverse of Paul's state of mind, when he was breathing out slaughter against the followers of Jesus. Paul's mind was indeed then in a state of high excitement; but it was, as is clear
from his own language, the excitement of bigoted zeal and furious hatred. The earlier disciples too, upon the condemnation and death of their Master, were unquestionably in a state—not of what we properly call excitement, but—of the deepest depression; and such is exactly the state of mind which we should expect to have been produced in their case by the death of Him whom they had reason to regard as the Messiah. They never could understand what Jesus meant when He told them of His approaching sufferings and death. His language on this subject utterly confounded them; and in all probability they believed to the very last that He would rescue Himself from the hands of His enemies. When His predictions were actually fulfilled, and they saw Him betrayed, condemned, and crucified, their hearts sank within them, their hopes were blasted, and their faith was shaken to its very basis. Their state of mind is vividly described to us in the words of the two who were going to Emmaus on the day of the resurrection. These two were conversing about their crucified Master. They were evidently trying to account for this, to them, most unexpected event. Their countenances were sad, indicating the deep depression of their spirits, and their words were, "We trusted"—we were, not are, hoping—"that this was He who should redeem Israel." Their words do not imply that their hope was wholly gone, but they state only what had been their hope until that dread event befell them—the death of Him in whom their hope was placed. Neither their faith nor their hope was as yet a thing entirely of the past; but both had suffered a fearful eclipse, and they knew not what to think.
ORIGIN OF BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION.

Such was, according to all the evidence, the state of these disciples' minds; and this is assuredly not that state of excitement which Strauss ascribes to them, and to which, as its source, he traces their subsequent belief in the resurrection of Jesus—the excitement which he supposes could not exist until its cause existed. That cause was not the death of Jesus, but persecution raised against themselves. Such is his theory. But this persecution was itself caused by their proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus. The excitement, therefore, occasioned by this persecution, could not have been the cause of their belief in the resurrection.

We have dwelt the longer on this point for two reasons. First, it is of the utmost importance to ascertain what was the real state of the disciples' minds upon the death of Jesus. To ascertain this clearly is important, because their state of mind enters into the evidence which is given us in support of the fact of the resurrection. Secondly, Strauss manifestly labours to throw into a sort of formula what he regards as the component elements of a state of mind from which, as its source, the idea and the belief of a resurrection would spring. The formula is so constructed as to apply to both cases—to that of St Paul, and to that of the earlier disciples. There is a seeming unity in the two cases; and there is an apparent simplicity in a formula applicable to both—although a mere set of words, or rather of conjectures—which to some persons may give it a plausible aspect. We might have urged against the theory the difficulty which both Paul and the earlier disciples could not but have experienced in concluding from any supposed mental
feelings, however highly excited, a fact which they yet believed to have been of an external, an objective nature, such as that of a resurrection from the dead. But we shall hereafter have occasion to allude to this view of the subject. Meanwhile we reject the formula itself as one which is not only purely imaginary, but is in direct opposition both to the natural workings of the human heart and to all the evidence we have, whether in reference to Paul or to the earlier disciples. "Give me a resting-place," said one, "and I will move the world." Strauss does not ask a formula to be given him. He is able to construct one for himself; and then he shows how easily he can raise the dead. But as his formula is the product of his own imagination, so is the conclusion which is involved in it equally the product of the same untrustworthy faculty. It is reason, and not imagination, which ought to be our guide in all inquiries into truth. If we abandon reason as our guide, and will not listen to evidence, we had better not inquire at all. Truth addresses itself to the reason alone.

Having stated the general formula which exhibits "the causes that produced these appearances" of Christ, whether to Paul or to the earlier disciples, and also "the conditions which made them possible," Strauss proceeds to particulars, in order to show how the idea of, and the belief in, the resurrection of Jesus would arise. And, first, he notices the conceptions prevalent among the Jews respecting the Messiah:—

"The Jewish conceptions of the Messiah, though different in different persons, agreed nevertheless in this, that the Messiah, after the opening of his kingdom, would continue to reign over his followers for a period far exceeding the
natural duration of human life. According to Luke i. 33 (comp. John xii. 34), his dominion was to have, absolutely, no end, as we might read in Ps. cx. 4; Isaiah ix. 7; Dan. vii. 14, 27; elsewhere we find sometimes a duration of a thousand years (Rev. xx. 4), sometimes of four hundred,* sometimes even a shorter dominion of the Messiah on earth is supposed.† If he died at last, this death was to happen to all life on earth for the purpose of bringing about the change into the superterrestrial state.‡ In no case could he die until he had finished his work and executed all that was expected of him; in no case as one submitting to superior power, as a condemned criminal. Both had occurred to Jesus: his ministry as the Messiah had been broken off by the violence practised against him by the Jews, even before it had fully begun. Interrupted it had been, but even this only apparently; the people to whom he had been sent had shown themselves unworthy to keep him, and to partake of the blessings which he had wished to bring them. Therefore the heavens at length had taken him up until the people should become worthy of his being sent again by God, that the times of restitution long since promised to the true Israel may come in (Acts iii. 20, ff.). The element of the premature and violent death could only be adopted into the Jewish conception of the Messiah on one condition, a condition, however, not unacceptable. That condition was the viewing of the death of the Messiah not as a descent of his soul into the kingdom of shadows, but as an exaltation to God, as an entrance into the glory of the Messiah (Luke xxiv. 25, ff.), with the prospect in reserve of a future return in that glory.”—Vol. i. p. 421-2.

The design of the above passage is very obvious. There is the prevalent conception entertained by the Jews that the Messiah's reign was to last either for

* 4 Ezra v. 29, ff. Compare on this, Volkmar, Introduction to the Apocrypha, ii. 61, ff.
† Gfrörer, The Century of Salvation, ii. 252, ff. ‡ 4 Ezra. Ibid.
2 A
ever, or at least for a period exceeding the natural duration of human life; and if by any it was supposed that He would die, His death was to be accompanied with the death of all life on earth, for the purpose of bringing about the change into the superterrestrial state. In no case was He to die as one yielding to superior power, or as a condemned criminal.

Without dwelling on the particular views here referred to, it is abundantly evident that the current conceptions of the Messiah among the Jews, when Jesus appeared and claimed to be the Messiah, were, that He was to establish a kingdom upon earth; that the Jewish people under Him were to be raised to a supremacy over all other nations; and that this kingdom was to endure for ever. The disciples of Jesus, as well as the rest of their countrymen, shared in these views of the Messiah—so much so indeed, that even after His resurrection "they asked Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 6). Carnality blinded the minds of the Jews, and they rejected the claims of Jesus, resisting the force of all the evidence by which these claims were supported, mainly because He came as a spiritual and not as a carnal deliverer. It was evidently owing to these carnal conceptions of the Messiah's nature and office that the disciples of Jesus "were offended" when He spake to them of His approaching sufferings and death. It was owing to the same cause that, when He was actually condemned and put to death, their hopes were well-nigh extinguished and their faith overturned.

Now, the simple question is, How did these disciples come to change their views respecting the Messiah's
kingdom, and especially respecting His death? How were they able to adopt into their conception of the Messiah "the element of a premature and violent death," such as that which had befallen Jesus? Strauss's theory is, that this change was effected solely by an effort of their own minds. The disciples believed that Jesus was the Messiah. His death was directly opposed to the conceptions which they entertained of the Messiah. Still they were of themselves determined to persist in their faith, and therefore they set to work to find out some way by which they could adopt into their conception the fact of His death. And it occurred to them—to them all, without a single dissenting voice—that the way was to view this death, which had so stunned them, as only a temporary cessation of His work, caused by the unworthiness of the Jewish people of that generation to retain Him as the Messiah; and further, to view it not as a real death, but "as an exaltation to God, as an entrance into the glory of the Messiah, with the prospect in reserve of a future return in that glory."

This is his theory, and it is professedly constructed out of two passages, of which the one is found in St Luke's Gospel, and the other in the Acts of the Apostles, written by the same author. These two books Strauss ascribes to some unknown author who lived in the second century, and he therefore regards them as of no authority. Still he may say, that although he rejects the received authorship of these books, he is entitled to look at these passages as showing how the minds of the disciples—earlier or later—reasoned about those matters. Now we have, first of all, to reply,
that if we appeal to these or other passages as furnishing materials for a conclusion, we must take them as they are presented to us, and not garble them, or torture them to say merely what we wish they had said. The passage in the Gospel of Luke consists of words declared to have been uttered by the risen Jesus in order to show to the two disciples that, according to the ancient Scriptures, it behoved the Messiah "first to suffer, and then to enter into His glory." It was not these disciples who made this discovery. It was another—even Jesus Himself, risen from the dead—who explained to them from the words of Moses and the succeeding Prophets the things concerning Himself. We have here a satisfactory and reasonable account of the manner in which these disciples came to be able to adopt into their conception of the Messiah the element of His premature and violent death. We also learn that the other disciples were instructed by the same divine Teacher; for it is recorded by the same Evangelist that "Jesus opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ—the Messiah—to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day" (Luke xxiv. 45, 46). Here, we repeat, is a rational account of the change which took place in the conceptions of these disciples respecting the Messiah. Strauss's theory gives no rational account of it whatever. He merely asserts the change, and ascribes it to the working of the disciples' own minds; and he does this not only without adducing the slightest evidence in support of his view, but in direct opposition to the only evidence we have.
As to the passage in the Acts, it is taken from a speech addressed by the Apostle Peter to the Jewish people, who crowded to the Temple when they heard the report of the miracle there performed on the lame man. In this remarkable speech, delivered a few days after Pentecost, and therefore not a long time after the death of Jesus, Peter expressly charged those whom he addressed with having denied the Holy and Just One, and with having killed the Prince of Life, whom God, he said, had raised from the dead, of which fact he and his fellow-Apostles were witnesses; he then told them that though they and their rulers were guilty in having so treated Him whom God had sent, these things had happened according to predictions uttered by the Prophets, who had all foretold that the Messiah should suffer; and he exhorted them to repentance in order that they might receive the forgiveness of their sins, for that He whom they had denied and crucified, and whom God had raised from the dead, was now in heaven, and would come again to restore all things (Acts iii. 12-21). Here, indeed, is an account of the manner in which the death of the Messiah could, according to the Scriptures, be adopted into a just conception of His office. So far there is truth in Strauss's view; but then this account contains, as essential to the conclusion which it enforces, the fact of the resurrection of Jesus; whereas Strauss would first bring in the conclusion, and then draw from it the belief in the resurrection. He would represent the disciples as reasoning thus: "Jesus is the Messiah. He ought not to have died; but He has died. His death, then, cannot be anything else than an exaltation to God: therefore
He must have risen from the dead.” But the accounts which we have represent the matter otherwise. “Jesus is the Messiah. He has been put to death. He is risen again, and is exalted to the right hand of God.” And, as we have said, the risen Jesus Himself opened the understanding of His disciples to see how this series of facts was fulfilled in harmony with the predictions concerning the Messiah. Who can hesitate between the theory of Strauss and the accounts of Luke the Evangelist?

Strauss continues his argument, such as it is, in the following manner:—

“If the Old Testament was examined with this view, this passing of the Messiah through death and the grave to a new and higher life could as easily be found there, as, in so many places treating of quite different persons and things, the Messiah and circumstances relating to him were found. Did, then, it might be said, and in fact was said, David praise God on his account (Ps. xvi. 9, ff.) for not leaving his soul in hell, and not suffering his flesh to see corruption—David, who had died as other men, and whose body had seen corruption? Or was it not rather his great successor, the Messiah—that is, Jesus—to whom those words applied as a prophecy (Acts ii. 25, ff.)? Had not, further, Isaiah prophesied of the servant of Jehovah, that he shall be cut off out of the land of the living, and make his grave with the wicked; but that when he has made his soul a sin-offering, he will live long, and divide his spoil with the strong (Isaiah liii. 8-12)?”—Vol. i. p. 422-3.

We need not offer many remarks on this passage, the design of which is to insinuate that the first disciples examined the Old Testament in order to discover passages which they might apply to the Messiah, and therefore to Jesus, whom they were determined
to regard as the Messiah. We pass over, as unworthy of notice here, the assertion that this was an easy task to persons who were in the habit of "applying to the Messiah and to circumstances relating to Him, passages which treat of quite different persons and things." It is necessary for the opponents of Christianity to do what they can to throw discredit on the evidence of prophecy, which is one great branch of that miraculous evidence which God has given in proof of the claims of His Son Jesus Christ. However obvious to us is the meaning of many of these prophecies, the carnally-minded Jews were often unable to discern their import; and in particular their minds were so engrossed with worldly conceptions of the Messiah's kingdom, that those predictions which clearly pointed to His sufferings and death were hidden from them. Hence it became necessary for the Apostles, to whom Jesus Himself explained these predictions, and who were further enlightened by the gift of the Holy Spirit, to explain especially to their Jewish brethren the full significance of what God had foretold by the Prophets concerning the Messiah.

It is important in our discussion to notice what was the mode in which these Apostles reasoned. They did not assert, as Strauss more than insinuates, that certain passages of Scripture represent the Messiah as suffering and dying, and then passing into glory; and that since Jesus is the Messiah, therefore He, after suffering and death, must have passed into glory. Their invariable mode was, after proving from Scripture that the Messiah must first suffer and then pass into glory, to show that Jesus did actually suffer, did rise again from the dead, and did ascend to
heaven; that therefore the prophecies concerning the Messiah were fulfilled in Him; and that this Jesus whom they preached was accordingly proved to be the Messiah. This, we repeat, was the mode in which they invariably conducted their argument; and neither Strauss nor any other man is entitled to misrepresent their mode of procedure, and to do this merely to uphold a preconceived opinion, which they know perfectly well cannot be sustained except by such manifest misrepresentation. How utterly frivolous, were the subject not so awful, might we pronounce such conduct! How childish it is in any man to think he can support a cause by such pretended criticism!

We say nothing as to the two passages adduced. They are both direct predictions concerning the Messiah, and clearly intimate His death and His resurrection. But it is only right to draw attention to the application of the first passage which the Apostle Peter, in his first speech on the day of Pentecost, quoted as bearing on the resurrection of Jesus. Before Peter referred to the passage, he had uttered these solemn words, in which he appeals to facts that had occurred—"Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it." It is only after this appeal to known facts
that the Apostle refers to the passage in the 16th Psalm as showing that in these facts divine prophecy was clearly fulfilled.

As to the passage from Isaiah to which the attention of Philip was providentially directed, we shall merely observe that all the ingenuity of scepticism has utterly failed to set aside its application to the Messiah, and to disprove its fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth. That prophecy stands clear and distinct, and will never cease to direct the faith of every sincere inquirer to Him who alone died for our sins and rose again for our justification.

"In connection," continues Strauss, "with these words, the disciples might remember many of Jesus himself, in which were involved, on the one hand, allusions to the passion and death that awaited him, on the other hand to the victory of his cause, which was not to be defeated thereby; and these words, perhaps, had been placed in connection with passages of this kind out of the Old Testament. Luke (xxiv. 25, ff., 32, 46, ff.) represents it as having been one of the principal things that Jesus did after his resurrection, to open the Scriptures before the disciples, and point out to them how his passion, death, and resurrection were predicted in them. But we have no trace of this, that after the final departure of Jesus it was a renewed search into the Scriptures which served to revive the faith of his disciples."—Vol. i. p. 423.

It is not very easy at first to perceive the bearing of the last sentence in this passage; but a little reflection discovers this to be its bearing: 'Luke represents Jesus as after His resurrection opening the Scriptures before His disciples, and pointing out to them how His passion, death, and resurrection were predicted in them. But as Jesus did not rise from
the dead, Luke's account is erroneous, and we might have supposed that his error lay in attributing to the risen Jesus what was really done by the disciples themselves—that it was they who, after the death of Jesus, made a fresh search into the Scriptures, and that this served to revive their faith. Could we discover a trace of this, we should easily account for their belief in the resurrection; but though we must confess that there is no such trace, we throw out the insinuation that such may have been the case. At all events, these disciples might remember, in connection with the words of David and Isaiah, "many of Jesus Himself," involving allusions to His coming passion and death, and also to the victory of His own cause; and probably Jesus Himself had connected His own words with passages of the kind out of the Old Testament.

