

## LECTURE

Less than five years ago, it was my good pleasure to give to the world, a New Religious teaching called "PSYCH- IANA". The start was very humble, but inside of one year, we had received inquiries regarding this New Teaching from 67 different countries, and today we are sending our litera- ture into every civilized country on the face of the globe, and some not civilized.

Before I launch out on my address of this evening, I wish to invite every listener, whether over the air or in this audience, to send his name and address to me at Moscow, Idaho if you are interested in this New Teaching, and you must be interested or you would not be here. A post card or letter addressed to Dr. Robinson, Moscow, Idaho will bring you, without any cost to you, details and complete information as to what this New Teaching really means. I invite you to do this, and you will be sent, within a few days, detailed information.

My subject tonight is, "Did Jesus Christ Rise From the Dead?"

It seems to me that I hear ~~those~~ <sup>SOME</sup> in my audience saying, "Well, is there any question about that at all?" Now, let me say to you that there is a very big question about it. As a matter of fact, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is ~~denied~~ <sup>refuted</sup> by ~~everyone~~ <sup>many</sup> who has taken the trouble to examine the evidence for or against it.

If this story of the miraculous birth, the

crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ were an original story, then there might be some ground for believing it. There are millions of people holding church membership who say ~~that~~ they believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but the chances are, the only reason they believe in it is that they were taught to believe in it in early childhood. These millions of people have never taken the time to investigate for themselves the foundations of ~~the~~ <sup>their</sup> faith. Consequently they are in no position to give a reasonable and logical explanation as to why they believe this story, except that it was handed down to them by their forefathers.

The story of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, let me repeat, is by no means an original story. If we examine the Bibles and the religions of other nations, we are met with the startling fact that every essential fundamental of Christianity was known to millions of people hundreds and thousands of years before Christ was ever heard of. The history of ancient religions tells us that over a score of Gods had been miraculously born of virgins, had come down to this earth to save it, had met the cruel death of crucifixion and had risen from the grave hundreds and thousands of years before the time of Christ.

Now if we accept the resurrection of Jesus Christ as being true, then we are bound to also accept the resurrections of these other crucified Gods as being true, for there is no more evidence that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was a fact than there is that the resurrection of ~~a~~ <sup>these</sup> dozen other crucified saviours was a fact, ~~also~~. If all of these resurrection stories are true, then we have in heaven

at the present time, about a score of crucified Gods, and surely with that number, the world cannot or should not be lost.

If, on the other hand, the accounts of the crucifixions of these Gods of antiquity are not true, then neither is the account of the resurrection of the Christian's God true. The facts regarding these crucified Gods are available to everyone who cares to spend the money, time and effort to find them out. Every theology professor should know these facts, <sup>if they do</sup> but they very carefully conceal from their followers, the fact that every fundamental of Christianity did exist in pagan religions long before Christ was ever heard of.

If any of my audience would like a record of these Gods, then I suggest that you send to Moscow for a copy of my latest book, "Crucified Gods Galore". The book costs \$4.00 and contains over 400 pages of evidence that the Christian story, instead of being original, is nothing more nor less than a copy, taken direct from pagan and heathen religions.

We are living in a changing age. History is made over night. We are living in an age of New Deals. We have a New Deal in Government. We have a New Deal socially and economically. Yet by far the most important Realm that exists is past by and men and women in earnest about religious Truth and in earnest about the facts of Life as they exist, have nothing but old traditions and dogmas thrown to them as they endeavor to keep afloat on a turbulent and stormy religious sea. These old creeds and dogmas, however, do not

satisfy and the time has come to give to men and women, to enlighten <sup>ed</sup> thinking men and women, A New Deal in Religion.

Writ in our country's reddest blood are the cruel records of the struggles and sufferings of patriotism while laboring to give birth to a new nation. Hallowed by age and sacred memories are the nightmare tales of Valley Forge, when despair in vain sat brooding over the smouldering fires of hope, and the cold, dark night of disappointment settled like a pall over the sons of liberty. Just when the night was darkest, the infidel Paine again brought hope and cheer in his book, "The Crisis," whose opening words, "These are the times that try men's souls," are known to every school boy. Then from far-off France, came Lafayette, an alien and an infidel, to fight for freedom and humanity. In that dark hour, Benjamin Franklin, the American Socrates, an infidel, a deist, prevailed upon the Court of France to send the aid that made our freedom possible.

When the long dark night was over and the morn of liberty's day began to break, our fathers gathered together to formulate a plan of government. After due deliberation, these great men adopted our far-famed Constitution, as it came from the hand of Governor Morris, an infidel. From this sacred document, they purposely omitted all reference to God, decreeing that religion and government should forever be separate, that you and I might be free indeed.

Now, I realize the fact that it is a dangerous thing to attempt to change the religious ideas of those, who from childhood, have been saturated with creeds, dogmas and

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traditions expounded to them by some religious organization, which has not submitted the faintest scintilla of evidence of its truth. But the day is here, ~~I repeat~~, when men and women are crying for something substantial in the Realm of religion and it is my purpose, as long as I live and despite all the opposition possible, to give to this world, what I believe to be a sane, logical and rational religion, and one which actually brings achievement with it here and now.

There are those who will tell me that if I take away the superhuman origin and authority of the Bible, I destroy religion. They will tell me that I take away their only moral guide and leave them drifting on an unknown sea. This is not so, for the foundation of religion and morals is entirely independent of any book or verbal revelation. It is a part of man and nature.

