

of his own philosophy; those who were educated in the times in which he first came upon the stage, when his renown was in its fullest bloom; and those who are still to be made acquainted with the speculative questions and problems which have been agitated during the last fifty years, may find some enjoyment and satisfaction in the new theories of Schelling. But the problems of the present age cannot be solved, the interest of present times cannot be permanently attracted, by the new shape in which his system is to appear. Yet even for the present age his reëpearance upon the stage will not be fruitless; for the history of the past teaches us what the future demands, what the present ought to accomplish. Our gaze must be directed to the guidance of the unseen hand in history, if we would find the path and the means of our future spiritual progress. The history of the last fifty years—and Schelling's reëpearance will again turn our attention to them—contains the materials out of which the present age is to construct its peculiar system of philosophy. Kant laid the corner-stone, his successors have brought together the quarried blocks of marble. Hail to the men of German science who shall rear the temple of Freedom!

ARTICLE IV.

THE NATURE OF OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION-BODY.

By E. Robinson, Prof. in Union Theol. Seminary, New York.

THE inquiry respecting the nature of our Lord's resurrection-body has at the present day an interest, not only in itself considered, but also from its near relation to several other questions just now before the public mind. The raising up of Jesus is every where spoken of as the "first fruits" of the resurrection from the dead,—as the earnest and pledge and pattern of the future resurrection of the saints.¹ If then we can ascertain the character and circumstances of this great fact in our Lord's history, it may be expected to afford us some aid in obtaining a more clear and defi-

¹ 1 Cor. 15: 12—23. Col. 1: 18.—Rom. 6: 5, 8. 1 Cor. 6: 14. 2 Cor. 4: 14. Phil. 3: 10, 11. 1 Pet. 1: 21.

nite apprehension of the great Scripture doctrine of the general resurrection of the dead.

The inquiry before us as to the nature of the body in which our Lord rose, is very closely connected with the history of his resurrection itself. The answer to our inquiry must depend entirely upon the interpretation we give to those passages of Scripture, which narrate the circumstances under which our Lord rose, was seen for forty days, and then ascended to heaven. The witnesses to these great facts in the history of Jesus, witnesses ordained of God, were his apostles and disciples. Their testimony has been made sure unto us; having been recorded by the pen of inspiration in the sacred books of the New Testament; and being confirmed to us also by the institution and continued existence of the Christian church, which is built upon these same "apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."¹ It is, however, only to this recorded testimony, that we can appeal for all our knowledge of the manner of our Lord's resurrection and its attendant circumstances. It is only to this testimony,—to the views and opinions and feelings of the apostles and disciples, as made known to us in this record,—that we can go for an answer to the question before us. Neither fanciful speculation nor philosophical theory can here have any place. The simple inquiry is, and can be only, What do the Scriptures teach us as to the views and belief of the apostles and disciples, those witnesses chosen before of God, respecting our Lord's body, as he showed himself to them during forty days after his resurrection?

On this subject three different opinions have prevailed more or less at various times in the church. Some have held that the body of Christ was changed at the resurrection as to its *substance*; so that it was in its *substance* a different and spiritual body. Others have regarded the Lord as having had after the resurrection the *same* body as before, but glorified; or, as the earlier writers express it, changed as to its *qualities* and attributes. The third and larger class have supposed, that the body with which Christ rose from the dead, was the same natural body of flesh and blood, which had been taken down from the cross and laid in the sepulchre.

I. The first of these opinions is near akin to the ancient heresy of the *Docetæ* or Phantasiasts; who held that our Lord's whole life and all his actions, before as well as after his resurrection,

¹ Eph. 2. 18.