The design of Strauss here is to account for the fact that the disciples did ultimately adopt into their conception of the Messiah the element of the premature and violent death of Jesus, whom they believed to be the Messiah. The account which he seems to regard as the most probable is, that Jesus Himself had used expressions involving the things referred to, and had also connected these expressions with certain passages to be found in the Old Testament. But, according to Strauss, Jesus, whilst alluding to the passion and death that awaited Him, spoke only of the victory of His own cause, which was not to be defeated thereby. Now, the very documents from which alone Strauss could learn this much, tell us plainly that Jesus spoke to His disciples not only about the victory of His own cause, but also about His own resur-
reception, which He assured them would take place on the third day after His death. Strauss does not attempt to explain how Jesus, whom he regards as only a man, came Himself to adopt into His conception of the Messiah the element of a premature and violent death, and also to represent to His disciples that His cause would, notwithstanding that death, prove victorious. The difficulty which Strauss labours so vaguely to remove in the case of the disciples by means of the teaching of Jesus, is only, according to his view of Jesus, thrown back to the case of Jesus Himself, who, if He is to be regarded as but an ordinary Jew, must to some extent at least have entertained the prevalent conception of the Messiah. But conceding, for the sake of argument, that Jesus rose above this prevalent conception so far as to see that the promised Messiah was to die, whilst His cause was not to be defeated thereby; that He, without any direct warrant from God, but solely from the impulse of His own mind, claimed to be this Messiah; and further, that certain persons came to recognise this claim, we might understand how these persons should, after the death of their Messiah, still insist upon His claims, and upon the ultimate victory of His cause,—yet how are we to account on such grounds as these for their belief in His resurrection from the dead, a belief, be it observed, which they held when they engaged in the enterprise of announcing His claims to Gentile as well as Jew? If Jesus really, as the documents tell us, foretold His own resurrection, and if He, in point of fact, did rise from the dead, as the same documents assure us He did, then we have a satisfactory account of the matter. But upon the
hypothesis of Strauss we have no such account of one of the most remarkable phenomena that have occurred in the history of the human mind. Let us now, after these vague preliminary attempts to clear up this matter, hear how the case stood, according to Strauss, after the death of Jesus.

"The case, then," says he, "immediately after the decease of Jesus, between the Jews of the ancient faith and his adherents, stood as follows. The former said, 'Your Jesus cannot have been the Messiah, because the Messiah is to continue for ever, or not to die until after a long period of dominion as the Messiah, at the same time as all other earthly life; but your Jesus has died before the time by a disgraceful death, without having done anything expected of the Messiah.' On the other hand, the latter said, 'As Jesus, our Messiah, died so early, the prophecies which promise to the Messiah that he shall endure for ever can only have meant that his death shall not be a continuance in hell, but a transmigration into a higher life with God, from whence he will return to earth at his own time, in order to bring to a conclusion his work that was interrupted through your guilt.'"—Vol. i. p. 423.

Now let us carefully look at the case here presented to us. The two parties, the Jews of the ancient faith on the one hand and the adherents of Jesus on the other, are represented as entering into a discussion respecting the Messianic claims of Jesus. Let us suppose that the former employed the argument here put into their mouths, and consider the manner in which the latter reply to this argument. They are described as having attained to the belief that Jesus, though dead, had passed into a higher life with God, whence He was to return to complete the work which had been interrupted through the guilt of their
opponents. Now, where is there the slightest evidence that, upon the death of Jesus, His disciples went forth and presented the claims of their Master in this vague manner? Where is there the slightest evidence that they themselves, through any mere remembrance of words spoken by Jesus, whether connected or not with passages of the Old Testament, attained to such a belief? Jesus, they knew, had been put to death, and His body had been laid in the tomb; or, if Strauss will have it so, His body had been thrown into some dishonourable place. How is it possible to conceive that any number of men should have gone forth with what, in the case supposed, could have been only a mere theory, a theory directly opposed to their own inherited conception of the Messiah, and should have boldly faced the Jewish rulers, and for the sake of such a theory have encountered not mere opposition in words, but positive persecution even to imprisonment and to death? Strauss represents the two parties as arguing solely about some matter of speculative opinion, like two opposing sects in the schools of philosophy. He draws the features of the case entirely from his own imagination.

We must, with all deference to Strauss's power of imagination, prefer to look at the case as presented to us in the only documents which give us information regarding it; and when we so look at it, we find it to be not only essentially different from the case as described by him, but actually such as we might expect it to have been under all the circumstances known to us. The disciples did believe Jesus to be the Messiah. They believed Him to be such, because of the evidence which supported His claims. But
when He gave them intimations of His death and also of His resurrection, they were wholly unable to "adopt the element of His death into their conception of the Messiah." And when He was actually put to death, their minds were so stunned—the gloom of His death so obscured their mental powers—that they forgot His words about His rising again. It was only after sensible evidence—evidence appealing to their senses of sight and hearing and touch—evidence repeated given, that they were thoroughly convinced of the reality of His resurrection.

Such is the representation of the case given in the only documents we have bearing on the subject, as to the way in which the belief of these disciples was produced. It was produced by the presentation of a visible fact—of Jesus Himself. And it was after His visible ascension to heaven, and after they were themselves endowed with power from on high, that they went forth and proclaimed to the people of Jerusalem—not first the transmigration of Jesus, their Messiah, to a higher life with God—but His actual resurrection, of which they declared themselves to be witnesses, and then, as subsequent to this fact, His ascension to the right hand of God, and His promise to come again in His glory, not to complete a work which had been interrupted by His death, but to judge the world in righteousness, and to perfect the eternal salvation which by His one all-perfect sacrifice He had obtained for every one, Jew or Gentile, who believes on His name. They first of all, we repeat, proclaimed the fact of His resurrection, and they presented themselves as witnesses before God of the reality of this fact; and when they appealed to passages in the Old
Testament, they did so, not for the purpose of establishing the reality of the resurrection, but with the view of proving that this fact, as well as that of His death, was in perfect harmony with the prophecies which had gone before concerning the Messiah.

Such, and such only, is the case as it really stood, not immediately after the death of Jesus, but shortly after His resurrection and ascension, between the Jewish people and the disciples of Jesus. It was no matter of mere opinion to be tossed to and fro between two opposing parties. It was a matter of fact, of a fact involving practical consequences of the highest possible order, of a fact involving life and death, misery without end and bliss without end. Strauss has no right to draw from the original sources just so much as may aid his imagination in constructing a case involving his very conclusion. He is bound either to reject these sources altogether, or to take the case as it is there presented; and then, if he can, to support his desired conclusion. He had, by his previous insinuations, all contrary to the evidence, prepared the way for setting up his imaginary case. He has now succeeded, as he thinks, in representing the disciples of Jesus as arguing with their opponents, and as employing a particular style of argument. And he must now go on to show how this style of argument employed by the disciples must issue in their coming to the idea of, and belief in, a resurrection of the body of the deceased but now exalted Jesus. The idea, you will observe, of the deceased Jesus having passed at His death into a higher life with God, is the germ from which the idea of a resurrection of His body, and not only that, but a positive
belief in such a resurrection, is made to proceed. The whole must be reduced to a mere idea which sprang up in the minds of the disciples. He has now succeeded in the formation of this idea; and his ingenuity will not fail in rendering it productive of all the necessary fruit. However incredulous the sceptic is as to facts, he is in his very element when he is at work with ideas. Credulity never forsakes him then. He can cause them to spring up at a moment’s notice, in any soil, and produce whatever he pleases. These may seem to be harsh sayings, but they are true; and for their truth we have only to appeal to the sad and tedious statements which we are at present compelled to subject to criticism. Strauss is purposely labouring to subvert the very basis of our faith and hope; and he attempts to do this by substituting, in the room of real argument, conjectures which involve a manifest misrepresentation of the case as set before us in the only authentic documents, and which are due solely to his own fancy. We can meet his reasoning, such as it is, only by appealing to the case as it really was, and by a decided protest against such a mode of trifling with so solemn a subject.

He is now to show how the idea of the resurrection of the body of Jesus would in course of time spring from the idea of His having passed at His death into a higher life with God.

"Now if the eminent men," he says, "of the Old Testament, to whom a similar ascension to God had been vouchsafed, an Enoch and Elijah (Moses also, according to later Jewish legends, of which below), had ascended thither without the intervention of death, they must have taken their bodies with them unchanged. This seems to be an essential dif-
ference, but it is not so. The mortal bodies of an Enoch or Elijah could not have entered, in their natural state, into the heavenly world of spirits, but God must have changed them first. What in these cases he did with the living bodies, in the case of Jesus he did with the dead body, anticipating at the same time in him the future resurrection of the dead. The distinction was only the same as the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. xv. 51, ff.) assumed was to exist between those who were to live until Christ's second coming and those who had died before. The former were to be changed, the latter awakened—that is, the bodies of the former were to attain the condition requisite for the new life in the kingdom of Christ without the intervention of death, while in the case of the latter the dead bodies would be at the same time re-awakened and changed. But that such a double miracle, exceeding far what had occurred in the case of Enoch and Elijah, occurred also in that of Jesus, could only be credible to one who saw in him a prophet superior to them—that is, to one who, notwithstanding his death, was persuaded that he was the Messiah; this conviction was the first to which the disciples had to attain in the days of their humiliation after his crucifixion. When they had done so, it became a matter of course that his soul could not be confined powerless in hell, but must have ascended up to God in heaven; and when they reflected upon the mode in which this ascension might have taken place, they came, from the Jewish point of view, to which the soul without the body was a mere shadow, to the conception of a restoration of his body to life—that is, of the resurrection."—Vol. i. p. 424.

In this passage Strauss merely expands what he had before asserted, appealing to the cases of Enoch and Elijah as in certain respects similar to the supposed case of Jesus, and as furnishing to the disciples a ground for the idea which arose in their minds; but
further than assertions on these points, the passage contains no argument whatsoever to show how the disciples came, soon after the death of Jesus, to believe that He had risen from the dead. Strauss assumes one thing which is perfectly correct, that the disciples did believe Jesus to be the Messiah—but he seems also to assume here that they attained to this conviction during the days of their humiliation after the crucifixion of Jesus; whereas the fact was, as is attested by evidence, not by mere conjecture, that they had attained to this conviction during the ministry of Jesus; and that His crucifixion, instead of strengthening their conviction, operated, as in their case might have been expected, to shake their faith, and to throw them into the most perplexing doubts. Had Jesus not actually risen from the dead, there is not the slightest ground for supposing that their faith would not have been entirely subverted. "They had hoped that this was He who was to have redeemed Israel;" but this hope was now buried in the tomb where the body of Jesus lay; and had that body continued in the tomb, their hope had never risen again. It was the fact of His resurrection which alone rekindled their hope.

Strauss adduces, and can adduce, no evidence in support of his theory. According to him the conviction of the Messiahship of Jesus sprang up in the minds of these disciples during the time of their deep distress occasioned by His death. Then this conviction begat the idea of His having passed, notwithstanding His death, or rather in consequence of His death, into a higher life with God. This idea, again, connecting itself with the remembrance of what had
happened to Enoch and Elijah, assumed the shape of an ascension on the part of Jesus to heaven; and as this last idea of an ascension must complete itself according to the Jewish view of the relation between the body and the soul, it at length reached the form of a restoration of the body of Jesus to life—that is, the conception of His resurrection. At each stage of this process a firm belief accompanied the growing idea, that things really were as they were conceived to be. And, further, this germinating process of mere ideas was begun, carried on, and perfected simultaneously in the minds of all the disciples, who by-and-by became so convinced of the objective reality of what the consciousness of every one of them could not but tell them was a mere idea in their own minds, that they presented themselves before the world—before Jew and Gentile—as witnesses not of a mere idea, but of an external, sensible fact, and submitted, in support of their testimony, to all manner of torture—to distress of every sort, to imprisonment, and to death—to what, if their belief was an illusion, showed them to be, as they themselves confessed, "of all men most miserable."

Such conduct we believe to have been impossible in any set of men who had no other foundation for their belief than what Strauss assigns to the disciples. He can make ideas beget one another; but the human mind which can reflect, as he supposes the disciples did reflect, is incapable of confounding mere ideas with objective realities; and human nature, which was, we may assume, essentially the same in the case of these disciples as in that of other men, is utterly incapable of acting and suffering as they did in support of a
mere idea, of which they themselves were the conscious originators, and which they declared to be no mere idea, but a fact of which they had been witnesses.

As to the cases of Enoch and Elijah—not to mention that of Moses—these are referred to by Strauss merely to show, that since such eminent men had been favoured by being taken up to God, it might well be supposed that Jesus would receive a similar honour. It is true that these servants of God had passed into heaven without the intervention of death, and must therefore have, as he says, carried their bodies with them unchanged. A difficulty, then, is suggested here, which, however, these disciples would by reflection easily overcome; for they were already aware of that distinction which is pointed out by the Apostle Paul when discussing the subject of the general resurrection of Christ's people. The living are to have their bodies changed; the dead are to be re-awakened, and then to be changed. In the case of the latter there is, then, to be a double miracle—the re-awakening and the change of their bodies. No such change, Strauss assures us, took place in respect to the bodies of Enoch and Elijah. The framers of these older fictions had not perceived the necessity of a change in the body when transferred into the heavenly sphere. But this necessity was now felt; and, double miracle as it occasions, they could have no difficulty in predicating it of the body of Jesus, since He was regarded by them as so superior to these eminent men.

Is it not painful beyond expression to see how a man, capable of reasoning, can satisfy his own mind with such a tissue of pure conjectures, and set at
defiance all consideration of the ordinary workings of human nature as well as all evidence, be it what it may, which exists in respect to the very matter he is discussing? However, we must follow him still further, and see how the process which has now produced not only the conception of the resurrection of Jesus, but also the firm belief in the objective reality of His resurrection, will yet further manifest itself. Conjectures are endless; but there is art in arranging them well, so that the one shall beget the next, and so on in regular procession. The skilful formation of the series tends to give a plausible appearance to the theory, and even in the case of some persons to beget a belief in the truth of the theory. No sceptic excels Strauss in this art. He knows thoroughly where to begin and how to advance; and the unwary reader is gradually led on from one stage to another in such a manner as tends to blind him to the fact that he began with a mere conjecture, and is all along in the region of conjecture.

"As there was no necessity," he says, "for this conception to be even accurately defined, the possibility was readily assumed that the ascended Messiah might show himself in his new glory to his followers. If he were once conceived as being with God in the position of an angel, he must have the power of appearing as an angel, otherwise such an intimation of his existence need not be even a visible appearance. On the occasion of that vouchsafed to Paul, there were, according to the description in the Acts, two things together: there was a shining light, which was considered as the veil of the ascended Christ, and an audible voice from heaven. The latter reminds us of the audible oracle of the later Jewish faith, the so-called 'daughter of the voice' (Bath Kol) which we hear of in the
Rabbinic writings, and which, as may be seen from John (xii. 29), consisted in a natural sound, accidentally arising, as a sudden clap of thunder and the like, being considered as an omen, and a definite meaning being given to it, according to the circumstances or the temper of men's minds, with the existence of which it coincided. If it had been Paul himself who told us of a light which suddenly shone around him, and of a voice which he heard from out the splendour (otherwise than merely symbolically, as 2 Cor. iv. 6), we should have no hesitation in thinking of a flash of lightning and a clap of thunder, which, coinciding with the inward struggles in his mind, was considered by the Apostle as the appearance and angry voice of the Christ whom he persecuted; but as it is only the Acts of the Apostles which gives the account, we cannot, considering the later origin, and in many respects unhistorical character, of this writing, determine whether these features of the description belong or not, only to legend or poetic fiction."—Vol. i. p. 425.