At this Easter time, shall we, <sup>they</sup> in the light of reason, examine the foundation of our faith. Let us prove our beliefs and hold fast only that which is good--that which will stand the test of reason or experience. Let us first uproot the weeds that flowers may grow. Let us follow the heavenly Light though it leads us away from the flesh-pots of contentment, through the dead sea of our cherished hopes, over the arid desert of disappointment. Let us follow, though our friends forsake us and our enemies make war upon us, and though famines of doubt and pestilence of despair make us to grow sick at heart, carefully, cheerfully, let us follow the light of reason, for only thus may we hope to reach the promised land of Truth.

True religion is a realization of one's relations and obligations to God and his fellowmen. The Bible, like other writings, both sacred and profane, may help to point out the way to true religion and to God, but it is no necessary part of that religion, or of God. All that is good or true or helpful in the Bible will still remain for us after a belief in its superhuman origin has ceased to exist. With this view of the Bible as a work of man, all its cruelties and immoralities, its absurdities and contradictions, Deuteronomy and Esther, Jonah and the Whale--all cease to trouble. They are but the chaff amidst the wheat, the dross amidst the gold.

These facts take away no fundamental truth of any true religion, for there is no religion higher than the Truth. No ancient tradition, no Church council, no Christian creed can decide for you or for me what is true, what is good, what is inspired, what is the Word of God. / God's ever-inspiring word is written on every page of nature. The laws of nature are the laws of nature's God, not proclaimed alone to a favored few in ages past, but ever revealed in every age to every man whose mind and heart is open to receive the sacred truth. No, this does not leave us drifting helplessly on the great unknown. It leaves us with our reason, which is the safest guide when upon the boundless deep. Better to sail alone upon a shoreless sea, tossed by the waves of thought, drifting with the winds of truth, guided only by the stars of hope and reason than to be soothed to sleep by a siren's song amid the rocks and breakers of a false belief.

which he elaborated, as other moral teachers, to great extremes.

~~3. That Christ differs so little in his character, preaching, and practical life from some of the oriental Gods, that no person whose mind is not deplorably warped and biased by early training can call one divine while he considers the other human.~~

~~4. That if Christ was a God, then all were Gods.~~

If time permitted this evening, there is nothing I would like better than to give you the names and dates and evidences of a score of crucified and resurrected Gods, long before Christ's time. But, time will not permit, so for the balance of my address, I want to examine the evidence for the resurrection of Christ.

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No religion has anything to fear from anything I may say, for Truth always gains from being investigated. It is error alone that shrinks from inquiry. I shall ask you to remember this, for while criticism and opposition make not much difference to me, yet I would have you see the true picture of all I am trying to do. There must be considerable truth in my message, otherwise it would have died a natural death long ago. People must be receptive to my teaching or it would never have attained the enormous strides in five years that it has attained. Personally, I think the entire Christian story had a natural and human origin and evolution, just like hundreds of other religions have had. I do not believe it to be "supernaturally revealed" religion, but like all other religions, I do think it is the outcome of a natural and human growth and a

natural and human origin.

This belief has not been arrived at over night by any means and you may depend upon it that I am pretty positive of my ground and I am prepared to prove my standpoint otherwise, I should not be here.

Now, please follow me closely and I shall be happy to debate, on this platform, with any priest, preacher, or theology professor in existence, any point mentioned by ~~any~~<sup>me</sup>, provided that I feel the criticisms or points are honestly made, and made with a view to determine what is the Truth of the matter. I have no time to engage in argument with priests, preachers or theologians for argument's sake for time is too fully occupied, my teaching very effectively proves itself.

STOP

The corner stone of Christianity is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If Christ did not rise from the dead, Christianity crumbles. Prove that Christ did not rise from the dead, and you prove that Christianity is but a superstition--a superstition born of ignorance and credulity, of piety and fraud, of weakness and cunning, of priestcraft and persecution--a superstition that must disappear as fast as its real character is found out.

The doctrine of the resurrection from the dead is far older than Christianity. Thousands of years before the preaching peasant of Palestine was born, India, Egypt, Babylonia--all the ancient countries, indeed--knew the story of the resurrection. These countries, whose religions were of great antiquity, had numerous gods. They had virgin-born saviours who were the sons of their gods. <sup>while</sup> These saviors,



while they lived, preached and worked miracles, and after their death, they arose again and ascended into heaven.

All the doctrines of Christianity are far older than Christ; and all that can be said in favor of the resurrection of Christ can be said in favor of the resurrection of a dozen other saviours.

As I have stated, time will not permit a study of all of the resurrections of these pagan gods, but I want to consider here, the resurrection of a few of them.

About twelve centuries before Christ was born-- and there is no certainty that he ever was born--Chrishna, the crucified Hindoo savior, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. Attended by celestial spirits, amid the wondrous illumination of heaven and earth, Chrishna, the savior of men, slowly rose from earth to Paradise, while witnesses exclaimed with joy; "Lo, Chrishna's soul ascends its native skies."

Five centuries before Christ, the great Buddha, the founder of Buddhism--a religion that now embraces one-third of the human race--lay dead in India. From heaven's supreme God came the command: "Rise, Holy Love!" Then the shroud of Buddha unrolled itself; by divine power the lid of his coffin was removed; and Buddha, the Enlightened One, the savior of mankind, released from the grip of death, rose to heaven's glory.