were a mere *δῶσις* or phantasm, destitute of all reality. Some of the fathers, who rejected this general view, and held fast to the idea of our Lord's human nature and human body before his crucifixion, were disposed nevertheless to regard him at and after the resurrection as clothed in a body of a subtile and ethereal nature, not having any relation to human flesh and blood or to his former body. In support of this view names are found of no less weight than Origen,¹ Clement of Alexandria, and Chrysostom.² In a similar manner Theodoret, and afterwards Ammonius in the fifth century, and Anastasius of Sinai in the sixth, affirm, that Christ ate before his disciples, not because he needed food, but in order to persuade them of the reality and truth of his resurrection; and they appeal for proof to his passing through closed doors, to the manner of his sudden appearance and disappearance, and the like.³ All this, however, may perhaps imply nothing more than the second view treated of below.—The same view is understood to prevail in the Romish church; apparently in such a form as to be akin to the doctrine of transubstantiation.—This whole representation is and can be nothing more nor less than fanciful speculation, an airy nothing. It has not in itself the weight of a feather; and stands in direct contradiction to our Lord's declaration to his disciples, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."⁴

II. The second view requires more consideration, as having been held to a certain extent in all ages of the church, and with some modifications, even at the present day. It ascribes to Christ the *same* body after the resurrection as before, but *glorified*, endowed with new qualities and attributes, and no longer subject to the laws of human flesh and blood.⁵ This is the *σῶμα τῆς δόξης* of some among the early Fathers, which they held to be the same in its *substance* as before, but describe it in various places as *ἀθάνατον, ἄφθαρτον, ἀδιάφθορον, αἰώνιον, immortale, impassibile, incorruptibile*. So, in the third century, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyp-

¹ ORIGEN, c. Cels. II. 62, ἦν μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν αὐτοῦ, ὡς περὶ ἐν μεθορίῳ ἐνὶ τῆς παχέτητος τοῦ πρὸ τοῦ πάθους σώματος καὶ τοῦ γυμνῆν τοιοῦτον σώματος φαίνεσθαι ψυχῆν.

² CHRYSOST. ad Joh. 21: 10, ἐφαίνετο γὰρ ἄλλη μορφή, ἄλλη φωνή, ἄλλη οὐχ ἑνὶ ματι, ἐπίστη πολλὰς τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ οὐκ ἐγνωρίζετο.

³ See DODEKES *Dissertat. Theol. de Jesu in Vilam reditu*, p. 137.

⁴ Luke 24: 39.

⁵ Theophylact. ad Joh. 20, σῶμα ἄφθαρτον καὶ θεοῦδοτατον καὶ μηκέτι σαρκινικοῖς νόμοις ὑποκειμένον.

rian; the former of whom speaks of Christ's body as "made incorruptible after the resurrection."¹ So too Hilary of Poitiers in the fourth century; Augustine² and Leo the Great in the fifth; and Gregory the Great in the sixth.³ In like manner many of the scholastic writers of the middle ages held to the like view; as did also the earlier Lutheran divines, who, in maintaining the ubiquity of Christ, describe the body of the risen Lord as *gloriosum, idem numero et substantia, sed novis qualitatibus vestitum, sc. impassibilitate, invisibilitate, et illocalitate*.⁴ Similar at the present day apparently is the view of Hahn,⁵ Olshausen,⁶ Hengstenberg,⁷ and others; except that they regard the process of transformation in the Lord's body from human flesh and blood into the glorified state, as having been gradual; commencing at the resurrection and going on by degrees through the forty days, until it was completed in the ascension. The language of some on this subject, as of Hahn, is very indefinite; while that of others, as Olshausen and Hengstenberg, is decided and emphatic.

¹ Haer. 5. 12. 13, *μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἀφθαρτοῦτον*.

² Augustine's language sometimes seems to favor the third view: e. g. de Agone Christ. 24 or 26. Opp. T. VI. ed. Venet. p. 256, "Nec eos audiamus, qui negant tale corpus Domini resurrexisse, quale positum est in monumento. Si enim tale non fuisset, non ipse dixisset post resurrectionem discipulis, *Palpate et videte, quoniam spiritus ossa et carnem non habet, sicut me videtis habere*. Sacrilegum est enim credere Dominum nostrum, cum ipse sit Veritas, in aliquo fuisse mentitum. Nec nos moveat quod clausis ostiis subito eum apparuisse discipulis scriptum est, ut propterea negemus illud fuisse corpus humanum, quia contra naturam hujus corporis videmus esse per clausa ostia intrare, omnia enimabilia sunt Deo." He then adduces Christ's walking upon the water and his Transfiguration as similar miracles during his lifetime.—But in many other passages, Augustine speaks of our Lord's risen body as exempt from the natural laws of the proper human body. Thus where he is describing the bodies of the saints after the resurrection; de Civitat. Dei XII. 22, Opp. T. VII. ed. Venet. p. 342, "Certe fides Christiana de ipso Salvatore non dubitat, quod etiam post resurrectionem, *jam quidem in spirituali carne, sed tamen vera, cibum ac potum cum discipulis sumpsit*. Non enim potestas, sed egestas edendi ac bibendi talibus corporibus auferatur." This last distinction would seem to have been a favourite one with Augustine, as it occurs several times in his writings.