This passage is intended to show how the conception of the resurrection of Jesus, when once formed in the minds of the disciples—a conception which it was by no means necessary for them to define with any degree of accuracy—would readily beget in them the idea that the ascended Messiah might appear—that is, be supposed to appear—in His new glory to His followers. Strauss, be it observed, always in this process assumes that the conception of a thing is identical with a belief—a firm belief—in its objective reality. This assumption he never attempts to prove. He could not but know that there is a wide gulf between a mere idea of anything and the belief in the reality of that thing. The former is indeed necessary to the existence of the latter, still they are essenti-
ally distinct; and prone as the human mind is to be deceived, and to mistake one appearance for another, it must have something beyond the mere idea of a thing before it can truly believe that it is really objective. The mind may believe false rumours about a thing of an objective nature; but the case before us refers to the first believers in the thing; and what we maintain is, that in their case the mere conception is not sufficient to beget belief. There must be something—however mistaken it may be—something to which the conception will attach itself as a ground or reason for the belief. Strauss seems to argue as if the human mind necessarily believes in the objective reality of whatever it has the power to imagine. Such is, in fact, the principle which he assumes, and upon which his whole reasoning proceeds. And indeed he would seem to have some warrant for assuming this principle in the apparent workings of his own mind; for he sets himself purposely to solve the problem, "How can I imagine certain ideas to have entered the minds of these disciples?" After forming in his mind an image of the process, he professes to believe that this imagined process was an actual process in the case of the disciples and begat belief in them of the objective reality. His whole proof consists in the implied affirmation: It was so, because I have imagined it to have been so. Sound reasoning in general requires us to assume only those principles which we know govern human nature, and to bestow some attention on whatever evidence we have as to the formation of belief in mankind. But such a mode of procedure is unsatisfactory to Strauss. The evidence he wholly rejects, and the principles of the human mind
he sets at defiance. His own imagination is the source whence everything must be drawn. The disciples having by the mere power of reflection—rather, we should say, by the power of imagination, for reflection must have been out of the question—conceived and therefore believed that Jesus, as the Messiah, had ascended to heaven; that accordingly He must have taken His body thither; and that, therefore, though laid in the tomb, it could not now be there;—the disciples, according to Strauss, having been bereft of their senses, and giving uncontrolled rein to their power of imagination, experienced no difficulty, of course, in fancying, and therefore believing, that the ascended and glorified Messiah might appear to His followers, and they accordingly believed that He did appear to them in His new glory. Had they not imagined Him to be with God in the position of an angel, it would not have been necessary for them to suppose visible appearances; but having so imagined, and angels being messengers, and having visibly appeared, they could not escape from the conception and belief of such appearances on the part of the risen Jesus. The idea of the Messiah as an angel necessarily begets the idea of His appearing as such.

Strauss then refers to the alleged appearance to Paul, "on which occasion there were, according to the description in the Acts, two things together—a shining light and an audible voice from heaven." The latter he considers not, as is expressly stated in the Acts, as an articulate sound, but as reminding us of the Bath Kol—"the daughter of the voice"—in which the later Jews believed, and which he erroneously describes as an audible oracle; whereas that so-called
“daughter of the voice” was believed by these Jews to be not an ordinary audible sound, but a voice which was miraculously heard, even when all around was in perfect silence. Such, however, is the view of Strauss respecting the sound which reached the ears of Paul, and also the ears of his attendants, although the former only, as we are informed, understood the words which it conveyed, and which were addressed solely to him. Strauss thinks that we have a similar instance of such a sound in John xii. 29, where he erroneously conceives we have a description of the Bath Kol, which, he says, “consisted in a natural sound, accidentally arising, as a sudden clap of thunder and the like, being considered as an omen, and a definite meaning being given to it according to the circumstances or the temper of men’s minds, with the existence of which it coincided.”

It is unnecessary to enter again upon this subject of the appearance of Christ to Paul. Had Paul himself told us of a light which shone round about him, and a voice which he heard from out the splendour, knowing as we do that he speaks symbolically of a “light of the knowledge of the glory of God which shines forth in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. iv. 6), we should at once, according to Strauss, have concluded that in such a case also Paul was using symbolical language, and that on the occasion referred to there were a flash of lightning and a clap of thunder, which, coinciding with the inward struggles in his mind, were considered by him as the appearance and angry voice of the Christ whom he persecuted. In short, Strauss would have explained away the statement, had it proceeded directly from Paul, by adopt-
ing the theory of the so-called Rationalists—a theory which he had formerly shown to be utterly untenable. But he has an easier way of getting rid of the statement; for although it does proceed from Paul as well as from the author of the Acts, yet, as the statement of Paul is recorded in the Acts, he thinks it better to deny the historical character of this book; and this being done, we are, of course, at a loss to determine whether to adopt the rationalistic explanation of the light and the voice, or to ascribe these features entirely to legend or poetic fiction.

But the main thing to be observed in all this passage is, that the idea of appearances of Jesus as the Messiah is regarded as fully explained by the idea already engendered in the minds of the disciples of His ascension, which latter idea necessarily produced that of His resurrection—the idea of His ascension, or rather of His having passed at death into a higher life with God, having itself been occasioned by the belief that Jesus was the Messiah, and by the necessity of having to meet the objection, "Your Jesus is dead, and cannot be the Messiah, for the Messiah abideth for ever." Such, be it remembered, is, according to Strauss, the true genesis of all these ideas—ideas identical with beliefs.

But Strauss still further shows himself now quite ready to follow the Rationalist interpreters of miraculous events. He formerly, as we have said, treated their theory with contempt, and he certainly justly exposed their silly interpretations. But he has so far changed his mind, as we shall again see.

"Thus also," he says, "some of the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection, taken by themselves, are by no means
incapable of explanation as perfectly natural occurrences. According to Luke, on the second day after the crucifixion, two disciples, who were going from Jerusalem into the country, met with a person unknown, who in inspired words opened their understandings with regard to the death of the Messiah, and just at the moment when he separated from them in the dusk, they thought they recognised him as their own Jesus. In the supplementary chapter to the fourth Gospel, certain disciples, being in the ship in the twilight of the early morning on the Sea of Galilee, met an unknown person on the shore, who gave them some advice on the subject of throwing out their net; in consequence of the surprisingly fortunate result, they considered him to be 'the Lord,' without one of them having had the confidence to ask him whether he was really so. In these cases, taking the narratives by themselves, and supposing them in the main historical, we might admit that the excitement of the disciples after the sudden death of Jesus, their power of imagination incessantly busy with the recalling of his figure, readily showed them, in the first unknown person who met them in ambiguous circumstances, and made a particular impression on them, an appearance of the Master who had been taken from them. And here an appeal might be made to historical examples of similar delusions having happened under similar circumstances. I quote one of these from the history of my own home. Duke Ulrich of Wurtemberg was, not indeed killed by the Swabian League, but only banished from his country; this was occupied by the Austrians, and secured against his return. 'But as the Duke,' says an excellent historian, 'still numbered many adherents in the country, whose hearts and minds he occupied waking and dreaming, and the command not even to speak of him invested his person in a mysterious obscurity, the power of imagination became naturally more inventive. Stones and animals were represented as speaking of him. There were also people who professed to have seen their former master (here and there in the country), or even to
have had him in disguise under their roof. "The heart thinks, the hour brings."

"It is not to be supposed," Strauss continues, "that the Duke, in his cautious and suspicious state of mind, would have really thus travelled about unprotected among his enemies. We must therefore consider these tales of his haunting the country like a spectre solely as the results of the excited imagination, and consequently of legend, for which, as the acute historian does not forget to remind us, circumstances like those described are a particularly favourable soil. The hostess at Münchingen, of whom he tells, may have really taken a foreign guest who lodged with her for the Duke; so, sooner or later, may the collier at Urach the unknown person to whom he showed the way through the wood; and these stories, told at greater length, might have given occasion for the invention of others in which there was nothing real whatever."—Vol. i. p. 425-7.

We have quoted all this about the Duke Ulrich, lest it should be supposed that Strauss was appealing to some example fairly capable of a stricter comparison with the subject under discussion. He himself, as we shall immediately see, admits that the comparison is not complete. Still, he quotes the story in order to prepare the minds of his readers for adopting the theory which he is endeavouring to establish respecting the accounts of the appearances of the risen Jesus, and which he is about to present as sufficient to account for those appearances. No one questions the power of imagination to invent, under certain circumstances, stories such as those about Duke Ulrich. Delusions of that kind have abounded among all nations. And they certainly teach us to scrutinise with the utmost severity every account of appearances such as those which are recorded concerning
Jesus. But whilst we thus scrutinise such accounts, we are not to judge unfairly. We are bound to examine the accounts with an impartial mind, and also to take into consideration all the circumstances of the particular case. If we assume, as Strauss does, that Jesus was an impostor when He claimed to be the Son of God, then, whether we can explain the appearances recorded to have taken place after His death or not, we cannot regard the belief of His disciples in these appearances as anything else than a delusion. Assuming Strauss's premisses, we must adopt his conclusion, for the premisses involve it, and all further inquiry is merely a matter of curiosity. If, however, we do not adopt his assumption, but desire to ascertain whether Jesus was indeed what He claimed to be—the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world—then we do not summarily reject these accounts as containing stories of mere human delusion, but must allow that for such a Being—if He were really what He professed to be—to rise from the dead is assuredly not inconsistent with His claim, but, as far as such an event is concerned, is in perfect harmony with such a claim. Hence we are bound to examine the evidence in support of such a fact, that we may really ascertain whether it does support the fact, or whether we shall be entitled to reject it as altogether insufficient to convince us of its having occurred. This is assuredly the only fair mode of judging on such a momentous subject.

Now, looking at the two alleged appearances to which Strauss specially refers in the above passage, we think he presents neither case as he ought to have
done. And, by the way, he says that it was "on the second day after the crucifixion that the two disciples who were going from Jerusalem into the country met with a person unknown." Strauss never says anything carelessly. He has his main design constantly before his mind. And here he speaks unfairly, knowing, as he could not but know, the common mode of reckoning time among the Jews, that this day was by them considered not the second, but the third day after the crucifixion, which all allow took place before the close of our Friday, so that the first day of the week became the third day after that event. But leaving this matter, we ask any one to conceive the case of the two disciples meeting with this unknown person in the way which Strauss describes. Here are two disciples of Jesus profoundly sad on account of their Master's death, and evidently expressing to one another their perplexities as occasioned by such an event—by the death of one who they had been hoping would have redeemed Israel. A stranger joins them, and draws from them an account of what has happened. He opens their understanding with regard to the death of the Messiah. He explains to them from the Scriptures that "it behoved the Messiah to suffer, and then to enter into His glory." Was not this unknown person, to say the least, a disciple of Jesus? Was he not more enlightened in the knowledge of Scripture than either of the two whom he was addressing, and in whose hearts he was kindling the well-nigh extinct hope? If more enlightened than either of them, was he not also more enlightened than any one of the other disciples whose company these two had shortly before left? Who, then, was
this unknown person? And why did he so abruptly separate himself from the two? Is it possible to conceive that this person, the only one among the friends of Jesus, so far as we know, who really understood the import of ancient prophecy concerning the Messiah, should, if a friend, have felt so little interest in the other disciples as either to have been utterly unknown to them, or to have made no effort to relieve them in their distress, except by a brief and apparently accidental intercourse with the two going to Emmaus?

The case, be it observed, of the disciples is unique. It has no parallel in the whole history of the human race. We must look at it as it was in itself, and not as it may be reduced, by leaving out its essential features, to the level of such cases as that of the banished Duke Ulrich. No, this unknown person was no mere secret friend or secret disciple of Jesus. He could be no other than Jesus Himself, risen from the dead, and revealing Himself, though with a measure of reserve, as seemed to be expedient under the circumstances, to His two sorrowing disciples. If ever story, as we said before, bore on itself the characteristics of historical truth, the one before us does so; and it does seem unaccountable how any thoughtful man, learned or unlearned, can peruse the narrative without feeling his soul burning within him with the deepest sympathy with these two disciples. The unknown stranger comes to every unprejudiced mind to be recognised as no other than Jesus who was crucified—that Jesus whom it behoved to suffer and to rise again the third day, and thus to be declared the Son of God with power.

As to the other case to which Strauss refers, and
which he also thinks is capable of explanation "as a perfectly natural consequence," he misstates it equally as he does the former.

"On this occasion certain disciples," he says, "being in the ship in the twilight of the early morning on the Sea of Galilee, met an unknown person on the shore, who gave them some advice on the subject of throwing out their net: in consequence of the surprisingly fortunate result they considered him to be 'the Lord,' without one of them having had the confidence to ask him whether he were really so."

Is this the whole account given us of that case? If it is not, why does Strauss give us only a part of the account? Why does he not tell his readers that it was after the "unknown" person asked the disciples to come and take some food that the Evangelist mentions their conviction—not mere supposition—that it was the Lord who had given the advice referred to? We formerly showed the main design of this supplementary narrative, and therefore do not again enter on the subject. Most clear it is that neither this nor the former case is susceptible of explanation as "a perfectly natural occurrence." In both cases there was a real appearance of the risen Lord. But, as we have said, all this about delusions and natural occurrences is only preparatory to what is next to be presented to the reader, where we shall find Strauss applying all that he has said to the purpose of reducing the appearances of Christ to mere delusions, or subjective impressions on the part of the disciples.

"Similar delusions," he says, "may also in the case before us have been current at the same time; but it is scarcely likely that the first appearances of Jesus, which individuals
thought they had seen, were of this kind. As soon as ever the notion that Jesus had been seen restored to life had once taken root, mistakes of that kind might be made; but originally, as the question was not about an exile, but about one who was dead, the faith could not have arisen in this way. When Paul says that he appeared after his resurrection to Cephas first, the possibility is not excluded, as was above remarked, of certain women having supposed that they had already seen him. The expression of Mark (xvi. 9), 'He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had driven seven devils,' admits of much suspicion. Not only John (xx. 14, ff.), but also Matthew agrees with Mark that it was this woman who first saw such an appearance, only that Matthew (xxviii. 1, 9, ff.) associates with her the other Mary, and the notice of the seven devils driven out of her was ready to hand for Mark from Luke (viii. 2). In a woman of such a constitution of body and mind it was no great step from inward excitement to ocular vision. But we have seen in the example of the Apostle Paul, that even in men of that period, and educated as they were, mental conditions like these were not unheard of. As regards Peter, we may refer those who in the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles see a real history, unusual indeed, but still natural, to the occurrence before the baptism of the Roman officer Cornelius, as a proof of a visionary disposition in the Apostle. Even in the brightness of the noon, during the time that he was praying on the housetop, he fell into a trance, in which he thought he saw the well-known appearance of a sheet coming from heaven with all kinds of animals, and that he heard a voice from heaven. This history, indeed, we lay to the account of the legends of the Church, or the pragmatism of the author of the Acts; but think we may assume in the days after the death of Jesus, in the narrower circle of his adherents, a common tone, an elevation of mental and nervous life, which overrode the particular disposition of the individual. Of James the tradition says in
the Gospel of the Hebrews that Christ appeared to him after the resurrection, when he fasted several days; this circumstance also, assumed to be historical, would make a vision or hallucination all the more intelligible."—Vol. i. p. 427-28.

Thus does Strauss attempt to reduce the alleged appearances of Jesus to mere delusions on the part of the disciples. He admits, however, that these delusions, having reference to one who had died, cannot be explained in the manner in which delusions such as those respecting the banished Duke might be explained. Delusions similar to these might have arisen as soon as the notion that Jesus had been seen restored to life had once taken root; but such delusions do not account for the origin of this notion. Hence Strauss must seek for this origin in the mental state of the disciples. The idea of a restoration to life on the part of Jesus must first spring up in their minds, and he has already shown how he conceives this idea to have arisen. He would attribute the origin of it first to the excited state of the women mentioned in the Evangelical accounts, and especially to Mary Magdalene, to whom, according to John and Matthew and Mark, the first appearance is said to have been made. That Mary Magdalene was a person of highly excitable mind he infers from what Luke records, that she had been dispossessed of seven demons; nor is there any reason for questioning this view of her mental disposition. But Strauss also says that we have evidence that even in men of that period, educated as they were, similar mental conditions were not unheard of; and he refers particularly to the cases of Paul and Peter.
Now, we formerly discussed the case of Mary Magdalene, as also that of the Apostle Paul, and we need not again go over these matters. We have in the narrative of John a full account of the circumstances referring to Mary Magdalene; and manifest as it is that she did possess a highly excitable mind, it is equally manifest that the idea of a restoration to life on the part of the crucified Jesus never crossed her mind, until it was forced upon her by her actually hearing Him pronounce her name. It was a feeling of distress which filled her mind as well as the minds of all the rest, when Jesus was put to death. Nothing can be more natural than that such should have been the state of their minds, and the whole evidence shows it to have been so. The followers of Jesus, both men and women, were cast down—not elevated by His death. It is easy for Strauss to imagine that their state was one of mental excitement and elevation, and then to assert that the idea of Jesus passing at His death into a higher life with God was originated; that this idea immediately led to that of His restoration to life—to the resurrection of His body, and that then He might be expected to show Himself in His new glory. But the whole theory is baseless, because the mental state of these followers was not as is here assumed. That state is described by all the Evangelists as one of deep depression—of depression approaching to despair; and it is inconceivable that, had such not been their mental state, the Evangelists should not have let fall, however unwarily, something to betray that the very opposite was the case. The women went to the sepulchre to anoint the body: Mary Magdalene, in particular, as soon as she saw
that the stone was rolled away, was wholly occupied about the recovery of the body, which she immediately inferred had been stolen. Her peculiar disposition made her rush to this inference, and her distress increased at the very thought; but the idea of a restoration to life was wholly absent from her mind. The same was the case with the other women, and with all the disciples. It is a pure conjecture, then, on the part of Strauss, not merely in the absence of evidence, but in direct opposition to the evidence, when he ascribes to these women and to the disciples a state of mind such as may answer his purpose. If we are to reason at all upon the subject, we must do so not according to our own conjectures, but to the evidence before us.