Ancient Egypt worshipped the risen Osiris. ~~Mr. Bonwick, in his "Egyptian Belief,"~~ says: "It is astonishing to find that, at least five thousand years ago, men trusted

in Osiris as the 'risen savior' and confidently hoped to rise, as he arose, from the grave." Among the Greeks, Aesculapius, the son of God, the savior, the divine healer,--he who was called the "Great Physician"--after being put to death, rose in triumph from the grave.

The resurrection of gods was a fundamental idea in the religions of all the nations by which the Jews were surrounded. With these religions the Jews were familiar, and from them they borrowed many ideas. For example, the worship of Adonis, the virgin-born savior of the Syrians, was well known to the Jews long before the time of Christ. The Jews themselves worshipped Adonis. This was a part of the idolatry into which they were continually lapsing. In the Hebrew, the word "Adonis," means "Our Lord"; and this god had an altar in the very temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. The resurrection of Adonis was annually celebrated in Judea--in Bethlehem, indeed--even as late as 386 A. D. St. Jerone says: "Over Bethlehem the grove of Tammuz, that is, of Adonis, was casting its shadow! And in the grotto where formerly the infant Anointed, Christ Jesus, cried, the lover of Venus was being mourned." Observe the significance of this declaration. In the grotto, the cave, where Jesus cried, Adonis, says this Christian Father, was mourned. For centuries the church had a tradition that Christ was born in a cave. Among the Fathers of the church, who believed that tradition, was St. Jerone, the learned ecclesiastic who translated the Latin Vulgate of the Bible, and thus gave the Christian world its "Word of God." This saint tells us that nearly four hundred

years after the birth of Christ, the death and resurrection of Adonis, the mythical savior of the Syrians, were observed in the very cave where the Christian savior was believed to have been born. But there is another thing worth noting in connection with the death and resurrection of Adonis, and that is that according to the learned author of that masterpiece of scholarship--"Bible Myths and their Parallels in other Religions"--the celebration of the resurrection of Adonis, became the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Is there any wonder that orthodox churches are silent about the science of comparative religions, when that science proves that our reputed divine religion is but a pagan superstition under another name? How could the clergy preach about the uniqueness of Christ if their congregations were familiar with my book, Crucified Gods Galore?

For if the story of the resurrection of a god who was the son of a god is far older than Christianity, if thousands of millions of people in India, Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome lived and died in the conviction that savior gods had risen from the dead in their behalf, and if these resurrection stories were well known to the people among whom Christianity arose, how can we be certain that the account of Christ's resurrection is not the ancient myth told again?

The worship of Osiris continued for about six thousand years. During that time, thousands of millions of Egyptians implicitly believed that he had risen from the dead. Christianity is less than two thousand years old; and

the resurrection of Christ is rejected today by nearly every human being who has impartially examined its claims.

By what criterion, then, shall we decide that the resurrection of Osiris was a fable, while the resurrection of Christ was a fact? Buddhism is at this hour the religion of five hundred million human beings. Christianity in all its forms cannot number one million intelligent believers-- people who know what they believe, and why they believe it; people who have examined the foundations of their faith, and are satisfied that those foundations are sound. By what standard, I ask again, are we justified in determining that the Buddhists are mistaken about the resurrection of their savior, and that the Christian belief is founded upon a revelation from God? Is a religion false merely because it happens to be another man's religion? Is my religion true simply because it is mine? Buddha, according to Buddhism, arose from the dead, five hundred years before Christ was born. Does that make the story of his resurrection false? Buddhism is the religion of more than twice as many people as seriously profess Christianity. Does that prove that Buddha did not rise from the dead, but that Christ did? Why, my Christian friend, do you reject as false the divine resurrections of the old religions, and accept as true the resurrection story of the religion of yesterday?

Will you answer by saying that Buddha was only a man, and, therefore, could not rise from the dead; that Christ was God, and as God, conquered the grave? Let me show you that this is the position you must take; I shall also show

you that you can not maintain it. If Christ was only a man, his death was only a human death, and therefore could not be an atonement for the sins of the world. Christianity teaches that Christ was God; that his sacrifice was divine and infinite; and that as God, he rose from the dead. But if Christ was God, how could he die? How could a few moments' suffering destroy the Infinite resources of a God's longevity? How could a God's Infinite hold on life be conquered by the frail means used to overcome the life of a man? Nothing could be more flagrantly absurd than the idea that a God was put to death by piercing the hands and feet of a Jewish peasant!

But let us suppose that God did die. Let us suppose that the creator of the universe threw his life away, and allowed the crucifixion to reduce him to the cold, pathetic stillness of death. God was dead! They buried him! God lay dead in the tomb! Well, how did he come to life again? Who, or what, resurrected him? A dead God becomes a living God--by what means? Could he thrill his nerves with the melody of life when he was dead? Could he, in death, re-animate with infinite designs the brain from which all consciousness had fled? If he could not return himself to life, what in the universe could restore him? There was no other God to resurrect him. He was the only God, and he was dead! ✕ Think of the audacity of the superstition that would attempt to paralyze our faculties and dwarf our minds, pervert our emotions and benumb our powers of perception, by having us believe that a God of infinite wisdom and power--grand, wondrous and sublime in the wealth of his everlasting mastery

of a boundless universe--came down among the ancient Jews; allowed them to nail him to a cross; threw away his life with the recklessness of a gamester; was buried in a hole in a rock just outside of Jerusalem; and there, while dead, infused himself with life again; fled from his tomb, and flew back to heaven! No Arabian tale, no story ever invented to scare children, could be more absurdly false than this fundamental fable of Christianity. If Christ was a man, he did not rise from the dead, for dead men have the uniform habit of staying dead. If he was God, he could not and did not die, and therefore, he could not and did not rise from the dead.