³ GREGOR. M. Hom. 26 in Evv. "Palpandam carnem Dominus praebeat, quam clausis januis introduxit. Qua in re duo mira et juxta humanam rationem valde sibi contraria ostendit, dum post resurrectionem suam corpus suum et incorruptibile et tamen palpabile demonstravit."

⁴ See Doedes l. c. p. 138 sq.

⁵ Lehrb. der chr. Glaubens. p. 440.

⁶ Commentar, Bd. II. p. 548. 3te Ausg.

⁷ Evangel. Kirchenzeitung, 1841, No. 66, col. 514.

This general view seems not to differ essentially from the preceding one, except in the single point of identity. In both, our Lord's resurrection-body is regarded as possessing like qualities and attributes; but in the former these are connected with a different substance, while in this they are superinduced upon the same substance. That is to say, in the second view our Lord's resurrection-body has a relation to his former human body; while according to the first view it has no such relation. Thus far, unquestionably, the second view is much more in accordance with the testimony of Scripture. But, like the other, it would seem to be founded upon inferences drawn from one class of events and circumstances, without a due consideration of other circumstances and declarations still more clear and express. For example; because Luke relates that, in the Saviour's interview with the disciples going to Emmaus, their eyes were holden so that they should not know him, and he at last vanished out of their sight; and because too Christ is said to have stood in the midst of the disciples the same evening, the doors being shut; it is argued that his body could no longer be identically the same as that in which he was crucified; since it was no longer subject to the same natural laws. But here the fact is overlooked, that our Lord himself directs his disciples to "handle" him and see for themselves that he has still his own human "flesh and bones;" and submits also to the still stronger and more convincing test demanded by Thomas, in order to prove to him and them that what they thus saw and felt was still the very body which had been crucified and laid in the sepulchre. And further, if, in the view of the disciples, the risen body of our Lord could truly of its own nature thus pass through solid doors in spite of bolts and bars, to what end were all the magnificent accessories of the resurrection-hour? Why the earthquake, and the angel descending from heaven to *roll away the stone*? According to this view, the stone could have presented no greater obstacle, than a closed door; and it is difficult to perceive, why the one should have been supernaturally removed more than the other. In respect to the doors, we shall see further on, that the language of John does not, in itself considered, necessarily imply any miraculous interposition.

It is also further argued, that we are forced of necessity to regard the body of the risen Lord as already glorified, in order to find in his resurrection that significancy and importance everywhere ascribed to it by the apostles. This argument, however,

as it seems to me, is drawn from a partial apprehension of this great subject. We must return to it in the sequel, and discuss it, as well as some other arguments, more fully, in the form of objections to the remaining view respecting our Lord's resurrection-body.

In respect to the idea of a gradual process of glorification going on in our Lord's risen body for forty days, it is enough perhaps to say, that there exists not the slightest warrant for it in any part of the Scriptures,—not the slightest hint, which, logically or philosophically, can be wrested to sustain such a position. It is an airy hypothesis, without foundations, without necessity, without utility; and as unsound in its philosophy, as it is without analogy in the providence and Word of God. It asserts of the body of our Lord, just what our Lord himself took pains to contradict; and what assuredly it never afterwards entered into the hearts of his disciples and apostles to conceive.¹

III. The third view, to which we now turn, regards the body with which Christ rose as being the same natural body of flesh and blood which had been taken down from the cross, and laid in the sepulchre. So taught in the fourth century Ephraem Syrus; Gregory of Nyssa, and Epiphanius;² in the fifth, Cyril of Alexandria,³ Jerome, and others. Jerome is particularly full upon this point; and returns to it in various places.⁴ In modern times, the same view has been strenuously maintained by Calvin⁵ and

¹ How Hengstenberg can affirm, as he does in his usual positive manner, that the reply of our Lord to Mary Magdalene, John 20: 17, contains "the certain proof" (den sichern Beweis) of this view, is more than I can explain. *Ev. K. Z.* 1841. No. 66. col. 522.