As to the case of Peter's vision, we are plainly told that it was a supernatural vision; and until Strauss can show that it is not in the power of God to instruct His rational creatures in this way, he is not entitled to identify such visions with objective realities, when the author of the Acts, as well as the other writers of Scripture, clearly distinguish between these two distinct things. God had a great moral purpose in view in that vision, and that purpose was answered. But Strauss is not warranted in representing the appearance of the risen Jesus to Peter as a vision similar to that which was bestowed upon him in order that he might open the door of faith to the Gentiles, and which he never for a moment mistook for an objective reality. Strauss regards this vision either as a legend of the Church, or as a story framed purposely by the author of the Acts in order to account for the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentile Cor-
nelius. But he thinks we may assume that, even among the first disciples, there was an elevation of mental and nervous life which overrode the particular disposition of the individual. What we maintain is, that we can assume nothing contrary to what we are told was the case; and, as we have already said, instead of that elevation which Strauss assumes, there was, according to the credible evidence, nothing but depression—sorrow—despair. His theory, then, collapses. It is a mere dream of his own mind; and truth must be sought for in realities, not in dreams. As to the case of James, we know that the risen Jesus did appear to him; but whether the early tradition about his having fasted for several days be trustworthy or not, is of no importance to our inquiry.

Strauss, whose reasoning on the whole of this subject is, we presume to say, exceedingly feeble, concludes this part by again referring to that remarkable account which Luke gives of the appearance of Jesus to the two disciples who were going to Emmaus. This account has such an historical aspect that it is no wonder if Strauss should exert all his ingenuity to weaken the impression which it can hardly fail to make on every reader's mind. But the attempt will be seen to be marked by the same feebleness of which we have spoken as characterising his whole discussion of this momentous part of the subject.

"Luke," he says, "speaking of the disciples going to Emmaus, says that when the Unknown, following their invitation, had placed himself at table with them, he took bread, uttered the prayer, then broke it and gave it to them. Then, he says, 'on the breaking of the bread' they
recognised him as the Lord (xxiv. 30, ff., 35). The division of bread and fish by an unknown person, in whom the disciples saw the risen Jesus, is brought forward in a similarly significant manner in the supplementary chapter also to the Gospel of John (xxi. 13). Let us remember, now, that by the expression ‘breaking of bread’ the supper was accustomed to be described (Acts ii. 42, 46, xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 16), and that this meal, the material representation of the last, and many others besides, in which Jesus had, in the capacity of host, shared the bread among them, formed in the most ancient times, by frequent, probably daily, repetition, a powerful consolation and bond of union of the little band of the early Church. If we remember this, it is obvious to conjecture that it may have been principally the exalted tone of mind which prevailed at this meal, which in particular cases elevated the memory of the Departed into an imaginary appearance even before larger assemblies."—Vol. i. p. 428-29.

Strauss begins and ends this discussion of the origin of the disciples' belief in the reality of the resurrection of Jesus with a conjecture. With what he here says of the Supper of the Lord as "a powerful consolation and bond of union of the little band of the early Church," we thoroughly agree. Had Strauss but allowed the idea thus so justly expressed to take due possession of his mind, he might have been led to ask himself how such a meal could have proved such a consolation and such a bond of union in a band consisting of persons who were surrendering all earthly considerations for the sake of the Lord Jesus, unless it was what Jesus declared it to be when He instituted it as an ordinance in His Church—a memorial of His death until He should come again; unless, in short, these devoted followers of Jesus
knew, upon legitimate evidence, that He had not only died, but risen again, and believed in His resurrection, not through mere delusion, but because they saw the Lord and conversed with Him after He was risen.

How could Strauss conceive the scene which is recorded as having occurred in the village of Emmaus, and in which the unknown but wondrous Stranger, reclining with the two at the table, took up bread, and, in a manner known to them, blessed it and gave it to them, revealing Himself by His very manner and words to be no other than their Lord who had been put to death, and then, for wise reasons of His own, immediately withdrawing Himself from their presence—how, we say, could Strauss conceive such a scene, and suppose it to be explicable in any other way than as explained to us by the Evangelist? What mere man could have so acted as this unknown Person did? Some stranger or other must have joined these two. Something must have taken place to cause them to believe that the Stranger was Jesus Himself. Even a delusion in such a case must have some external fact to rest upon. What could that fact be? Who could that Stranger be? It is impossible, we venture to say, to accept the story to any extent, and to account for it even as so accepted, unless we adopt the Evangelist’s account of its character. The expression, “the breaking of the bread,” came indeed to be most significant; but it acquired all its significance from the reality of the facts which it indicated.

As to the case recorded by John in his supplementary chapter, we have already remarked on it also, and need not repeat what has thus been said.
But it is to be remarked that Strauss evades a real discussion of the recorded appearance of Jesus before a large assembly. He would merely apply to "larger assemblies" what he has said in respect to appearances to one or to a few persons. But surely there is a difficulty in conceiving a large assembly of persons—an assembly of more than five hundred brethren—being all at the same moment in such a state of mind, however elevated, as to imagine and believe that they saw and heard one whom not one of them either saw or heard. Delusions do spread rapidly, but not such a delusion as is here supposed. It is a delusion about an external fact supposed to be presented to the organs of sight and hearing. It is no delusion about a story repeated to an excited crowd. One is alleged to appear—to appear in the human frame—and to speak words heard by the ear. The assembled multitude believe that they see Him and hear Him. They believe this firmly and publish it to the world, and are willing to suffer and die for their belief. The multitude, we say, simultaneously believe that they, each one of them, see and hear Jesus who had been put to death. Such a simultaneous and unanimous belief necessarily implies the reality of the fact. The belief is otherwise inexplicable; and Strauss does not attempt to discuss this part of the subject. He evades it by means of a conjecture. He implicitly confesses that his theory breaks down at last in his hands. And we conclude the review of this part of his discussion by affirming that the whole of his theory is built on a baseless assumption, and that, since he has failed to trace the origin of the disciples' belief in the resurrection of
Jesus to delusion occasioned by excitement and elevation of mind, the Evangelical accounts remain firm and true, which trace this belief to its real origin—the actual appearances of the risen Jesus to His disciples. Their belief rested on facts appealing to their senses. THEY BELIEVED, BECAUSE THEY SAW AND HEARD THE RISEN LORD.
LECTURE XV.

STRAUSS ON THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE APPEARANCES TO THE APOSTLES.

In his next section, which is also the last of his first book, Strauss discusses the subject of "the time and place of the Apostolic visions of Christ." His design in this discussion will be apparent as we proceed to consider its several parts.

"If we ask," says he, "when and where the disciples of Jesus saw these apparitions, the most ancient witness, the Apostle Paul, gives us, as we have already mentioned, little or no assistance towards arriving at a result. The place he does not define at all, the time only apparently. He says (1 Cor. xv. 3-8) that he had heard as a tradition that Christ had died and been buried, and that on the third day he had risen again according to the Scriptures, and that he had appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve, &c. Paul therefore says, indeed, that Jesus arose on the third day; but that it was on the same third day that he appeared after his resurrection to Cephas or any one else, he does not say. Moreover, he mentions this appearance to Cephas immediately indeed after the statement of the resurrection, but in like manner he mentions the appearance which he himself had seen immediately after the appearance of Jesus to the Apostles collectively. But the appearance to himself could not, in any case, have taken place until several years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. Thus we
do not know what length of time we must suppose to have occurred between the different appearances, or, consequently, between the first of them and the resurrection on the third day."—Vol. i. p. 429.

We formerly showed that the main design of the Apostle Paul in the passage here again referred to, was not to prove the reality of Christ's resurrection, but the reality of the future resurrection of Christ's people. It was the latter doctrine which was assailed by some persons in the Church at Corinth, and not the former fact. The Apostle meets the false teaching of these persons by showing that on their principles the reality of Christ's resurrection was denied. Hence he deemed it necessary to state briefly the evidence in attestation of this fact, which indeed was admitted even by these persons, in order that upon this fact, as a basis, he might show how inconsistent they were in denying the future resurrection of the bodies of Christ's people, and on how firm a foundation the doctrine on this subject rested.

Now, we would again call special attention to what is manifestly the correct view of this passage; seeing that Strauss repeatedly represents the Apostle as formally discussing the subject of Christ's resurrection, as if this subject were the main purpose of his argument, and then finds fault with the Apostle for not entering into minute details respecting the appearances of the risen Jesus to Cephas and the others. Paul states distinctly that he had been taught, not by tradition, as Strauss represents it, but as we in this same Epistle learn, by divine revelation, that Christ died and was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures—in fulfilment of ancient
prophecy; and then he mentions in a summary manner the visible evidence which attested the resurrection. This he manifestly does in order to impress the minds of the Corinthian converts with a profound conviction of the reality of the fact; and his whole subsequent argument rests on the reality of Christ's resurrection. He mentions several appearances of the risen Lord; but as he is not formally discussing this subject, he simply mentions these appearances, and as his argument does not require further details, it never, I apprehend, occurred to him to state when and where these appearances took place. He speaks at greater length of the appearance to himself: "And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God." What solemn, calm, and pregnant words these are, let us just observe in passing. Would that they might reach in all their force the heart of one who has indeed also been persecuting the Church of God! Then would he, too, lay aside his enmity, and no more trifle like a wayward child with things which, if real, are awful realities.

It is implied in Paul's words that the appearances to Cephas and the others took place soon after the resurrection, but that the appearance to himself was at a later date; for the Church was now constituted, through the labours of the Apostolic witnesses of the resurrection. It is therefore most unfair dealing, in point of argument, when Strauss discusses this passage with the manifest design of insinuating doubts into the minds of his readers about the times and places of the appearances of Christ to His first disciples, as
if the absence of details on these points in any measure affected the credit of testimony to the reality of these appearances. Had Paul meant to discuss the evidence bearing on this subject, Strauss might have had some reason to ask for such details; but as such was not the main subject before the Apostle’s mind, Strauss acts most unfairly, and, we must also add, most artfully, in thus treating the Apostle’s statements solely with a view to prejudice the mind of the unwary reader. Such are not the weapons of a legitimate warfare. Such is not the procedure adopted by any one bent, not on apparent victory, but on finding out the truth. Strauss calls Paul the most ancient witness. He is so only in one respect. It is probable that this Epistle to the Corinthians was written before any of the Gospels was composed; but he is not the most ancient witness to the resurrection of Christ in any other sense. The first disciples had founded the Church which Paul at one time persecuted; and this Church was built on the testimony of these disciples to the fact of Christ’s resurrection.

"On the other hand," Strauss next says, "the authorities of the third rank, the Evangelists, represent all, or at all events a part of, the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection as occurring on the very day of the resurrection. According to John, he appears to Mary Magdalene on the morning of the resurrection close to the grave, then in the evening to the assembled disciples. According to Luke, his first appearance is on the same day to the two going to Emmaus, then to the eleven and the others; and the same assumption lies at the bottom of the brief and confused account of Mark. In Matthew he does not indeed show himself to the eleven until later, in Galilee, but to the women on the morning of the resurrection, on their return to the city from
the sepulchre, which they had found empty. And now it may be said: how did it happen that in the most ancient times of Christianity, the third day after the death of Jesus was set down as the day of the resurrection, if it was not on this day that the first appearances of him, after his resurrection, took place? How can we explain the fact that, so early as the time of the Apostle Paul, and the composition of the Revelation of John, the day after the Sabbath appears as the day of the Lord, the Christian weekly holiday (1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 7), if it was not on this day that the great fact of the restoration of their Messiah to life was made known to the disciples?"—Vol. i. p. 430.

With the exception of his styling the Evangelists authorities of the third rank, when all existing evidence proves that they were authorities partly of the first and partly of the second rank, Strauss in this passage states the matter fairly; and we have now to hear how he will meet the questions which he has put. We maintain that, from the first, "the third day after the death of Jesus was set down as the day of the resurrection," for the obvious reason that on that day the resurrection took place. And by the same reason—this third day being the first day of the week—we account for the fact that the first day of the week, the day after the Jewish Sabbath, was set apart as the Christian weekly Sabbath—as the Lord's Day, the day on which His glorious resurrection is in all ages of the Church upon earth to be held in special remembrance. Such is the simple and correct explanation of these historical facts, and no other explanation of them will be found tenable. But Strauss is under the inevitable necessity of attempting to construct some other explanation. He would evidently rather avoid this necessity, especially as respects the
day of the resurrection; but he cannot do so, and therefore his utmost ingenuity is called into exercise in order to give some plausible conjecture on the subject, however untenable it may be. All the Evangelists affirm that Jesus rose on the third day after His death. No attempt can therefore be made to make their narratives even assume the appearance of the slightest difference on this point. Pure conjecture alone can be the source whence a contrary assertion can be drawn. But the case is different as to the places where the appearances of the risen Jesus are recorded to have occurred. These were numerous, and they occurred in different localities, some at or near Jerusalem, others in Galilee. And as each of the Evangelists thought of recording only some of these appearances, and therefore omitted others, it is in the power of any one who is a priori bent on setting them at variance to contrive, by a little ingenuity and some misrepresentation of what they do record, to appear successful in his attempt. The times and places of Christ's appearances are topics necessarily connected; and therefore we do not complain of the somewhat confused manner in which Strauss discusses them, passing as he does from the one topic to the other just as the exigencies of his assumed case seem to demand. He has before him a subject of insurmountable difficulty, especially as respects the time of the appearances, and therefore we need not wonder that he is seen to labour under the burden which he has undertaken to bear.

"If we look," says he, "upon the resurrection of Jesus as a miracle, it might take place as well on one day as another; a natural restoration to life must occur on some day soon after death, or it could not occur at all. On the other hand,
the psychological revolution from which we suppose the visions of Apostles to have proceeded, appears to require a longer interval for its development. More than one day, it would seem, should intervene before the disciples could recover from their terror at the unlooked-for result, before they could assemble together again after their first dispersion. Supposing, in particular, that it was from renewed and profounder study of the sacred writings of the Old Testament that the certainty arose that their Jesus, in spite of suffering and death, had been the Messiah, that his suffering and death had been for him only the passage to the glory of the Messiah, for this also a longer time was requisite. It appears, therefore, if it is true that on the very first day after the death of Jesus appearances of his took place, not to be conceivable that these appearances were merely subjective visions of the disciples; and our view of the origin of the belief in the resurrection of Jesus appears to fall to pieces upon the impossibility of making that origin conceivable on the third day.”—Vol. i. p. 430-31.

In this passage Strauss seems to acknowledge with great candour the difficulty of his present task, as it respects the alleged time when the first appearances of Jesus took place. We say advisedly that he seems to make such an acknowledgment, for we know already that he considers himself to have proved that these and other appearances were merely what he calls “subjective visions.” And therefore it is morally impossible to give him credit for a candid acknowledgment of the difficulty. That difficulty he feels to be such that he is compelled to gain over the reader’s mind to a favourable reception of his attempt to overcome it, by an ostentatious confession that he knows well the weight which the advocates of the reality of the resurrection assign to the fact that on the third
day after His death Jesus did show Himself alive to His disciples. His very confession that he is fully aware of the strength of the argument on the part of his opponents will tend, as he assumes, of itself to lessen its strength. We are entitled, we repeat, to regard the confession in this light, because this very topic, now professedly discussed, ought in all fairness to have been discussed before he had pronounced the judgment which he has already pronounced on the character of these appearances. The difficulty, in short, can now only present itself, not as one which is to be fairly argued, but as one which is to be set aside by some means or other. Before, however, he proceeds to show how this is to be done, he deems it proper to notice the other difficulty—namely, that which has respect to the locality of these appearances.