There is another point I wish to bring before you. Suppose that there was a Jewish reformer named Jesus two thousand years ago; suppose his enemies succeeded in bringing him to the cross; how can it be known that he died in the crucifixion? According to the Gospel of Luke, Christ was on the cross about three hours. If Mark is correct, he hung on the cross about six hours. It is altogether improbable that a man should have died of crucifixion in that length of time. Crucifixion was a long-drawn-out agony. The victim died, not from the loss of blood, but from the protracted nervous strain and from hunger. Frequently, the crucified lived on the cross for several days. A Negro slave, crucified in Jamaica in 1760, lived on the cross for two hundred and ten hours,--nearly nine days. In Kitto's "Biblical Encyclopedia," a standard orthodox work, it is said that "We may consider thirty-six hours to be the earliest period at which crucifixion would occasion death in a healthy adult."

Now if a healthy man would live at least thirty-six hours on a cross, how shall we explain the death of Christ in three or six hours? Was Christ a weakling? Did he lack average health and endurance? Why did he die in so short a time? Again, we are told that the soldiers broke the legs of the thieves, who were crucified with him, but his legs were not broken. This makes it more difficult to believe that he should have died so early; and quite reasonable to suppose that these unbroken legs may have enabled him to get away later on! It is said, however, that he was speared in the side, and that blood and water came from the wound. But nothing is said as to the seriousness of this wound. It was only in the side, and there is no intimation that it touched any vital organ, or was more than a slight flesh wound. Moreover, science, voicing its conclusion in Dr. Schmiedel's article on "John, Son of Zebedee," in the "Encyclopedia Biblica," declares that, "In spite of all efforts, no one has yet been able to show that blood and water actually do flow from a wound of this kind." The Gospel fabulist was not up in his physiology!

When told that Christ was dead, Pilate marveled that he should have died in so short a time; and when the crucified was taken from the cross, he was not examined by physicians to ascertain whether he was really dead. No effort was made to determine whether the last spark of life had fled. No restoratives were administered. In view of these facts, who shall say that Christ was dead? How can we know that he had not swooned? How can we be sure that his disappointment and his pain had not banished conscious-

ness from her throne while life remained? How can we be certain that he was not buried alive, but unconscious? He was not buried in the earth. He was laid in a sepulcher in a rock. Against the mouth of this tomb a stone was rolled. If he was yet alive, he had air to breathe, and in a few hours he may have recovered consciousness. Perhaps the stone that stood between him and freedom was not too large for him to roll away; or his disciples, returning to the tomb in the night, may have heard his cry for assistance, and helped him to make his escape. On the other hand, if he was dead, they may have stolen away his body and buried it where none might find his grave. Either of these suppositions is infinitely more probable than that a dead man or a dead God, rose from the dead. Men in pain have swooned; men have been buried alive; dead men have been stolen from their graves. These things are natural--within human experience. But all experience denies that a dead man ever became alive again; and the whole universe mocks the superstition that a God could die!

Do I hear some Christian say that the Roman soldiers guarded Jesus' tomb, and that, therefore, his disciples could not have stolen his body? Mathew is the only writer who mentions the Roman guard; and he assures us that the guard was not placed at the tomb until the second night. During the whole of the first night, there was no guard at the grave. What was there, then, to prevent Christ's escape, if he were alive, or his body from being taken away, if he were dead? Nothing! Admitting, therefore, that soldiers were stationed at Jesus' grave on the second night, as Matthew says; admit-



ting also that they sealed the tomb, and stood guard until they were officially relieved of their watch, the story of the resurrection gains nothing, for he may have escaped, or been stolen away, during the first night, when, as yet, there was no guard about. In such a situation, we might reasonably suppose that the soldiers arrived a day too late, and that they guarded an empty tomb.

But there is something else to be said in connection with the guard. Who went to Pilate and asked him to set a guard at the sepulcher? The chief priests and Pharisees--the Jewish Sanhedrin. Why did they ask for a guard? Matthew says they said to Pilate: "Lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, he is risen from the dead." Mark well this fact--the day after the crucifixion of Christ, the idea of his being stolen from the grave was, according to Matthew, in the minds of the Jewish leaders. Is not that significant? In assuring us that the Jews feared that the body of Jesus would be stolen, the "inspired" writer unwittingly suggests the solution of the empty tomb!

But was there really a guard at the sepulcher? Matthew alone say there was. The testimony of the other Gospels proves that there was not. That testimony is negative, positive and conclusive;--negative in that neither Mark, nor Luke, nor John knows anything whatever of the guard--positive, in that according to Mark and Luke the women brought spices to anoint the body of Jesus, which they would not have done had they known that Roman soldiers stood

guard at his grave,--conclusive, in that the women on reaching the tomb, said among themselves: "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher?" The women saw no soldiers at the tomb, either to guard it or to roll from its portal the closing stone, because there were none there.