² Epiphanius taught that our Lord's resurrection comprehended ὅλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ σὺν τῇ ἐκασθραπύσει κ. τ. λ. *Haer.* 29.

³ Cyril of Alex. affirmed that Christ as risen was not γίνετον σάρκος, and denied that his body was πνευματικόν, τοῦτ' ἔστι λεπτομερές τε καὶ ἀσφύδες καὶ ἔραρον τι παρὰ τῆν σάρκα. *ad Joh.* 20.

⁴ Hieron. *Ep.* XXXVIII. *ad Pamnoch.* *Opp. ed. Martianay,* Tom. IV. ii. 323, "Quo modo veras manus et verum ostendit latus; ita vere comedit cum discipulis; vere ambulavit cum Cleopha; vere lingua loquutus est cum hominibus; vero accubitu discubuit in coena; veris manibus accepit panem, benedixit ac fregit et porrigebat illis. Quod autem ab oculis repente evanuit, virtus Dei est, non umbræ et phantasmatis." See also *ib.* col. 685; also *Index art. Christus*, last paragraph.

⁵ Calvin, *Comment. in Harmon. Evang. ed. Amst.* p. 334, in *Luc.* 24: 39, "Ac si diceret, Visus et tactus probabunt me esse verum hominem qui antehac vobiscum versatus sum; quia carne illa sum indutus quæ crucifixa fuit, et adhuc notas gestat." Also *Comm. in Joh.* 20: 19, 20. p. 177.

his followers; and more recently has been adopted among the Lutherans by Herder,¹ Neander,² Lücke,³ Tholuck,⁴ and many others.

Olshausen, who adopts the second view treated of above, remarks with not a little *naïveté*, that the view now under consideration "would never have been able to maintain itself for a moment, did not the testimony respecting the appearances of the risen Saviour seem to speak for its correctness."⁵ I cannot but think that this remark concedes the whole matter in question; for, as we have already seen, it is the *testimony* of the sacred writers alone, which can afford us any light. It is not our own experience, it is not science, that can make known to us the nature of our Lord's resurrection-body. It is only the testimony of those who were appointed to be witnesses of his resurrection, to which we can appeal and on which we can rely. What then was the experience of these chosen witnesses? what the impression made upon their minds? and what their testimony?

As these are points on which the whole inquiry turns, I shall be pardoned for presenting the several heads of evidence somewhat in detail.

1. Our Lord, towards the close of his ministry, had at various times foretold his sufferings and death to his disciples; and had declared to them, that he should rise again on the third day.⁶ The same rumour was bruited among the Jews; and led to the setting of a watch at the sepulchre.⁷ The disciples, indeed, understood not this at the time; nor fully, until after the resurrection. But so far as they did or could understand their Lord's declaration, at the time or afterwards, it could only be of the resurrection of the same identical human body that was laid in the sepulchre; just as they had seen Jesus, by the word of his power, call forth the young man at Nain from his bier, and Lazarus from his tomb. These examples were their only standard of comparison. And if on one occasion, as they first beheld Jesus after his resurrec-

¹ "Daher es wundersam und fast unbegreiflich ist, wie die spätere Zeit diese körperliche leibhafte Person, die sich handgreiflich als denselben Jesus von Nazaret zeigte, zu einem geistigen Phantasma habe machen wollen und machen dürfen." Von der Auferstehung u. s. w. III. 8. VI. 10.

² Leben Jesu, p. 710. 3te Ausg.

³ Commentar über Johannes, II. p. 683, 2te Ausg.

⁴ Commentar über Joh. 20: 19.

⁵ Commentar II. p. 549. 3te Ausg.

⁶ Matt. 16: 21. 17: 23. 20: 19. Mark 8: 31. 10: 34. Luke 9: 22. 18: 33. 24: 6, 7.