"In like manner," he says, "the statement of the locality of these appearances in the Gospels seems to lead to a result unfavourable to our point of view. On the morning after the Sabbath, on the evening of the third day before which morning the crucified Jesus had been buried, the disciples, according to the accounts of the Evangelists, were still at Jerusalem, and here, according to all of them, even Matthew not excepted, the first appearances of their risen Lord occurred. Jesus therefore appeared to His disciples in the same place in which His body had been laid in the grave. Even this circumstance appears only to put us into a difficulty, while for the two other possible views of the resurrection of Jesus, it is inconceivable. For supposing Jesus to have been recalled into life by a miracle, or awakened naturally from an apparent death, in neither case would there be a body in the grave by pointing to which the proposition maintained by the disciples that He had risen could be contradicted.
When in the very city before the gates of which the body of Jesus lay in a sepulchre well known and easy to be found, not forty-eight hours after it had been buried there, his disciples came forward, maintaining that he had risen, that he had come alive out of the sepulchre, how is it conceivable that the Jews should not have run straight to this sepulchre, fetched the corpse away, and by the public exhibition of it have convicted the audacious assertion of falsehood? Or, rather, how could the disciples come to make this assertion, when they could examine the neighbouring cavern in order to convince themselves of its groundlessness?—Vol. i. p. 431-32.

In this passage Strauss professes to state the difficulty to which his own view of the nature of these appearances of Jesus seems to be exposed, from the statement that they occurred "in the same place in which His body had been laid in the grave," and on the very day when He is said to have risen. He affirms, however, in general, that to such as hold his view of these appearances—namely, that they were merely subjective impressions—"even this circumstance appears only to cause a difficulty," but that to those who maintain either of the two other possible views a contradiction is inevitable; for "the circumstance," he says, "is for these views inconceivable." Now, whatever we may think of his arguments, or of his fairness in stating a case, we seldom experience any great difficulty in making out Strauss's meaning; but in what follows in the passage before us we miss his usual clearness in statement. He seems to assert that the circumstance referred to, whilst only appearing to put him, with his view of the nature of the appearances of Jesus, into a difficulty, becomes inconceivable in the case of those who hold the one or
the other of the two other possible views. In support of this last assertion, he supposes that according to the one or the other of these views Jesus was either recalled into life by a miracle, or awakened naturally from an apparent death: in either case His body would of course be no longer in the grave; and the proposition maintained by the disciples that He was risen, could not be contradicted by producing the body. He then supposes that the disciples affirmed this proposition on the very day of the resurrection, and within the very city of Jerusalem, and asks, "How is it conceivable that the Jews should not have run straight to the sepulchre, fetched the corpse away, and by the public exhibition of it have convicted the audacious assertion of falsehood?" Now, according to the supposition, the Jews might have run to the sepulchre, but they could not have found the body, for it was not there. The thing here declared to be inconceivable is not the same with that which he formerly said was inconceivable, and which he professedly meant to set before the reader. He passes in his argument from one thing, said to be inconceivable, to quite another thing, which also he pronounces inconceivable. He means to show that to those who maintain the reality of Christ's resurrection, there is in the recorded appearances of Jesus at Jerusalem on the very day of the resurrection, a circumstance stated which is inconceivable. And to prove this he supposes that Jesus had really risen (the other possible view we need not consider), and that the disciples affirmed this fact on the very day of the resurrection; and then he puts the question as above stated, in which question he implicitly changes his supposition, and
now supposes the body of Jesus to be still in the grave. His other question involves the same change of supposition: "How," says he, "could the disciples come to make this assertion, when they could examine the neighbouring cavern in order to convince themselves of its groundlessness?" Both these questions evidently imply that the body of Jesus was still in the tomb; that the appearances, therefore, were only subjective visions; and that the idea of the disciples having had such visions at Jerusalem, and on the very day of the alleged resurrection, presents a greater difficulty to those who maintain the reality of the resurrection, than to those who believe that the visions were only subjective.

But whilst there is a manifest confusion in Strauss's statements on this subject, there is one thing which by means of this very confusion he artfully suggests to the reader. It is this: If Jesus really rose from the dead within forty-eight hours after His crucifixion, and if He, on the very day of His resurrection, really appeared to the disciples in or near to Jerusalem, then, as a matter of course, these disciples proclaimed the fact to the Jews on that day also, and thus gave them a full opportunity for becoming convinced of the truth of the assertion; for they would then have gone to the sepulchre and found that the body was not there. It was the desire to insinuate this supposition that led Strauss into the confused statements which we find in this passage. The disciples, he would implicitly argue, must have acted in this way, although he knows that they did not act in this way; and he thus prepares the mind of the reader for the argument which is next to follow, the purport of
which will be to show that, since they did not act in the way supposed, we have reason to doubt the statement, not only about these first appearances, but also about the recorded burial itself of the body of Jesus. We shall postpone our further remarks on these points till we have quoted the next passage, when they will be more logically introduced. The passage is as follows:

"But, in the first place, the Evangelists do indeed tell us that Jesus appeared to his followers so soon as the second morning after his interment; but not one says that they encountered the unbelieving Jews with the announcement of his resurrection. On the contrary, according to all the accounts, they kept quiet from the first; and Luke, in the Acts, represents the Apostles as not coming forward to preach of the resurrection of Christ until Pentecost—seven weeks, consequently, after that third day. In addition to this, there is the consideration that the interment of Jesus in the stone sepulchre of Joseph is anything but historically corroborated, as has been already intimated, and shall be hereafter more accurately discussed. But if Jesus was, as is probable, buried, with other condemned criminals, in a dishonourable place, his disciples had not from the first the tempting opportunity of looking for his body. And if some time elapsed before they came forward proclaiming his resurrection, it must have been more difficult for their opponents also to produce his corpse in a condition still to be recognised, or affording any proof. Moreover, when we remember the horror for dead bodies felt by the Jews, it was far from being so obvious a thing to do as we may at this day imagine."—Vol. i. p. 432.

In this passage, for which the immediately preceding one was evidently, with all its confusion, constructed to prepare the reader, Strauss aims at dis-
crediting, on two distinct grounds, the testimony borne by the disciples to the resurrection of Jesus; first, because, according to all the Evangelists, they did not, as he evidently wished to insinuate in the preceding passage they ought to have done, encounter on the very day of the resurrection the unbelieving Jews with an announcement of that event, but came forward, according to Luke's account in the Acts, to make that announcement only after seven weeks had elapsed; and, secondly, because—both on account of this delay and still more of the probability that the body of Jesus was thrown along with the bodies of other condemned criminals into a dishonourable place, rather than, as the Evangelists relate, deposited in the stone sepulchre of Joseph—the Jews would have found it exceedingly difficult to produce the dead body in order "to convict the audacious assertion of falsehood."

Now, in reference to this second reason, we have already discussed Strauss's attempt to discredit the unanimous testimony of the four Evangelists respecting the burial of Jesus, and we have shown how utterly he fails in this attempt. We must therefore refer our readers to our former remarks on this subject, the importance of which is fundamental in this inquiry. We shall merely observe at present that Strauss was fully aware of the importance of this point, and he was bound, we think, to have discussed it thoroughly in his first book, and not to have assumed his view as proved, and then reason upon this assumption, merely telling his readers that "it should be hereafter more accurately discussed." But the manifest truth is, that the evidence for the burial of
the body of Jesus in the tomb of Joseph, a man of Arimathea, is proof against all assaults. There is no miracle here to be summarily set aside. The burial belongs to the class of ordinary events, and nothing can be more natural than that under the circumstances it should have occurred just as all the Evangelists tell us it did occur. There is no fact, we presume to affirm, better corroborated historically than this. But Strauss was compelled, as we formerly observed, by the very exigencies of his whole undertaking, to deny this fact; for it is most clear that, if the body of Jesus was really laid in the tomb of Joseph, there is, under all the circumstances of the case, no alternative but to admit the reality of the resurrection; and then the whole enterprise which Strauss undertook and pledged himself to accomplish, collapses in a moment. Hence he purposely abstains from discussing this subject of the burial in its proper place as respects his argument. He deems it more prudent, as undoubtedly it is more artful, to gain the reader over to his assumed view by insinuating doubts and even unbelief about this fact, and to assure him that "it shall be hereafter more accurately discussed." Hence the reasoning based on the assumption that the body of Jesus was buried in the place assigned to the bodies of condemned criminals, is wholly worthless; and the very necessity of such an assumption exposes the desperate condition to which Strauss is reduced. Even after the lapse of seven weeks the Jewish rulers still had it in their power to convict the assertion on the part of the disciples of falsehood, had that assertion been mendacious; and their not having recourse to the means of such a conviction, constitutes
an invincible proof that for some reason or other they knew that they could not accomplish this by producing the dead body. That body, if not restored to life or stolen by the disciples, was still in the tomb, so that, whether the announcement was made on the day of the alleged resurrection or only seven weeks after that day, the unbelieving Jewish rulers had only to have recourse to the alternative either of producing the body, or of proving that the disciples had removed it from the tomb. They met the announcement, as far as Jerusalem was concerned, in neither of these ways. They adopted a third method, which they must have deemed more likely to prove effectual. They imprisoned the Apostles; they threatened them with further punishment if they should persist in their testimony; they commanded them to be silent on the subject.

But in addition to these ready means, they did adopt one of the above alternatives in regard to Jews at a distance. They induced persons to spread abroad the report that the disciples had stolen the body during the night preceding the alleged resurrection, whilst the soldiers on guard at the sepulchre were asleep. This latter topic Strauss will also discuss in his promised dissertation on the accounts of the burial; and he must of course show that the story about the guard is a fiction of the later Church. But all this, as we have elsewhere shown, arises from the necessity of his argument. His views rest on no evidence; they are entirely the product of his own imagination, which undoubtedly is most fertile in fruits of this kind.

But we have also specially to notice the first ground
on which Strauss would here raise an argument to discredit the testimony of the disciples to the resurrection of Jesus. In the immediately preceding passage he assumes that had this event taken place, or even had the disciples imagined and believed that it had taken place, they must no doubt have announced it to the Jews on the very day of its alleged occurrence. On that very day they must have come forward and proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus. If on that day they were convinced that Jesus appeared to them, they could not have kept silence. Such is manifestly the main design of Strauss's confused statements at the close of that passage. And now he shows that, according to the Evangelic accounts, they did not come forward on that day.

"The Evangelists do indeed tell us that Jesus appeared to them so soon as the second morning after his interment; but not one says that they encountered the unbelieving Jews with the announcement of his resurrection. On the contrary, according to all the accounts, they kept quiet from the first; and Luke, in the Acts, represents the Apostles as not coming forward to preach of the resurrection of Christ until Pentecost—seven weeks, consequently, after that third day."

The author evidently wishes his readers to look with great suspicion on this conduct of the Apostles. In short, his design is to discredit the accounts of the first alleged appearances of Jesus, and to show that the idea of such appearances did not arise in the minds of the disciples until a later date. He thinks it would be a gain to his theory if some time were allowed for the growth of this idea. Now, it is quite true that, though the risen Jesus appeared to His fol-
lowers on the very day of His resurrection, they did not openly come forward to announce the fact of His resurrection until after the lapse of fifty days; and it is admitted that if this were all we were informed of on the subject, we should have been at a loss to account for the delay. But Strauss most unfairly states the case as if this were all that is told us; whereas the Evangelists inform us that Jesus appeared to the disciples on several occasions—that He appeared to them in Galilee as well as at Jerusalem; and Luke, in the Acts, expressly tells us that Jesus continued to appear to them during a period of forty days after his resurrection, giving them repeated proofs of the reality of the fact, and also instructing them in the things pertaining to His kingdom. We are also informed by Matthew that on the very day of the resurrection the chief rulers did receive a testimony to the fact, so that they had a full opportunity on that very day of investigating the truth of the allegation, had they been really disposed to ascertain the truth. It is not fair in Strauss, first, by mere denial of certain parts of the Evangelic accounts, to get rid of important statements, and then, by means of what remains of these accounts, to construct a case to answer his own purpose. He is bound to take these accounts as they present themselves to us, unless he can by legitimate proof set aside what appears unfavourable to his views.

So long as Jesus continued appearing to the disciples, and personally instructing them for the office to which He had called them, it is only reasonable to suppose that they would not come forward and proclaim the fact of the resurrection. These men were
to be Christ's messengers, not merely to the Jews, but to all nations. They were to be sent forth to preach the Gospel to the whole world, beginning indeed at Jerusalem, but not confining their ministry to that city. It was not a mere contest with the Jews in Jerusalem that they were to enter upon; they were to be the heralds of salvation even to the ends of the earth. They were to be witnesses, not only of Christ's resurrection, but also of His ascension; and they were to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit after His ascension, in order to qualify them for their high office. Hence, during forty days after Christ's resurrection, they were under His own special teaching; and when He ascended to the right hand of the Father, they were commanded to wait until they should be endued with power from on high. We have thus a full and satisfactory explanation of the reasons of the delay on the part of the disciples; while, as we have already said, testimony had reached the Jewish rulers, even on the day of the resurrection, and the lapse of seven weeks did not deprive them of the means of refuting the Apostles' announcement, had it been possible for them to do so. The whole force, then, of Strauss's argument in this passage is due to a partial and erroneous statement of the case; and assuredly that is not the way to be followed in order to arrive at a sound conclusion. Indeed, although he does not expressly acknowledge it, he yet seems to feel the weakness of his argument here, and he therefore attempts to meet the difficulty caused by the alleged time of these first appearances in another way.

"Now," he says, "as regards the shortness of the time for
the development of a state of mind among the disciples from which those visions could proceed, this difficulty also is not insuperable. A purely logical method, by the intervention of clear thoughts, was not yet possible; and if it was not, and the reaction took place in the secret depths of the minds of the Apostles, then it was a violent burst, a flash of lightning in which the sultriness of the overloaded feelings relieved itself. Such a burst does not wait until all is first arranged in the course of thought; on the contrary, it assumes, by the power of imagination, all that reflection endeavours afterwards to clear up, it takes for granted at one stroke what the understanding afterwards works up. Thus our notion of the resurrection of Jesus would be far from being quashed even if it were established that, in fact, so soon as the third day after his death the conviction of it had arisen among the disciples."—Vol. i. p. 432-33.

The argument here really amounts to this: Had the idea and the conviction of the resurrection of Jesus arisen in the minds of the disciples so soon as the third day after His death, then "our notion" of the nature of that resurrection as being merely a subjective impression, without any corresponding objective occurrence, "would be far from being quashed." Now, it behoved Strauss to show that the state of mind among the disciples was such as to give rise to the supposed visions on that third day. To tell us that in a certain state of mind a purely logical method is not possible, and that violent reactions take place in the secret depths of the mind, when, by the power of the imagination, it takes for granted at one stroke what the understanding afterwards works up,—this may be all very true, viewed as a general proposition. We are not, however, dealing with general propositions, but with an actual case; and we must look at
this case as it is presented to us, not as we may conjecture it to have been. We are fully informed as to the state of mind among the followers of Jesus on the event of His death. Neither the men nor the women had the slightest idea that He was to rise again. They had been so stunned by the death of Him whom they believed to be the Messiah, that all their hopes were buried with Him in the tomb. The women went to the sepulchre, but their sole purpose was to anoint the dead body. The disciples refused to believe the testimony of these women when they affirmed that their Lord had risen again. The state of mind, therefore was the very opposite of that which is necessary for Strauss's theory; and although a reaction from one extreme to another is possible, yet we are not entitled to assume such a reaction, unless the phenomenon presented to us is inexplicable in any other way. Now the reaction, if we may here use such a term, in the state of the disciples' minds, is satisfactorily accounted for. It took place, not through the power of imagination, but through the testimony of the organs of sense. They saw the risen Jesus; they heard Him speak to them; they received sensible evidence of His being alive; and therefore they believed. Such is the account of the actual case, and all Strauss's conjectures are therefore absolutely worthless. But though he would by means of the above theoretical explanation attempt to lessen the difficulty which presses upon him, his chief resource is to throw discredit on the statement that the belief in the resurrection took place so early as on the third day after the death of Jesus. Hence we have the following passage:
"Meanwhile there are many points in the New Testament accounts themselves which throw a doubt upon this statement. Let us take that which was last touched upon: Why should the disciples, if they were convinced of the resurrection of their Christ so soon as the third day, have waited till the fiftieth before they allowed anything about it to come before the public in general? The Acts of the Apostles says, because they were compelled to wait for the Holy Spirit, which was not to be poured out upon them until the Day of Pentecost; and we know, on our own point of view, that the choice of this day especially for the communication of the Spirit was decided by the antitypical relation in which the most ancient Church view placed the first preaching of the Gospel to the lawgiving on Sinai—that, therefore, this choice of time has no historical, but only a dogmatical foundation. But it is another question whether in this statement the recollection may not be involved that the preaching of the resurrection of Jesus was deferred until a later period, as well as the origination of the belief in this resurrection, until one of longer duration than three days."
—Vol. i. p. 433.