That the story of the watch is a myth is further proved by Matthew's statement that the Jewish priests bribed the soldiers to say that, "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept." The Roman soldier's devotion to duty has never been surpassed in the military annals of the world. Moreover, under the inflexible discipline of Roman militarism, the soldier who slept on duty was unceremoniously executed. Yet Matthew would have us believe that for a bribe, Roman soldiers not only sold out their honor, but exposed themselves to the certainty of immediate and ignominious death! This is not only a libel alike on the integrity and sanity of the martial character of Rome: it is an insult to the common sense of the world.

If yet further testimony be required to prove that there was no watch at the tomb, it is found in the fact that, according to the Gospels, nobody felt the need of one. Why? Because the disciples believed that Christ was dead, and that he would remain dead--because they knew nothing of his resurrection, and were not looking for it. Luke says that when the women told the disciples of the resurrection, "their words seemed to them (the disciples) as idle tales, and they believed them not." Why did the disciples refuse to believe? Let John answer: "For as yet they knew not the

Scripture that he must rise again from the dead." To whom is John referring particularly? To Peter and "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and with them all the disciples. According to the Synoptic Gospels, Peter was the prince of the disciples; according to John, the chief disciple was the disciple whom Jesus loved--that is to say, John. These bosom companions of Jesus went and beheld his empty tomb. They were amazed to find it empty. Why? Because "they"--the foremost disciples who must have understood the mission of their master's life, --"knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead."

Now let us ask: if the most intimate disciples of Christ, those who knew him best and were most devoted to him--those who had followed him throughout his whole career--if these had never heard of his coming resurrection, where did the Jewish priests get their suspicion that his disciples would claim he had risen from the dead? Did Christ go and apprise his enemies of a stupendous secret which he kept carefully guarded from his friends? The ministry of Christ lasted for one year, or for three--the Gospels are so full of contradictions that nothing definite can be learned from them--and during all that time, according to John, his disciples never heard from him that he was to rise from the dead. Yet the priests at Jerusalem, whom he had scarcely seen, knew all about the Christian doctrine of the resurrection! If the disciples were in ignorance as to a proposed resurrection, nothing could be more reasonably certain than that the priests and Pharisees had never heard of it; and if these men of the Sanhedrin knew nothing of Christ's

teaching that he would rise from the dead, they certainly did not ask Pilate to set a guard at the tomb.

I am, of course, aware that, according to Matthew, Jesus had said to the scribes and Pharisees: "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." But there are four decisive facts which prove the spurious character of this supposed prophecy. These facts are, first, that our knowledge of the origin of the Gospels makes it quite unreasonable to rely upon anything they contain as being the words of Christ; secondly, that this prophecy was unknown to the disciples, since, as the Gospels show, they did not anticipate the resurrection; thirdly, that according to the prophecy, Christ compared his prospective stay in the earth with the myth of Jonas' sojourn in the whale--likened his resurrection to an event that never happened; and fourthly, that whereas, according to the prophecy, he was to be in the earth three days and three nights, the Gospels represent him to have been in the grave only one night and a few hours alike of the preceding and of the following day--that is to say, perhaps thirty hours in all. He was buried on Friday evening; his grave was empty at sunrise on Sunday morning, if not, indeed, according to Matthew, at the end of the Sabbath, on Saturday evening. By no possibility, therefore, can his stay in the sepulcher be harmonized with the duration of Jonas' alleged confinement in the whale, since thirty hours or less cannot be made to cover a period of three days and three nights.

But the sleeping sentries suiciding for priestly gold to spread the rumor that a grave was vacated, not by a risen God but by a stolen corpse, is but one of the fond fancies of "The Gospel According to St. Matthew." In his exuberant imagination, the writer of this pious piece assures us that when Christ was crucified many unusual phenomena occurred. An earthquake rent the veil of the temple in twain; tore rocks asunder, and opened the graves of sleeping saints. Thereupon, these saints "arose", and standing upright or sitting in their tombs politely waited until Christ had risen from the dead, when they left their graves, "and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." The resurrection of these "saints" born from death into life in the shattering rumble of an earthquake, stands on precisely the same authority as the resurrection of Christ. So there was not one resurrection only; there were many.

But who were these resurrected saints so deferential to Christ that they remained in their open graves from Friday evening till Sunday morning? How long had they been dead? Did they come from their tombs in their putrefying flesh? in the bareness of their clattering bones? or merely as unsubstantial ghostly forms? Were they clothed or nude? And who were the "many" to whom they appeared? Did they die again soon? If they came from a world of endless joy, why did they not leave mankind some record of their experience in the realm of the dead? Is it not strange that the history of the time is silent about Matthew's earthquake; that the Jews never heard of the rending of the sacred temple's veil;

and that the appearance in Jerusalem of a band of resurrected saints--corpses infused with life for exhibition purposes--neither excited the slightest commotion, nor drew from the pen of any writer of the time even the passing notice of a single line? How shall we explain the fact that three of the Gospels and the universal voice of history have absolutely ignored these stupendous miracles? Very simply. They never happened except in Matthew's perfervid imagination!

