

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE RISEN CHRIST.

To the Editor of The Open Court.

It may be because I am slow of heart, but I have not yet been able to see how the "Formula for the Risen Body of Jesus Christ," which Rev. Wm. Frost Bishop, Ph.D., D.D., offers for my consideration, meets half, or any, of my "trouble" about the Resurrection. Part of my "trouble" was that the evidence is not strong enough for so marvelous an event as a physical resurrection. But the rest and main part was the discrepancies in the accounts. Does Dr. Bishop's formula solve these discrepancies? Does it explain whether the risen Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene or to Peter; whether the visit of the women to the tomb was on Saturday evening (according to Matthew), or before sunrise Sunday morning (according to Luke and John), or after sunrise (according to Mark); whether all the appearances were in or about Jerusalem, or (except for that to the women) all in Galilee? Such material contradictions are evidence, as I urged, that while something startling occurred to give rise to the stories, "those who saw it were so moved by the experience that they were not able to remember and report it accurately." I do not see how Dr. Bishop's formula, granting that it is correct, meets this "trouble."

Furthermore, the formula presents new difficulties. Let us quote the formula, and then we can easily see these difficulties. "*What was natural to Him before His resurrection is now miraculous; what was before miraculous is now natural.*" Now if we grant that the risen body was so completely changed as this in its nature, why should it still retain the mortal form? Why should it have hands and feet if it can pass through walls as easily as light passes through a window pane, and no material object possesses resistance enough either to be grasped, or to furnish a support? But we are told in the Gospels that the risen body bore a perfect resemblance to the corpse, even to the wounds that were inflicted in the crucifixion. This we should expect if the risen body were in most points of the same nature as it was before death; but if it is now so changed that nothing is natural that was natural before, we should think the form would be revolutionized to correspond with these changes in nature. Our mortal bodies are formed to suit their functions. Is a risen and immortal body inferior in this respect? That would be as if men wore tails, or had claws instead of nails. It would be also a physical absurdity—as if a cake of ice were changed into steam, and yet though unconfined retained the shape and size it had as ice.

I should like to take this occasion to say that I have slightly modified my view of the genesis of the visions of the risen Jesus. In my article in the April number, I expressed the opinion that all the visions, including that of Peter were occasioned by the report of the women. I am now inclined to make an exception of the appearance to Peter. But I think the vision of Peter, if it had not received a certain support from the report of the women, would not have been of great importance. Perhaps on the other hand, the report of the women would have had less effect without this vision to confirm it. So I should now say, that "in this visit of the women to the tomb," and *the vision of Peter*, we have "the true historic basis for the Gospel stories of the resurrection."

Let me say in conclusion, that I heartily agree to your opinion that the Resurrection is not a historical, but a hyper-historical fact. The best expression of this fact is in Matthew xxviii. 20. "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This is a fact experienced by all earnest followers of Jesus Christ, from the vision of Peter to the present hour.

JOSEPH C. ALLEN.

To The Open Court.

Your accomplished Editor was kind enough to publish an article of mine upon the Risen Christ, in which is feebly presented the old orthodox view of this great subject.

But in commenting upon my article, the Editor accounts for my position by supposing that I had not been to school. He says that "young men who have attended universities, who have acquired a knowledge of cosmic laws, and who are familiar with the evidence of evolution," "will naturally modify the Christian faith as it has been handed down to them from parents and grandparents." This is not the quotation in full, but it is enough to give the drift. If I understand his remarks, the good Editor dismisses me and my position with the good-natured assumption that I am an old foggy, living in the distant past and ignorant of modern thought.

Were nothing at stake but my poor scholarship, I should have been silent. But the importance of the matter in debate will not suffer this.

With profuse apologies, then, let me say that besides my training in the universities of England and America I was educated at Jena under the very nose of "the great Professor Haeckel." I can read and write, and even do a little in arithmetic. At all events the author of the article upon the "Formula for the Risen body of Jesus Christ," published in *The Open Court* for the month of November, 1905, knows enough of the history of modern speculative thought *not* to fall into an error or misstatement, which characterizes an article in the same number of *The Open Court* and which the gifted Editor commends. I refer to the statement that "the majority (not all, but the majority) of scientific men, with the great Professor Haeckel at their head, have pronounced against the possibility of personal immortality, or of the existence of any such thing as 'spirit' or 'soul,' separable from its material encasement," (*Open Court*, November, 1905, p. 697).