We have already stated the reasons which occasioned the postponing of the public announcement by the disciples of the resurrection of Jesus until the Day of Pentecost. The ancient Church did indeed trace a typical relation between the lawgiving on Sinai and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples. But it was the fact that the Spirit was thus given to the disciples on the Day of Pentecost that discovered to the Church the reality of this relation. The Church founded the doctrine of this relation on the historical fact. It was not the doctrine that created the fact, so that Strauss's theory falls to the ground. Besides, he entirely ignores the fact that Jesus abode
with the disciples, or at least appeared to them on frequent occasions, during forty days, and that in reality they waited only ten days more after His ascension until the promised Spirit was poured down upon them.

But Strauss proceeds to assail the accounts themselves regarding the appearances of Christ. And we must now quote a rather long passage on this subject.

"But all the Evangelists, even Matthew, agree in representing Jesus, after his resurrection, as appearing on the third day in or near Jerusalem. Even Matthew—but how? First he describes the angel at the grave as announcing to the women the resurrection of Jesus, with directions to communicate the intelligence quickly to the disciples, meanwhile that Jesus will go before them to Galilee, where they are to see him. Nor are the disciples only to see their risen Lord in Galilee, but 'you,' says the angel, 'even you women, will see him there, in Galilee.' When, then, immediately after, when the women were running from the sepulchre to the city, Jesus himself meets them on the road, this is certainly exceedingly strange. If they saw Jesus here, they did not see him first, as the angel had predicted, in Galilee. And what occasion could Jesus have to depart so quickly from the plan which he had just before caused to be announced by the angel? The women were intending to give their message to the disciples, and for themselves they were already convinced, for they went from the sepulchre, as Matthew says, with fear, naturally, but also with great joy. Or had Jesus something more to say to them which the angel had forgotten? On the contrary, he repeats exactly the same thing which the angel had already said to them—that the disciples should journey to Galilee; there they will see him. Anything so perfectly superfluous as this first appearance of Christ in Matthew not only never happened, but, in this connection, was never told; it is a
later interpolation, not into our text of Matthew, but into the account which the first Evangelist placed at the foundation of his history of the resurrection, but into which he here introduced a feature absolutely irreconcilable with it. If we suppose this appearance removed, his narrative is perfectly consistent with itself. Near Jerusalem, at the sepulchre, and on the morning of the resurrection, only the angel appears with the preliminary announcement, and the direction to go to Galilee; Jesus himself appears, according to agreement, in Galilee, and not before, after the disciples with the women had finished the journey there. If, according to this, Galilee is the theatre for the appearance of the risen Jesus—if this appearance is thus brought down to a somewhat later period than the third day, as it is impossible that the disciples should have reached the hill country of Galilee on the same day on the morning of which they had received the instruction to set off to go there—this view, which is at the bottom of Matthew's account, is, as has been mentioned already, directly opposed to the description in Luke and John, where Jerusalem and the neighbourhood is the peculiar, and, if we set aside the supplementary chapter in John, the only theatre of the announcements made by the risen Christ, which might thus be supposed to begin on the very day of the resurrection. This last conception is irreconcilable with the first, which lies at the bottom of the narrative in Matthew. But still the author of the first Gospel has so far yielded to it that he has represented Jesus as having appeared—not indeed to the disciples, for then the journey to Galilee would have been quite aimless—but to the women while still in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.”—Vol. i. p. 433-35.

In this passage Strauss labours to show that the account in Matthew, as it exists in our text, of the appearances of Christ is inconsistent with itself; and that when the interpolated statement about the ap-
pearance to the women is removed, the account becomes consistent, but then stands in direct opposition to the accounts in Luke and John, the supplementary chapter of the latter being set aside. Now, we formerly discussed this subject. First, we considered the account of each Evangelist by itself, and then we compared the accounts one with another; and the result was, that we found these accounts, which are manifestly partial and brief, to be such as throw light on one another, and to be quite consistent among themselves. We need not go over this subject again; but we may mention that the promised meeting in Galilee was evidently one of a public nature, so to speak, and by no means precludes other appearances which were rather of a private character; that the appearance of Jesus to the women seems to have taken place, not when they were returning from the sepulchre with the angelic message to the disciples, but after they had delivered this message and had been disbelieved by the disciples; and that this appearance of Jesus to them was by no means that superfluous thing which Strauss represents it, but was designed to confirm to the women the message which the angel had given them, and which had been rejected by the disciples. The account of this appearance is no interpolation in Matthew's original narrative, but is a part of that narrative. The angel's assurance that Jesus would meet them in Galilee does not necessarily imply that Jesus would not appear to them elsewhere, but simply refers to the promise which Jesus had given before His death, that He would go before the disciples into Galilee. The truth is, that these several accounts are such that, if we are predeter-
mined to set the one against the other, we may succeed in making out a plausible discord; while, on the other hand, if, without any such predetermination, we are merely disposed to treat them fairly as brief and fragmentary accounts, we shall be satisfied that, whatever difficulties they (from their very character) present to us, there is really no sufficient ground for charging them with inconsistency or contradiction.

Strauss finds a great difficulty in the way of his theory in the alleged appearances at Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection, and therefore he labours as he does to discredit the accounts of these appearances. The first Evangelist records the public meeting, as we have termed it, in Galilee; but he also records an appearance to the women near to Jerusalem. Hence this part of the account must, according to Strauss, be an interpolation, whether by a later hand or by the Evangelist himself at a later date. It cannot be a part of the original document; for were it so it would militate against Strauss's theory, and this theory is to be upheld, whatever may become of the Evangelic accounts. But for a full discussion of the whole subject we must refer to our former statements. Galilee, then, is to be the only theatre for the appearances of the risen Lord—that is, according to Strauss, for the subjective visions or impressions which sprang up in the Apostles' minds.

"If," he goes on to say, "of these opposite notions with regard to the locality of these appearances, that of Luke and John appears to be the latest, from the fact that in Matthew one feature out of it is laid upon the other, the statement in Matthew, this feature apart, has internal his-
Historical probability on its side. It was, indeed, perfectly open to Jesus, if miraculously restored to life, to show himself to his followers at Jerusalem as well as in Galilee; and if he had come to life again in a natural manner, possibly wounds and weakness might have kept him at first in Jerusalem. But the disciples, with whom on our point of view we have alone to do, had evidently, after the blow which had fallen upon their master in the metropolis, every reason for returning as soon as possible to their home in Galilee. They could not know how far the hierarchical party would go—whether they might not, being encouraged by their success against their master, seize also upon his most notorious adherents. In Jerusalem, where they were strangers, they stood without protection in the presence of such dangers. In Galilee they were at home, secured by their connection both with relatives and countrymen, and the hierarchical party were far from being as powerful as in the capital. There are unmistakable traces in favour of this view in a statement in the Gospels, though that is not, like the other, peculiar to Matthew. After the flight which, on the arrest of Jesus, the two first Evangelists represent all his disciples as undertaking (Matt. xxvi. 56, Mark xiv. 50), we find, indeed, on the trial, Peter as still present, but, according to Matthew and Mark, not one of the twelve is to be seen at the cross; and when in Matthew (xxvi. 31) Jesus applies the prophecy of Zechariah (xiii. 7) to them, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered,' this expression appears to be quite correctly explained by the author of the fourth Gospel in the sense (xvi. 32) that the disciples will return to their home. In the fourth Gospel (taking the supplementary chapter into account) this return to Galilee takes place at the soonest eight days after the resurrection, and even in Matthew not until after they have heard of this, and been directed to go there by Jesus. The latter appears to be a sort of palliative representation of the fact attributing what was done voluntarily through fear to a higher command from Jesus himself."—Vol. i. p. 435-36.
Having, as he thinks, discredited the accounts which record appearances at Jerusalem, and having brought Matthew over to his view by setting aside his statement of the appearance to the women, Strauss proceeds in the passage now quoted to show that, immediately on the death of Jesus, the disciples fled to their homes in Galilee. Fear of danger from the Jewish rulers was the motive which urged this flight. And he would also find support for this assertion from some statements in the Gospels. Now, there can be no doubt that the disciples on the arrest of Jesus forsook Him and fled. Jesus Himself had foretold that such would be their conduct; but the expressions used to indicate this desertion do not mean that, either on the arrest or on the death of Jesus, the disciples immediately fled to Galilee. All the accounts tell us that although they forsook their Master they remained in Jerusalem. They knew perfectly that He was the chief, if not the only, object of hatred on the part of the rulers. Peter and John were present at His trial. Matthew and Mark tell us that the women who had followed Jesus were standing at a distance in a group beholding the crucifixion. Luke says that "all His acquaintance" were there, probably in another group, as well as the women. John, we know, was there along with the mother of Jesus. The disciples, according to all the accounts, were in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection. There can be no reasonable doubt, then, that all the disciples witnessed the crucifixion. Fear caused them to desert Jesus when the hour of darkness came, but there is no evidence that it constrained them to repair to Galilee. It was the command of
Jesus that brought them there. But it is necessary for Strauss's theory that they should instantly quit Jerusalem and reach Galilee in a state of terror, and therefore he now assumes that such was the case.

"But supposing," he says, "the disciples, after the execution of Jesus, to have fled, in their first terror, to their homes, the reaction in their minds up to the point at which they might have visions of Christ, even though not absolutely unintelligible, in Jerusalem, is nevertheless far more capable of explanation. Outside of the range to which the power of the enemies and murderers of their master extended, the spell of terror and consternation which had been laid upon their minds by his arrest and condemnation gave way. Moreover, in Galilee, in the regions which they had so often wandered through in his society, amid the population in company with whom they had so often been inspired by his words, they had every opportunity of continually recalling his image to their minds, of realising it to themselves in the different important situations in which they had seen him there. Even the distance of the sepulchre is to be brought into consideration, the immediate neighbourhood of which, at least at first, would necessarily aggravate the difficulty of believing that he who had been buried there had quitted it. And if the transference of the appearance to Galilee disengages us from the third day as the period for the commencement of them, the longer time thus gained makes the reaction in the minds of the disciples more conceivable."—Vol. i. p. 436-37.

Having removed the disciples to Galilee in their first terror upon the death of their Master, Strauss—though he will not allow that the reaction in their minds up to the point at which they might have visions of Christ would have been absolutely unintelligible had they remained in Jerusalem—considers that such a reaction is now far more capable of ex-
planation. And then he states some circumstances which he thinks were favourable to the bringing about of this mental revolution. Now, let it observed that we are not considering here an abstract problem in reference to the human mind. Strauss admits that the disciples believed—firmly believed—that they saw, not once or twice, but repeatedly, their Lord alive after His death. The great question is, whether these visions were purely subjective, or had their origin in outward realities? No general reasoning on mere suppositions can avail to answer this question. There is no evidence whatever to sustain the supposition that the disciples fled to Galilee in their first terror. That they were in terror when Jesus was arrested and tried and put to death—in such terror that, on His being arrested, they forsook Him and fled from the spot—we are informed by the Evangelists; but not one of them says that the disciples fled to Galilee in their terror. Nay, how does Strauss know that they went to Galilee at all, but by the testimony of the Evangelists? Matthew, whose account he deems preferable to the other accounts, expressly tells us that they went there by the command of their risen Lord. Strauss insists that Matthew's account has been enlarged by a later hand; but he insists on this, partly from a misinterpretation of his account, and partly, or rather mainly, because of the requirements of his own theory. Does not Matthew, however, clearly affirm that Jesus rose on the third day after His death, and that it was after the resurrection had taken place that the disciples went to Galilee? Matthew, then, equally with the other Evangelists, represents the fact—or, according to Strauss, the idea—
of the resurrection as having been prior to the journey to Galilee.

It is exceedingly easy, indeed, for the author or any other person to form a theory in his mind of what he supposes to have been the origin of the disciples' belief, and then to set aside whatever in the accounts is opposed to this theory; taking out of them some one thing, such as the journey to Galilee, and connecting it with something else that happened or existed under different circumstances and at a different time—such as the fear or terror in which the disciples were when their Lord was actually apprehended and condemned and put to death—and then to construct a case out of these two things, and to represent the disciples as fleeing to Galilee in a state of terror immediately upon the death of Jesus. But this is not criticism—this is not reasoning; it is mere trifling with the accounts, and making them say what one wishes them to say. Whether, upon the supposition of Strauss, such a reaction would have taken place as he conjectures, we know not; but what we do know is, that the supposition is worthless, being based, not on evidence, but on conjecture.

Strauss all along assumes that there was no resurrection, that the appearances were entirely subjective—mere mental visions; and he is forced to these strange and unwarranted suppositions merely to support his preconceived theory. Our desire is to be guided by evidence in our inquiry into the alleged resurrection of Jesus. We form no *a priori* conclusion in respect to this matter; and we feel bound to examine the accounts recording the event in order that we may know at what conclusion we ought to
arrive. These accounts affirm a real resurrection, and they contain the evidence on which the disciples came to believe in its reality. Their belief, which is admitted by Strauss, is explicable only in the way in which these accounts explain it. And although Strauss labours hard to give a different explanation, he stumbles at every step, and is compelled to seek relief only by laying hold of one supposition after another.

Having then, as he thinks, brought all the disciples to their homes in Galilee in a state of terror, he will now suppose a reaction which shall issue in visions of their Lord. A longer time than that of forty-eight hours has been gained for the necessary reaction to take place—a reaction, be it observed, not in the mental state of one or two disciples, but in the minds of all the disciples and of all the other followers of Jesus, so that every one of them, without a single exception, is to imagine and believe that he or she has seen Jesus alive and heard His words, and that, too, all at one and the same moment—a reaction, moreover, which is to lead these once affrighted disciples to return to Jerusalem, and embolden them at the hazard of their lives to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus in presence of their known enemies, and also at the same hazard to make known salvation, in the name of their once crucified but now risen and exalted Master, to all the nations of the earth. It is absurd, we venture to affirm, to suppose that such a reaction as this could ever have taken place in the manner laid down by Strauss. But let us now see how he will account for the appearances said to have taken place at Jerusalem.
"If, accordingly, as regards the locality of the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection, Matthew is in all probability right, it is easy also to see how it happened that subsequently injustice was done him—nay, that he did himself injustice, that is, the last hand that touched up the older narrative worked upon by Matthew, by interpolating the appearance of Jesus before the women at Jerusalem. It was, of course, the most obvious thing for the imagination to represent the risen Lord as announcing his return to life; that is, as appearing in the very place where he must have quitted the sepulchre. Moreover, the disciples, after they had recovered themselves in Galilee, and gained new faith in Jesus as the Messiah, had in fact returned to Jerusalem, and became here the founders of a Church which, by reason of the central position of this city, soon became the centre of all the Churches of the crucified and restored Messiah. How natural, then, that the time during which the Apostles retired from this central point should be willingly forgotten, and that the description of the course of events should take a turn implying that the metropolis had never been without a nucleus of a Church, that the eleven had from the first continued together in Jerusalem, and that here, too, they had been awakened to renewed faith by the first appearances of their Master after his resurrection! In this form the facts were stated at a later period in Jerusalem in particular, and in this form represented by the author of the third Gospel, who enriched the Galilean tradition of the first principally by Jewish traditions and those of Jerusalem. But it does not follow that it was from Galilean patriotism that Matthew made this country the theatre of the reappearance of his risen Lord; but in the Galilean tradition which he followed there was simply no occasion to modify the original fact to the advantage of Jerusalem."—Vol. i. p. 437-38.