Let me say here, that in assuming that the Gospels were written by the men whose names they bear, I do so merely for convenience. As a matter of fact, nobody knows who wrote a line of any of the Gospels. It is certain that they were not written by the disciples of Christ, or by anybody acquainted with Christ or his immediate followers. They are not the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; but Gospels "according" to these persons. These superscriptions did not originally belong to the Gospels; they were added by the church; and whether Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were ever more real than the imaginary characters of fiction, nobody will ever know. Where these Gospels were written, and when, are matters of equal uncertainty. There is no evidence, whatever, to show that they were in existence during the first century after the supposed events they pretend to describe. Emerging from the darkness of early Christian times, wholly anonymous in their character, composed of myths and legends that had floated for ages in the fancy of ignorance and credulity, selected from a spurious mass of pious drivel, declared divine by superstitious priests and the votes of quarreling religious councils, embellished with frauds by forging hands in the interest of the church--

such were and are the Gospels; and the doctrine that they are the inspired word of God is a fond religious fiction that rests on no authority whatever, but the lies of priests. But for convenience, I assume that they were written by those whose names they bear.

The story of Christ's resurrection is proved to be hopelessly false by the clamoring tongues of its many contradictions. Was Christ embalmed before he was buried? John tells us that he was. According to John, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus embalmed him with a mixture of "myrrh and aloes of about an hundred pounds weight"--enough to embalm a dozen bodies! According to Matthew, he was not embalmed; and Luke's story plainly shows that there was no embalment. Luke says he was wrapped in linen and laid in the sepulcher, and that the women who saw him so laid away, returned to prepare spices and ointments which they brought to the tomb later. But why should the women who, according to Luke, saw the body laid away, prepare spices to embalm it if they knew that it was already embalmed as elaborately as John describes? According to Luke, the women prepared the embalming spices before the Sabbath began--before sunset on Friday; according to Mark, they did not buy them till after the Sabbath had ended--after sunset on Saturday. Surely no one will ever accuse the Scriptures of monotonous harmony!

How many women came to the sepulcher? John says that one came--Mary Magdalene. Matthew says there were two--Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Mark holds that there were three--Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome. And Luke insists that there were at least five--

"Mary Magdalen and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them." Four inspired writers, yet not one of them can tell us how many women came to the sepulcher of a risen God!

At what time did the women come to the tomb? Matthew says they came "in the end of the Sabbath" --at sunset Saturday evening. Mark says they came at sunrise on the first day of the week--on Sunday morning.

When the women came to the tomb they found it empty. The stone had been rolled away. The grave clothes lay where they had been cast. Jesus was no longer in the grave. How long had the sepulcher been empty? Nobody knows. No writer ventures the information that he was present when the resurrection took place; nor does any writer say that anybody else ever said that he or she was present when it happened. The resurrection stands without a single witness. All that the Gospels tell us is that when the women visited the tomb Jesus was not there.

When the women came to the sepulcher, whom did they meet? Matthew says they met "the angel." Mark says they met "a young man." Luke is certain that they met "two men." You are all wrong, declares John; they met "two angels." Matthew, where was the angel when the women met him? "He was sitting on the stone outside the sepulcher." Mark, where was the young man? "He was sitting in the sepulcher, on the right side." What did the women do when they were told that Jesus had risen from the dead? Answer, Matthew. "They departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy, and did run to bring his disciples word." Mark, is that what



they did?" No, "It is not." Then tell us, Mark, what they did? "They went out quickly, and fled from the sepulcher, for they trembled and were amazed; neither said they anything to any man, for they were afraid." These are last words of the Gospel of Mark, as it existed in the early centuries. The last twelve verses of that Gospel as we have it, are acknowledged by Christian scholars to be a forgery. They are not found in the oldest manuscripts of the Gospel. Yet I shall make use of these verses, for, though forged, they are a part of the Bible.

Note the last contradiction to which I called your attention. Matthew says the women hurried from the tomb to tell the disciples of the resurrection; Mark says they fled in fear, and for that reason said nothing about it to any man. Both of these statements can not be true.

As we are considering what is called the evidence for the resurrection, let me tell you something about evidence in general. It is a rule in the logic of evidence that the more unusual, the more important, is the fact sought to be established, the greater in amount, the more precise and conclusive in character, must be the evidence required to establish it. An ordinary fact is established by ordinary evidence. An unusual fact, a fact of vast significance, a fact involving life, liberty, reputation, can be established only by a great amount of evidence--evidence of the best quality, evidence that will bear scrutiny and analysis. A modest amount of evidence would be sufficient to prove that a man in good health rose from his bed and dressed himself this morning. Why? Because the fact is one of most common occur-

rence. But how much evidence do you suppose it would require to convince an intelligent court that a man walked down the street on his ears, and that he walked faster than a healthy athlete who followed him could walk on his well-developed legs? Such a proposition could not be proved at all. And why not? Because the thing alleged is unnatural, unreasonable, impossible, and, therefore, false!

A court could more easily believe that a hundred or a thousand witnesses had been deceived by optical illusion, or that they were lying, or that they were insane, than that a man could walk a mile in a few minutes on his ears.

If, moreover, in trying to establish such an unusual proposition, the witnesses did not agree as to the facts; if they contradicted one another in vital essentials as to time, place and circumstances; do you think the court would conclude that the thing had actually happened? Now such a case would be an exact parallel to the story of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The thing affirmed as a fact is unnatural, unreasonable, and, according to every canon of human experience, impossible. Therefore, no amount of human testimony can make it credible. If all the writers of the New Testament were in absolute agreement about it, that would not even tend to make it true; and when we find the writers who deal with it contradicting one another vitally, the story proves itself to be hopelessly false.