Professor Haeckel contradicts this statement. He states that the majority of scientific men have renounced Monism and gone back to Dualism. This is the burden of his books and of his lectures in the class-room. No man that has read his two last books or ever heard his lectures in late years can be

ignorant of this fact. Almost with tears he laments the defection of Germany's chief scientists from the ranks of the Monists and their return to Dualism, the old orthodox view. He states the fact over and over again, and deplores it. He calls names and cites instances. Either, therefore, the writer in *The Open Court* is in error, or else "the great Professor Haeckel" is mistaken. As Elijah the prophet complained that "he alone was left," so Professor Haeckel complains that the vast majority of modern scientific men—the very chiefest of them—have reversed themselves, and that on the Monistic side "he alone is left." Undoubtedly, the highest scholarship of the day—even pure physical science—has parked its mighty battery under the shadow of the cross on Calvary, and the Halls of Highest learning are reverberating with its cannonade in defence of "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Kant was one of the first minds that thought out a complete theory of the descent of man from the lower animals. After elaborating the theory fully, he rejected it. The same is true of Kant's early speculation to account for the existence of the world by a mechanical or Monistic theory, as Haeckel the Jena biologist claims to do. Afterwards this most famous philosopher of the age rejected Materialism as insufficient and put in its place a theistic speculation. Haeckel deplores the fact that Kant is a Dualist and orthodox, after having been a Monist.

It is well known that Kant repudiated Fichte, his most brilliant pupil, because he seemed to deny the existence of God. All this while Fichte was teaching the absolute necessity of such existence. Schelling, too, though at first a pantheist, spent the closing years of his life in an effort to reconcile his views with the doctrine of a personal God. Hegel, like Schelling, was a mystic. Condillac, the founder of the French Sensational School and the disciple of Locke, was an abbe of the Church.

Herbert Spencer goes out of his way to declare most positively that whatever he may be, he is in no sense of the word a materialist, and Huxley fiercely objects to the word as applied to him. When John Locke, also called a materialist, was dying, he said: "I am in perfect charity with all men and in communion with the Church of Christ by whatever name it may be distinguished."

Hobbes, called the Father of Materialism, was a true and reverent Christian, stating the first article of his creed to be: "Jesus is the Christ." We all know that religion with Spinoza was a passion. He could conceive of no existence apart from God.

Du Bois-Reymond, the Secretary of the Berlin Academy of Science, at one time was inclined to hold the Monistic theory of nature, describing mind and matter as attributes of one substance. But this view he abandoned. His great name now ranks with the Dualists or transcendentalists, who assert that consciousness reveals two distinct worlds, one of matter and one of mind. Many regard Du Bois-Reymond as the chiefest authority upon such questions of the present age, and he pronounces finally against Monism.

A like change of principles, from Monism back to the old orthodox view of Dualism, was characteristic of Wundt, Virchow, Karl Ernst Baer and many others, whose names are "a light and a landmark along the cliffs of fame." The majority of biologists, physiologists, and philosophers of modern times, Haeckel says, are against him, having returned to the older and more popular view. After Kant, perhaps Wm. Wundt of Leipsic is thought to be the ablest

psychologist of the world. He is a perfect master of zoology, anatomy, and physiology. It is tremendously significant that he abandoned the Monistic view and became a pure Dualist. That he should ever have lent the influence of his great name to the heresy of Monism he publicly confessed to have been a "crime and a sin."

The last word of science, with few exceptions,—our enemies themselves being judges—is out and out in favor of orthodoxy and the Church.

No man can fail to admire the candor and enthusiasm in the search for truth characteristic of Haeckel, but throughout Europe he is *not* regarded as a safe man. His posing as a true and strict disciple of Spinoza, while ignoring the cardinal principle of the Spinozistic philosophy which makes the attributes of thought and extension independent, co-ordinate and mutually op-pugnant—this disregard of what may be called the very citadel of Spinoza's marvelous speculation is an illustration of Haeckel's lack of caution. The great Darwin, you remember, had to utter a silent prayer, to be delivered from his own disciple.

If any word in this communication can bear the remotest shade of discourtesy, the writer begs to withdraw it. He is most grateful for the privilege of stating his views before a "court" of such culture, offering meanwhile with best wishes for its Editor the sentiment: "*Me Socium Summis Ad-jungere Rebus.*"

WM. FROST BISHOP.

[The application which Mr. Bishop makes of a passage in my article is *his*, not *ours*. We know very well that a man may be very scholarly, and yet have remained untouched by the spirit of modern science, which can be acquired only through a familiarity with the natural sciences.

As to the problem of personal immortality, we should first settle the question as to the nature of personality. What is the person of a man? Does or does not his body form part of it, and if so is a resurrection of the corpse necessary for the preservation of a personality?

It goes without saying that we are not responsible for Mr. Bishop's statements concerning Kant, Du Bois-Reymond, Wundt, and others.]

"HOW FAR HAVE WE STRAYED FROM CHRISTIANITY?"

To the Editor of The Open Court:

I was very much interested in your article in the October number of *The Open Court* entitled "How Far Have We Strayed from Christianity?" for the reason that you voice my own experience to a remarkable degree with regard to the development of my present religious convictions.

A person can not advance very far in the study of science before he discovers that the point of view and the conceptions of science are at variance with those held by the writers of the Bible, and expressed by the average orthodox minister of to-day. He soon becomes impressed with the thought that if God is the ruler of the universe He must rule and manifest Himself through the forces of nature which orthodox churchmen affect to disregard as important avenues through which we may increase our knowledge of God; that if God is present in the cosmos it must be in the order and orderly unfolding or evolution of the same.