One cannot refrain from expressing astonishment at the childishness which every now and then becomes
apparent in the discussions of such men as Strauss, when subjects of the highest magnitude are before them. The Evangelic accounts of the appearances of the risen Jesus are constructed by persons who are thinking of “the advantage of Jerusalem or of Galilee!” These accounts consist of “Galilean traditions,” and some of them are “enriched by Jewish traditions and those of Jerusalem!” The idea of a Gospel of the grace of God revealed for the salvation of sinful man, whether Jew or Gentile, seems never to cross the minds of these men. The relation of the death and resurrection of the Son of God to this all-precious Gospel seems never once to be thought of. They assume the whole to be a cunningly-devised fable, or the product of an excited imagination. The Gospel exists merely as a thing on which they are to exercise their powers, so as to account for its existence on the one or the other of these assumptions; and, what is indeed most strange, they do not seem to be aware of the utter childishness which so often marks their efforts.

Strauss having taken the disciples in a state of terror to Galilee, a reaction takes place there in their minds to such an extent that they now, one and all, have visions of Christ. But he must bring them back to Jerusalem; for it was there, by all accounts, that the Christian Church was founded. The difficulty which it is evident he saw meeting him here, is slurred over in the quietest possible manner. He simply asserts that “the disciples, after they had recovered themselves in Galilee, and gained new faith in Jesus as the Messiah, had in fact returned to Jerusalem, and became here the founders of a Church
which, by reason of the central position of this city, soon became the centre of all the Churches of the crucified and restored Messiah." Let it be ever so "obvious a thing," as Strauss says it was, "for the imagination to represent the risen Lord as announcing His return to life—that is, as appearing in the very place where He must have quitted the sepulchre"—we ask for some explanation of what took place in Galilee where the disciples first believed they had visions of Christ, and also of the reasons which so soon brought them back to Jerusalem, from which they had shortly before fled in terror. Taking Strauss's own account of these things, can we conceive it possible that the disciples, after such a reaction in their minds, could have kept silence in Galilee? And if they did not, why are there no accounts of any of their proceedings there? What could have moved them, Galileans as they were, not to proclaim the resurrection of their Lord to their countrymen there, "amid the population in company with whom they had so often been inspired by His words"? They were there "outside of the range to which the power of the enemies and murderers of their Master extended," and they were now no longer under "the spell of terror and consternation which had been laid upon their minds by His arrest and condemnation." What, then, could have been more natural than that, as soon as the reaction took place in their own minds, they should have been constrained by the very condition of their minds to proclaim to the inhabitants of Galilee, what they themselves now believed, the resurrection of their Lord, and to have founded the Christian Church in Galilee? Or what could have
moved such men to rush back to Jerusalem, where their enemies were all-powerful, and where they could, therefore, expect to encounter only persecution and death? The very thought of returning to Jerusalem, where their Master had been put to death, would at once have dispelled their dream, and reminded them that the sepulchre was there in which still lay the body of their Lord.

Strauss acts wisely for his theory in keeping silence on these matters, and in attempting to ascribe to persons at a later date "the wilful forgetfulness of the time during which the Apostles had retired from Jerusalem, that central point,"—a wilful forgetfulness, not only of the time, but of all that, upon the supposed theory, must have taken place in Galilee during that time. It was in Jerusalem that the disciples, according to the accounts of Luke, first preached the resurrection of Jesus. It was there that the Christian Church was founded. And Strauss's theory fails to account for these facts. He removes the disciples to Galilee, and he brings them back, without assigning any reason for their return. According to his theory, they had fled in terror from Jerusalem, and nothing had occurred to lessen their danger there. It was in Galilee that their terror gave way; and it is manifest that it was in Galilee that they would have remained, and made known the visions which they now imagined were vouchsafed to them. And yet Strauss admits that, after recovering from their terror, and gaining new faith in Jesus as the Messiah, they did in fact return to Jerusalem. The silence of these disciples in Galilee, and their return to Jerusalem, are inexplicable on the theory of Strauss. But they were silent
in Galilee, because, as we know, they went there by the command of Jesus, and they returned to Jerusalem by the command of the same Jesus. These facts are fully explained to us by the Evangelic narratives, which therefore are true, whilst Strauss's theory is false; for no theory can be true which does not account for all the phenomena.

So much for the locality of the appearances of Christ. Strauss now returns to the difficulty respecting the time of these appearances. This difficulty he found to be very great; but having, as he thinks, gained the reader over to his views as to the locality, he will now try to surmount the difficulty, insurmountable as we believe it to be. He is compelled to make the attempt; let us then patiently observe how he does so.

"An unhistorical origin of the statement as to time, which lies at the foundation of the history of the resurrection, will be more difficult to admit than in the case of the locality of the appearances. The primeval definite account that Jesus rose on the third day, and was seen after having so risen, seems to have every claim to historical validity. But in this case also, when once the faith in his resurrection, and in his having shown himself after it, was a given quantity, it may be discovered, without difficulty, why the third day exactly was fixed upon for the occurrence. It was necessary that death should have had power over the crucified Messiah for a short time only (comp. Acts ii. 24); his victory over death and hell must have been decided as early as possible. Thus, if the faith of his adherents had on the one hand a natural interest in placing the moment of his quitting the grave as close as possible to that of his death and burial, on the other hand they did not choose to go so far that the element of this death should appear to vanish entirely; Jesus
must have been only a short time dead, according to the body, but he must have been really dead. The endeavour to realise this notion was met by the circumstance that the crucifixion of Jesus, according to the unanimous account of all the Gospels, which is not affected by their discrepancy as regards the Feast of the Passover, had taken place on the day, and his interment on the evening, before the Sabbath. On the Sabbath God had rested from all His works: how appropriate the idea which represented the Messiah also as resting from the works of his human life over this very day, as only keeping the Sabbath rest in the grave! Add to this, that in consequence of the typical meaning of the number three, the third day seems to have been, to a certain extent, the proverbial limitation for a short time, as a period for the free execution or performance of anything. 'Jehovah,' say the repentant people in Hosea (vi. 2), 'Jehovah will revive us after two days, and on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight.' In like manner, in Luke (xiii. 32, ff.), Jesus orders Herod, that fox, to be told, 'Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and on the third day I shall be perfected,' and also the fixing of the time in the deposition of the false witnesses (Matt. xxvi. 61), that Jesus undertook to destroy the temple of God, and in three days to build it up again, need not be derived from the history of the resurrection, as if it had not been said before. On the other hand, the continuance of Jonas in the belly of the whale, in which he offered a prayer (ii. 1-11) that may be compared with the Psalms relating to the passion of the Messiah, does not seem to have been brought in as a parallel case until later—subsequently, that is, to the time when the morning of Sunday had been fixed upon for the resurrection of Jesus (Matt. xii. 40). For the three days and three nights of that continuance do not agree with the two nights and one day which, according to the Evangelical narratives, Jesus passed in the sepulchre.

“In this way,” continues Strauss, “the third day might
have been fixed upon for the resurrection of Jesus even in the lifetime of the Apostles, and have been adopted by them, even though it had no historical foundation. No one professed to have been an eyewitness of Jesus coming out of the grave; the time at which he did so rested solely upon inferences. The only certain inference was, that Jesus must have come out of the grave before he appeared to any one whomsoever. How long before was left undecided; and if on dogmatical grounds formed by prophecy, the day after the Sabbath, the third day, appeared particularly appropriate for this, one who had seen an appearance of Christ on the fourth or eighth day, or later, would have as little to urge against fixing on the third day for the resurrection as Paul, who did not see his until several years later.”—Vol. i. p. 438-40.

Such is the way in which Strauss attempts to show that the alleged time of the first appearances of Jesus to His disciples, and accordingly of His resurrection, has no historical foundation. He admits that this circumstance as regards the time lies at the basis of the history of the resurrection, and that it gives rise to a greater difficulty than that which relates to the locality of these appearances. He even admits that “the primeval definite account that Jesus rose on the third day, and was seen after having so risen, seems to have every claim to historical validity.” But, notwithstanding these admissions, he asserts that “in this case also, when once the faith in His resurrection and in His having shown Himself after it was a given quantity, it may be discovered without difficulty why the third day exactly was fixed upon for the occurrence.” Now, it is necessary for us to understand clearly the problem which Strauss here asserts it will not be difficult to solve. He assumes, we must
observe, that Jesus did not rise from the dead, but that the disciples, having fled to Galilee in a state of terror, experienced a reaction in their minds which reached that point at which they, through the mere power of an excited imagination, had visions of Christ. The disciples, one and all of them, having had such subjective visions, believed that He was risen again; and they returned to Jerusalem, where they proclaimed His resurrection as a fact which had occurred, and, prevailing on others to believe their assertion, laid the foundation of the Christian Church. Faith in the resurrection and in the appearances of Jesus is thus assumed as "a given quantity," and it therefore became natural, or even necessary, to give to the believed fact of the resurrection an historical aspect, by fixing the time after His death when this fact took place. If, according to Strauss, the disciples did not experience visions of Christ on the third day after His death, these visions could not be of service to enable them to fix exactly the day on which He was supposed to have risen again. Strauss felt it to be important, if not necessary, to his theory, that some time longer than three days should elapse before such a reaction as that which he supposes should take place in the minds of the disciples. But he does not seem to have perceived that the longer he postponed the visions, the more difficult was he rendering to himself the problem as to fixing the time for the resurrection. For if the disciples had had these visions on the third day after the death, it would have been natural for them to fix on that same day as the day of the resurrection itself. But if a longer time intervened between the death and these visions, then it is mani-
fest that it was by no means so easy a matter for
them to agree, without a dissentient voice, as to the
day on which they should affirm that the resurrection
did take place.

Thus Strauss, in his effort to escape from one diffi-
culty that pressed upon his theory, rushes into an-
other, which, however, he acts wisely for himself in
not noticing, and which, indeed, is in itself a much
greater difficulty than the one from which he was so
anxious to escape. For the risen Jesus did appear to
His disciples in Galilee as well as at Jerusalem; but
He only once rose from the dead, and He rose at a
definite moment. Now, whatever difficulties we may
meet with in the Evangelical accounts in respect to
details as to the times and localities of the appear-
ances of Christ, there is none, not the slightest, in
respect to the time of His resurrection. There is but
one account of this matter, and Strauss himself ad-
mits that it is "primeval and definite." That account
is, that Jesus rose on the third day after His death.
Strauss further admits that "this third day might
have been fixed upon for the resurrection of Jesus
even in the lifetime of the Apostles, and might have
been adopted by them even though it had no his-
torical foundation." Indeed, it is impossible even for
him to question the fact that the Apostles did declare
Jesus to have risen on the third day; for in that Epistle
which is one of the few New Testament writings the
genuineness of which he admits, in the First Epistle of
Paul to the Corinthians, the third day is expressly men-
tioned by that Apostle as the day on which Jesus rose
from the dead. We can have no doubt, therefore,
that this was the belief of the other Apostles on this
matter. Strauss would represent that belief as resting solely upon "inference." True it is that "no one professed to have been an eyewitness of Jesus coming out of the grave;" that no one, in all probability, saw Him, when, having restored life to His own dead body, He raised it from the tomb by His supernatural power. But equally true it is that it was on the very day of His resurrection that His tomb was found to be empty, and that He appeared to His disciples. "Inference," then, though it was, it was an inference based upon facts which allowed of no other inference. And the only reasonable explanation which can be given why the third day was believed by the Apostles, and declared by them, to have been the day of the resurrection, is to be found in the fact itself, that on that day Jesus actually rose again.

But now let us notice Strauss's attempt to explain this phenomenon, and to surmount the difficulty before him. "Faith in the resurrection of Jesus, and in His having shown Himself after it," is to be assumed as "a given quantity," and an easy solution of the difficulty involved in the exact fixing of the third day for the occurrence is to be placed before us. The Apostles, when reflecting on the difficult problem (for, according to Strauss, it was they, and not merely himself, who had a problem to solve), would consider it necessary that the crucified Messiah should be under the power of death "for a short time only." And we may learn from Acts ii. 24 that such a consideration would occur to them, for we there hear one of them saying that "God raised Him—Jesus of Nazareth—raised Him up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden
of it." But, passing over the fact that the Apostle who is here speaking refers to the resurrection of Jesus as an objective fact which had occurred—a fact as objective as His death had been—we observe that he appeals not to prophecy as a proof that this fact must have occurred, but to the fact itself as a fulfilment of prophecy. It may be at once admitted that the prophecy referred to might be justly understood as implying that the Messiah would be under the power of death only for a short time, although there is no specification of the time. But whilst, according to Strauss, "the faith of the adherents"—that is, in fact, of the Apostles—"had, on the one hand, a natural interest in placing the moment of His quitting the grave as close as possible to that of His death and burial, on the other hand, they did not choose to go so far that the element of His death should appear to vanish entirely: Jesus must have been only a short time dead, according to the body, but He must have been really dead." Does not all this, we would observe, indicate a kind of reflection and reasoning very inconsistent with the theory that these adherents—these Apostles—had arrived at their belief in the resurrection solely through the power of an excited imagination? Can we conceive it possible for these Apostles to have directed their attention in this manner to the problem before them? "We," they say to one another, "must place the moment when our crucified Master quitted the grave as close as possible to that of His death and burial, and yet we must not go so far that the element of His death shall appear to vanish entirely, for then it will not be believed that He was really dead." Can we, I repeat, conceive the Apostles thus
deliberating—coolly deliberating how to frame an answer to the question, On what day after His death did our Master rise again? The supposition is absurd. If Strauss had represented these men as from the first conscious originators of a falsehood—as themselves not believing in the resurrection of Jesus, but as resolved, for some inexplicable reason, to proclaim to the world that He had risen,—then the determination of the day of the resurrection would have formed an essential element in their false story. But even Strauss repudiates the idea that these men were conscious authors of a falsehood. They believed—firmly believed, he admits—that their Master had risen again. And he is right in this admission. But how is it possible to reconcile with such an admission the idea that they proposed to themselves, and determined by reasoning, the problem as to the exact time—the very day—on which this firmly believed though purely imaginary resurrection took place? The theory contains its own refutation within itself. It involves a manifest contradiction.

Strauss, however, proceeds in the solution of the problem as if no contradiction had entered into his suppositions; and we must hear what his solution is.

In endeavouring to realise their notion, which he has told us involved two elements, the adherents—that is (for these could in the case supposed be no others) the Apostles of Jesus—were met by the circumstance that the crucifixion had taken place on the day, and his interment on the evening, before the Sabbath. Now, it could not but occur to them, that as God had on the Sabbath rested from all His works, so it would only be proper that the Messiah
also should be represented as resting from the works of His human life over this very day—as keeping the Sabbath rest in the grave. Hence it is clear that they could not think of the resurrection taking place on that day. But then this event must not be deferred longer; and as the “number three was considered as having a typical meaning, and as, therefore, the third day seems to have been to a certain extent the proverbial limitation for a short time,” the day after the Sabbath, being the third day after the crucifixion, was unanimously fixed upon as the day on which Jesus—did not indeed rise, but—must be represented as having risen, from the dead.

Strauss endeavours to support this solution by referring to a passage in Hosea, where the Israelites, chastened for their sins, are represented by the prophet as expressing their penitence and hope in Jehovah: “After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight”—a passage which it is abundantly evident could have no reference to Him in “whom there was no sin, and in whose mouth there was no guile,” and which is never once applied to Him in the New Testament. But it is enough for Strauss that the passage speaks of two days and a third day, as indicating a short period of time.

Again, he refers to a passage in Luke, where Jesus, in reply to a threatening message sent to Him by Herod, says, “Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following, and the third day I shall be perfected.” Of this rather obscure passage the meaning seems to be that our Lord had reference to what was to take place in
three literal days. Strauss next refers to the deposition of the false witnesses who at the trial of Jesus charged Him with having said, "I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days." We know that Jesus did not utter exactly these words; for what He said was, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"—words which He spake with reference to the temple of His body, and which, therefore, contained a prediction both of His death through the malice of His enemies, and of His resurrection by His own power. Even Strauss admits that words to this effect may have been uttered by Jesus, and he is evidently disposed to allow that they were so, because they furnish, as he thinks, some help to the Apostles when engaged in fixing the time for the supposed resurrection.