But there are other contradictions. Let us return to them. Where did Mary Magdalene first meet Jesus after his resurrection? John says she met him at the tomb. Matthew says she met him while on her way to tell the disciples. Was

she alone when she met him? According to John she was. According to Matthew she was not. Did Mary Magdalene know Jesus when she met him? Matthew tells us that she did, that Jesus saluted her saying, "All hail!" John assures us that she did not know him, that she thought he was "the gardener." Did Mary Magdalene touch Jesus when they met? Yes; according to Matthew, she "came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." No; according to John, Jesus said to her: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father." Where did Jesus desire to meet his disciples after the resurrection? Matthew declares he gave Mary Magdalene the following message: "Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." Luke avers that the words of Jesus to his disciples were, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

Where, then, did Jesus first meet his disciples after his rise from the dead? Matthew is certain that it was on a mountain in Galilee. Luke insists that it was in Jerusalem; and John adds that it was behind closed doors, where the disciples had met for fear of the Jews. Galilee is at one end of Palestine, and Jerusalem at the other. The two points--one in the North, and the other in the South--are separated by what was then known as a three days' journey. Now as Luke and John declare that Jesus met the disciples on the evening of the day of his resurrection, it is certain he could not have met them in so short a time at a point so far away. If Luke and John are correct, the meeting did not take place in Galilee; if Matthew was well informed, it did not

occur in Jerusalem. A little less "inspiration" and a little more truth might have saved the reputation of these writers.

When the disciples saw Christ, were they agreed that it was he? They were not. Matthew tells us that some doubted. Here was a man with whom they had been associated for one year--or for three years--a man with whose person, whose voice, they were entirely familiar, a man whom they revered as their teacher and leader, and yet, when they saw him, they were not satisfied that it was he; they looked on him, talked with him--and doubted!

There are Christians who contend that Christ did not rise in his physical body. They believe that he arose in spirit form only. But the Gospels teach that he arose in his body of flesh and blood. According to Luke, he said to his disciples: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself, handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." And did he not, according to John, invite doubting Thomas to feel his several wounds? And does not Luke insist that he ate some broiled fish and honey-comb just before his ascension? To argue after all this that the resurrection was spiritual only is to turn the Gospels into a wild burlesque.

There remains the testimony of St. Paul.

Paul tells us that Christ's first appearance was to Cephas, that is, Peter. This is contradicted by all the Gospels, His second appearance, according to Paul, was to the twelve disciples. But there were at that time only eleven disciples--Judas had hanged himself. Of the treachery and

suicide of Judas, Paul is utterly ignorant. Paul says that Christ's third appearance was to "above five hundred brethren at once." But not one of these gentlemen has anywhere testified that he saw the resurrected Jesus; and of this appearance to the multitude the Gospels are wholly silent. To certify that Paul is quite mistaken here, we may observe that there were not five hundred Christian brethren in the world at that time. "After that, says Paul, "he was seen of James." The Epistle of James knows nothing at all about the resurrection; and no appearance to James is mentioned in the Gospels. "And last of all," declares Paul, "he was seen of me also." It may be so, Paul, but you are the only witness in your behalf. No other writer knows anything whatever about any appearance to you.

The testimony of Paul is in hopeless conflict with the four Gospels. While the Gospels quarrel with one another, Paul quarrels with them all.

While the four Gospels teach that Christ rose from the tomb in his body of flesh and blood, and while two of them declare that with that body he ascended into heaven, Paul challenges the Gospels with this positive pronouncement: "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Very well, Paul; but if this is so, will you be so good as to explain to us what Christ did with his human body when he got beyond the clouds? After this we can easily agree with the Rev. John W. Chadwick, who says: "Paul's witness to the resurrection is the ruin of the argument."

I call your attention to but one more contradiction. According to Luke, Christ ascended into heaven on

evening of the day on which he rose from the tomb; but according to the Acts of the Apostles, he was with his disciples for forty days before his ascension. If there was a memorable period in the life of Christ, it certainly was the period that intervened between his resurrection and his ascension. The incidents of that period must have been indelibly impressed on the minds of the disciples. Never could they have forgotten their associations and conversations with him who had triumphed over death and the grave. His answers to their questions as to the world he had visited would have become a part of the very texture of their souls. But in these things, the disciples evinced no appreciable concern. They did not question their risen master about the life beyond the tomb. Having brought him from the grave, their only interest in him seems to have been in getting rid of him. They even forgot the time he spent with them in those wonderful days. Luke remembers only from the morning to the evening of the resurrection day; while the writer of Acts extends his stay to forty days. Both accounts may be "inspired," but it is certain that both can not be true.

The ascension of a resurrected God ought to have been considered important enough to merit a fairly complete description. But Matthew does not even mention it. Mark ignored it until the forger referred to it in a meager line. John passes over it in silence. Luke alone of the disciples mentions it, and in his hurry to take leave of the subject, dismisses it with this brief reference: "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven."

Luke did not know that the earth revolves on its axis, and that the direction we call "up" is continually changing. He did not know that if Christ went "up" the direction he took would depend precisely upon the time he left, and that twelve hours later he would have gone in the opposite direction. He did not know that the stars are thousands of millions of miles away, and as far apart; that it would take Christ, traveling with the velocity of a cannon ball, thousands of ages to reach the nearest of them; that the interstellar spaces are infinitely cold--a thousand times colder than ice; and that the telescope, in sweeping the immensity of space, would never discover the fable land of heaven. Astronomy has no time to consider seriously the story that any being with a human body ascended among the stars.

The evidence by which Christianity seeks to prove that a man or a God rose from the dead is infinitely inadequate. What! Prove the truth of a story that all human experience denies, that the whole universe declares to be false, and prove it with the glaring contradictions offered by ignorance!

There is not a court in the civilized world that would accept such evidence as is offered for the resurrection of Christ as proof against a man of bad reputation that he had killed his neighbor's chickens. The evidence is not only worthless; it is self destructive. Yet upon such evidence--evidence that crumbles the moment it is examined--Christianity, with its threat of endless pain, has never stood and still stands. "If Christ be not raised," says Paul,

"your faith is vain." Paul stakes the whole belief in immortality on the resurrection of Christ. How absurd is such a doctrine! How childish is the claim that whether there is or is not a life beyond the grave, depends upon whether a Jewish reformer did or did not rise from the dead.

"But," some may ask, "if Christ did not rise from the dead, how shall we account for the great Easter festival which is celebrated by the Christian world?" Let me explain that the Easter celebration has nothing to do with the resurrection of a God. The celebration of Easter was hoary with age long before Christ was born. It was an old pagan festival in honor of the reanimation, the rejuvenation of nature at the vernal season of the year. On the twenty-first of March the sun, which as it were, has been buried in the darkness of winter, crosses the line of spring, and, as it appears, ascends triumphantly into the heavens. With the rise of the orb of day, all nature awakens and thrills with newness of life--the grass grows green; the trees shoot out their leaves; the flowers bring forth their buds. It is Nature's resurrection. At this time of the resurrection of the great forces of nature--the forces of life and growth--all the ancient nations celebrated the resurrection of their mythical gods. The Christian church followed the custom of the pagan world; she made her God to rise when the other Gods had risen.

Nor is the Easter egg a Christian institution. The egg has ever been regarded as the symbol of life: and at the Easter season, the ancients ate eggs and presented



eggs to their friends. The very name of this festival is of pagan origin. Oestra was a Norse goddess, and was worshipped as the devoted patroness of the renewing life of spring. The name of this pagan goddess was borrowed, and became a conjuring word in the vocabulary of Christianity.

There is still another argument. If it were really true that Christ rose from the dead, the world would know the exact date on which the resurrection took place. The date of a fact of such momentous importance--a fact that hurled defiance in the face of Nature, and conquered the forces of the world--could never be forgotten by the mind of man. But the Christian church has never known, nor does she now know, the date of Christ's resurrection. The resurrection is celebrated, not on the anniversary of any particular day, but in accordance with astronomical facts. Easter Sunday is always the first Sunday after the first full moon after the twenty-first of March--the spring equinox. The celebration of the resurrection is therefore a festival of changing time--it may occur as early as the twenty-second of March, or as late as the twenty-fifth of April. Could anything be more curious than this manner of celebrating an historical event? Why should the resurrection of Christ, if an actual occurrence, depend upon the course of the sun and the phases of the moon? Why should it be celebrated in March one year, and in April the next? Simply because the resurrection story is only a pagan fable retold in Christian form.

Nobody knows that Christ ever lived. If he was crucified, nobody knows that he was dead when he was buried. Nobody saw him rise from the tomb. Nobody knows who wrote

the resurrection stories; but any thinking person who will examine these stories will discover that they are myths.

Let us face the truth with candor. Christ did not rise from the dead; but the intellect of men is rising today from ages of confinement in the grave of superstition. There was no resurrection of Deity on *that* fabled Easter morn; but humanity is being resurrected today from the prisoning hold of a crumbling creed. God did not burst the bonds of the tomb; but man is riving the fetters with which religion has enthralled him, and standing in the Light of day, determined to be free. Superstition's gloomy night that palled the world with hate and fear is passed. The sun of reason floods the world with the rosy dawn of a hopeful day. The promise of the future lures the steps of those with eyes to see the light. The priest and the preacher are falling to the rear in the great forward march of mankind. Humanity is rapidly recovering from the Bible's blinding blight. Honest souls no longer tremble at the thought of the bigot's hell. The mirage of heaven that once charmed the human mind and made of earth a desert, is ceasing to sap the energy of the race. Unchained, unafraid, thoughtful, erect, free!--caring for the concerns of this world alone--the men and women who have reached their intellectual maturity--who no longer feel the need of the pious pap of priests--who prefer healthy truth to sickly lies--have come to know that this world, and not another, is our home; that this world can be greatly enriched and improved, that the joys of heaven, plucked from hope, can be realized in this life. So these forward-looking souls are striving to enlarge the realm of

freedom in thought and toil; to broaden the sphere of justice; to banish the wolf of want; to bring to all a needful measure of the means of Life; to diffuse knowledge; to banish disease and war and crime; to encourage the cultivation of the beautiful; to do the best that can be done to make this world a fit abode for mankind. This is the true resurrection---the resurrection of humanity to a better life.