Strauss, however, does not attach any weight to what Jesus is represented as having said about Jonah; and the reason of this is also evident. On this occasion Jesus spoke plainly, not obscurely, as He did on the occasion above referred to, about His own resurrection: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Such a prediction as this did not suit Strauss's theory; and therefore such a parallel as is here indicated could not have been introduced until after it had been determined by the adherents of Jesus how long He was to lie in the tomb. And besides, argues Strauss, "the three days and three nights of Jonah's continuance in the belly of the whale do not agree with the two nights and one day which, according to the Evangelical narratives, Jesus passed in the sepulchre"—just as if,
according to the well-known Jewish reckoning, the
day was not considered as consisting of "the night
and day," and as if, therefore, a part of this complete
day was not spoken of as "a day and a night." Jesus
was laid in the sepulchre on Friday, and He rose
again on the third day after. He was thus in the
sepulchre on three distinct days, and though not
strictly, yet, according to the Jewish mode of speech
in such a matter, He was three days—that is, accord-
ing to another mode of expressing the same idea,
"three days and three nights"—in the heart of the
earth. But, as we have said, Strauss could not allow
that Jesus had foretold His own resurrection; and
therefore this passage referring to Jonah must be dis-
carded along with all other passages in the Gospels of
similar import.

The third day, then, we are to believe, was fixed
upon as the day of the resurrection for the reasons
here assigned by Strauss. "That day might have
been fixed," he says, "even in the lifetime of the
Apostles, even though it had no historical foundation."
He would evidently prefer that this day had not
been fixed so early; and hence he says, "it might
have been" then fixed, as if there could be any doubt
even in his mind that it was then fixed, since the
Apostle Paul mentions the third day as the day of
the resurrection; and the first day of the week—"the
Lord's Day"—dates from the very origin of the
Christian Church; so that no historical fact can be
clearer than that the day was fixed, if fixed it was,
by the Apostles themselves. But, according to
Strauss, this day was fixed not upon historical, but
upon "dogmatical grounds, formed by prophecy."
Now, prophecy did clearly declare that the Messiah should die and rise again; but within the whole volume of prophecy there does not exist a single intimation as to the particular day on which the resurrection should take place. The Apostle Paul, indeed, says "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." The Scriptures did predict the death, the burial, and the resurrection of the Messiah, and it is to these events to which the Apostle refers as so predicted. But the particular day in which the resurrection was to take place is not foretold in the Scriptures; nor does the Apostle mean to affirm that it was so. Jesus Himself foretold the day, but Strauss will not admit this. The problem which Strauss attempted to solve refers not to the resurrection itself, but to the day on which it was to take place. He solves this problem by the assertion that the third day was fixed upon by the adherents of Jesus—that is, by the Apostles, and so determined by them upon "dogmatical grounds formed by prophecy;" and yet he cannot point out a single prophecy which was looked upon as referring to the Messiah, that says one word as to the day when the resurrection should take place.

His attempt, therefore, to solve his own problem is an entire failure. First of all he introduces a contradiction into the case, and then he proceeds on the purest conjectures, ending with a baseless assertion that prophecy formed the grounds on which the choice of the day was made. And thus he shows us that "in this case also, when once the faith in the resurrection of Jesus, and in His having shown Him-
self after it, was a given quantity, it may be discovered without difficulty why the third day exactly was fixed upon for the occurrence"! No, the discovery has not yet been made, and never will be made. That day was not fixed upon by mortal men, but in the counsels of the Eternal God. That third day was the day recognised by the Apostles, and by the Church which they founded, because it was, in fact, the day on which Jesus, the Son of God, rose triumphant over death, vindicating His own claims, and bringing life and immortality to light. Strauss has all along evidently felt that this was the fact which he would find it most difficult to discredit. He makes great preparation for his final assault. He attempts to conceal his weakness, and goes on with his solution of the problem as if it were one of no difficulty whatever. But the problem is insoluble. The fact presents itself in all its reality, that the third day was the day on which the Apostles affirmed from the beginning that Jesus arose, that the first day of the week was "the Lord's Day"—the day commemorative of the Lord—the day on which the Christian Church from the beginning held its solemn meetings. This fact must have an explanation; and the only explanation of which it is capable is, that it was founded upon an "historical" ground—on the ground that on that day Jesus did rise from the dead.

Strauss now concludes his discussion of this subject, and at the same time his First Book, in the following manner:—

"Thus the faith in Jesus as the Messiah, which by his violent death had received an apparently fatal shock, was subjectively restored, by the instrumentality of the mind,
the power of imagination, and nervous excitement. A progressive life was now insured for all that new and profound religious life that had been in Jesus, and by him, through teaching and example, imparted to his followers. But the imaginative form of this restoration continued thenceforth to give a standard according to which his figure was contemplated, his words, acts, and doctrines remembered; his whole life was veiled in a shining cloud, which continued to raise it more and more above the human element, but removed it in the same proportion from natural and historical truth. The history of the experiences also, which had founded the belief in his resurrection, suffered in this sense a modification, of which we shall speak at the conclusion of the second part of this work. It is the object of that second part to follow up in its particular features and changes that very modification which affected the history of the life of Jesus under the influence of the imaginative spirit of the most ancient Churches. The spirit was in many respects at the same time a relapse into the ideas of the Judaising period.”—Vol. i. p. 440.

In this concluding passage Strauss introduces no new argument. He merely gives a summary statement of the results of his preceding arguments against the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, and respecting the origin of the belief of the disciples in that resurrection. He appears to believe in the validity of all his previous reasoning against the supernatural claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. He seems to be perfectly convinced that the belief of the disciples in the resurrection of the Lord was wholly due to their own excited imaginations. “Their faith in Jesus as the Messiah had by His death received an apparently fatal shock, but it was subjectively restored by the instrumentality of the mind, the power of imagina-
tion, and nervous excitement." And he adds, that "a progressive life was now insured for all that new and profound religious life that had been in Jesus, and by Him, through teaching and example, imparted to His followers." Strauss admits that Jesus, whom He regards as merely a man, whose life was in no essential respect different from the life of any ordinary man, had in some way or other attained to a new and profound religious life, and that by His teaching and example He had imparted this same life to His followers. Truth and holiness and love were among the chief characteristics of this new and profound life of Jesus. Strauss does not attempt to explain how it was possible that men, to whom a life distinguished by such features was imparted, could have yielded so completely to the mere suggestions of an excited imagination. Minds under the influence of such qualities are generally in a subdued and healthy condition, and are keenly alive to whatever wears the aspect of falsehood, or trenches upon moral principle in general. Nor does Strauss explain how such men could have come forward and proclaimed to the world in the solemn and earnest manner they did that this Jesus, whom the Jewish rulers had put to death, God had raised up, and exalted to His own right hand. It is impossible for any sane mind to have been deluded by its own imagination, however excited, as Strauss represents these followers of Jesus to have been. Strauss or any other person may easily assert that such was the case; but we repeat, the supposition, taking all the circumstances into consideration, is morally impossible. Imagination cannot so operate in any mind not deprived of reason. A sound mind
may be deceived by outward appearances or by plausible testimony. Nay, it may at times be deluded by suggestions of its own imagination. But such a mind will recover its proper condition as soon as time and events have withdrawn the sources of deception or of delusion. Insanity alone could account for such a delusion as that under which, according to Strauss, these first disciples laboured. And then how is their future conduct to be explained, if such was their mental condition? These men became the instruments of revolutionising the moral and religious state of the human race. They proclaimed a morality so pure and sublime that man's highest imagination cannot even now conceive a purer or more sublime. They proclaimed a religion which alone is worthy of the One Living and True God, which alone is able to redeem man from the bondage of moral evil, and to raise him to the love and practice of holiness—to the love at once of God and of his fellow-man. Were these men insane—men who hazarded all their earthly interests, even life itself, in order to promote the glory of God and the good of man? The idea is absurd. It refutes itself. These men were not insane. They knew what they believed, and why they believed. They proclaimed in all solemn earnestness the name of Jesus as that name which is above every other name, and by which alone guilty man can be saved.

And what is it that has insured "a progressive life" for the religion which in the name of Jesus these men proclaimed? Not delusion, not fraud, not human eloquence or human power, but its own inherent excellence; its adaptation to man's moral condition; and the manifest evidence of its resting upon facts,
which, supernatural as they were, occurred within the sphere of man's observation. Had the faith of the disciples rested on delusions, it would infallibly have given way in progress of time. Had the religion of Jesus been built on such a foundation, it would have fallen, in spite of all its excellence, into ruins long ere now. It has not been reserved for Strauss, or any other man of this age, to assail for the first time the foundations of this religion. These have been assailed from the first, and during the whole intervening time, to the present day. Yet they remain firm and steadfast as when laid by Him who descended from heaven to dispel the darkness of the human mind in respect to the Living God, and to redeem the souls of men from sin and death. No—the delusion which Strauss ascribes to these disciples is to be found elsewhere. It is his own mind that is under the spell; it is his own imagination that constructs his case, and reason is employed merely to give shape and form to his own ideas. His argument sets out with groundless assumptions, and his conclusion partakes of the nature of his premisses. His theory may prove a hindrance—a snare to some; but it requires only to be patiently examined, and its hollowness becomes apparent.

He began his whole enterprise with an assumption which contains in itself his conclusion. There must be nothing supernatural in the life of Jesus; and therefore the conclusion is, that there was nothing supernatural in His life. Such is all his argument, however elaborate and plausible the processes of reasoning may appear. His problem was, How can I explain the life of Jesus on the supposition that His
life was only that of an ordinary man? That was the problem which he set before him; and hence at every step he must deny—must eliminate—every supernatural element, however clearly attested. His conclusion was before him at the outset; and his whole work is nothing else than a laborious effort to demonstrate a foregone conclusion. Truth is not to be reached by such a process as this. The investigation which aims at truth must be conducted "by a mind perfectly unprejudiced, perfectly decided, without ambiguity and without reserve," in a different sense from that in which these words are understood by Strauss. Whatever powers he may possess, such a state of mind as he has described, his work proves that he himself has not yet attained. May he yet attain to it! Then no man will more thoroughly see than he will, how utterly invalid are the premisses which in this work he has assumed, and consequently how worthless are the conclusions which by means of such premisses he has so laboured to establish. And most intensely will he regret that he should have persecuted the Church of God by such persistent efforts to subvert faith in Him whom, in His infinite mercy, God sent into our guilty and miserable world to dispel our darkness and to give us the hope of everlasting life—the hope which alone can alleviate man's present evils, and can enable him to look forward with calmness and even joy to a coming eternity.

As to the discussions in the second part of his work, to which in the concluding sentences of the passage before us he refers his readers, they consist of attempts, as he here tells us, to show how the history of what he calls "the experiences" of the first
disciples became modified—altered or enlarged—under the influence of what he regards as "the imaginative spirit of the most ancient Churches." In short, in that second part he undertakes to construct the history of the growing legend which sprang from the idea of the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. The discussion proceeds upon his conclusions in the first part. There is nothing strictly new introduced; and were we to enter upon it with the view of fully examining its statements, we should find ourselves only compelled to repeat what has already been said in the examination of the part now gone over. We deemed it, indeed, proper to examine minutely his discussion respecting the burial of Jesus, which he unfairly, as we think, postponed to this second part. But for the reasons we have stated, we consider it wholly unnecessary to enter on the other discussions.

In the conclusion of his whole work, he makes some statements which deserve a brief notice before we part with him. "Our historical knowledge of Jesus," he affirms, "is defective and uncertain;" and if we are to adopt his theory respecting the sources of this knowledge, he is perfectly right in this statement. If all we know for certain about Jesus is what Strauss leaves us, then is the amount meagre indeed; and he may justly assert that we know far more about Socrates, the sage of Greece, than about Him who came forth from God to be "the Light of the world." But this is a mere assertion on the part of Strauss, founded upon a theory which sets all historical evidence at defiance. The true state of the case is, that whilst the full knowledge of Jesus cannot be attained by us till we see Him in His glory, we have a
fourfold account of Him as He lived and taught and suffered upon earth, and also of His resurrection and glorious ascension, which account, in its diversified form, presents Him to us in such vivid lights and varied aspects that a living picture of Him is produced on the mind of every thoughtful believer—a picture which is more and more filled up and becomes more and more vivid as we dwell on His wonderful character, evinced not only in words, but in deeds and in sufferings. Looking with steadfast gaze into the mirror of the Gospel, we behold the image of Jesus—we behold Himself “full of grace and truth;” and as we behold Him, we ourselves are continually being “changed into the same image, as by the Lord the Holy Spirit.” Were the case such as Strauss would have it to be, we should at once acquiesce in his decision as to the value of such knowledge.

“There is little,” he says, “of which we can say for certain that it took place, and of all to which the faith of the Church especially attaches itself, the miraculous and supernatural matter in the facts and destinies of Jesus, it is far more certain that it did not take place. But that the happiness of mankind is to depend upon belief in things of which it is in part certain that they did not take place, in part uncertain whether they did take place, and only to the smallest extent beyond doubt that they took place—that the happiness of mankind is to depend upon belief in such things as these, is so absurd that the assertion of the principle does not at the present day require any further contradiction.”—Vol. ii. p. 434.

We add that the assertion of such a principle never in any day, whether past or present, stood in need of any contradiction. Such an assertion would indeed
be absurd. The principle laid down by Strauss was never asserted by any reasonable being. And as to the nature of "the principle" we appeal from Strauss, who assumes that a miracle is impossible—that immortality is a dream—that there is no Living and Personal God—that nothing exists but what we are able to see with our bodily eye—to one who lived nearer the time when Jesus was upon the earth, and who had traced the history of His life from the beginning to its final issue—to the Evangelist Luke, who tells us that he had received his information from those who were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, and that, "having a perfect understanding of all things" concerning Jesus "from the very beginning, he wrote his historical account of the Life of Jesus, in order that others might know the certainty of those things wherein they had been instructed." We appeal from such men as Strauss to men like this Evangelist; and we affirm that since the One Living and True God has done such great things for us through the mission of His Only-begotten Son into our world, it is most reasonable that we should believe in God, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and that the happiness of mankind should be made to depend on a real, a living faith in that Gospel which alone contains the testimony of God concerning His Son.

Strauss, like others, may attempt to veil his enmity to this glorious Gospel by raising up the picture of an Ideal Christ in the room of that Historical Christ who alone is the Saviour of the world; and, further, by giving credit to the historical Jesus, of whom he has told us we know so little, for having "first brought to light many principal features" of "that moral pat-
tern” which constitutes “the ideal Christ.” But if we are to form our judgments, not from imaginary theories respecting the development of the human race, but from the facts of its past history, and from the workings of that nature which all its successive generations possess in common, we cannot hesitate to affirm that woe indeed will be to the depraved race of man if ever this fiction shall become the universal belief; and if, instead of trusting in a real, an historical Saviour—in One who lived and died and rose again, and is now living in glory—mankind should be persuaded to look to a mere ideal Saviour, an ideal pattern, an abstraction which may be discussed by the intellect and pictured by the imagination, but will never leave any impress on man’s soul, or influence in a single respect the tenor of his life. No! nothing but reality can avail to the true happiness of man; and man cannot and does not “find in himself” that knowledge which is necessary for his happiness. Man is so constituted that he can attain to this happiness only through real communion with his all-wise Creator, the Living God. God alone can be the portion of his soul. And facts beyond all question prove that man in his natural state is not in communion with God, and that he has, in consequence of this state of separation, no true rest of spirit. Has God, then, in His infinite mercy, sent One—even His own Son—to bring man back to this communion? And shall we, in our blindness to spiritual realities and in our enmity to God, set ourselves to the miserable task of questioning the only evidence by which the mission of His Son can be confirmed to us? Or rather shall we not, conscious of our depravity, our
guilt, and our unrest, listen to the words which fell from this heavenly Messenger, this Divine Saviour—words which no mere man ever uttered, or would have dared to utter—words which, in spite of all the efforts of scepticism and infidelity, will abide as long as man lives upon earth, and will never fail to reach the heart of some sin-stricken and weary pilgrims—"COME UNTO ME, ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST"?

THE END.