⁷ Matt. 27: 63.

tion they thought it was a "spirit;" this arose, not from doubt as to the nature of his risen body, but from doubt whether he, or at least his body, was risen at all.

2. The whole history of the descent of the angel and the rolling away of the stone from the door of the sepulchre, presupposes the fact, that the body which thus issued forth was the very same which three days before had been laid in the tomb. So the women understood it, when, after inquiring who should remove the stone, they came and saw that it was taken away, (and entering in found not the body of Jesus). So the angels understood it, when they declared to the women: "He is risen; he is not here; behold the place where they laid him."¹ So Peter and John understood it, when they ran to the sepulchre, and found the body gone and the linen clothes and the napkin lying orderly in their place. Then it was that John "believed." He began to remember the declaration of Jesus, that he should rise again on the third day; and he believed that he was now thus risen in the same body; which body had in this way disappeared from the tomb, and not by theft or violence.

3. After the women were departed from the sepulchre to tell the disciples, Jesus met them; and they came and *held him by the feet*, (*ἔκράτησαν αὐτοῦ τοὺς πόδας*).² They could have no doubt that the limbs, the body, which they thus touched and embraced, were the very same in which three days before they had seen and known the Lord.

4. When Mary Magdalene first recognized her risen Lord, she passed at once from the extreme of doubt and despair, to that of joy and triumphant faith; she beheld in him not merely her Saviour risen from the tomb, but her already glorified Redeemer, and as such hastened to do him homage and worship.³ This worship and this mode of apprehension Jesus rejected and reprobated, saying unto her, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father."⁴ By thus rejecting the idea of being already in a glorified state, he impliedly affirms the contrary; that is to say, that his body was still flesh and blood, as before.

5. The two disciples on their way to Emmaus, had no other impression as to the person who walked and talked with them, than that it was a human being of flesh and bones like all mankind. Their eyes indeed were holden, that they should not know

¹ Mark 16: 6.

² Matt. 28: 9.

³ See the preceding number of this work, p. 176.

⁴ John 20: 17. See the remarks on this passage No. V. p. 175 seq.

him; and were afterwards opened, so that they knew him; but all this implies a change in their own minds and powers, not in the body of Christ. And if we admit, as the language seems most naturally to imply, that a miraculous agency was exerted in the manner of his leaving them; still this no more evinces a previous change in the nature of his body, than does the analogous miracle of his walking upon the waters of the lake of Galilee.

6. We come now to the first appearance of Jesus to his assembled disciples on the evening after his resurrection; "the doors being shut," as John relates. I have elsewhere assigned the reasons, why, as it seems to me, we are not necessarily compelled by this language to consider the Lord's entrance as involving anything supernatural.¹ That the doors were "shut," does not itself imply that they were fastened; nor is the circumstance mentioned at all by Luke or Mark. The word which expresses our Lord's presence, is not *ἐπέστη*, the usual one in the case of angels; but in Luke it is *ἴστη* "he stood," and in John still more definitely, *ἦλθε καὶ ἴστη*, "he came and stood;" indicating nothing more than an ordinary mode of approach.—If, however, with Calvin and others, we choose to regard his entrance as a miracle; still nothing more is required than in the similar instance of Peter's deliverance out of prison, where "the iron gate opened of his own accord."² There is not in the language the slightest foundation for the idea, that Jesus entered through the closed doors or solid walls; or that his approach was like that ascribed to angels, and not like that of an ordinary human being.³

On the other hand, the disciples were surprised and astonished by the *unexpectedness* of their Lord's presence among them. They had seen him crucified and laid him in the sepulchre; they had missed his body from the tomb, and had heard the reports of the women that he was risen; but these they had looked upon as "idle tales." And now, when Jesus presented himself before their own eyes, "they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit"⁴ They believed not that it was their Lord thus risen from the dead; but thought it was a spirit, a phantasm, to delude them. What course did Jesus take to reäis-

¹ See above, No. V. p. 183.

² Acts 12: 10.

³ The language of Calvin on this point is very strong: "Sic habendum est, Christum non sine miraculo ingressum esse.—Interea tamen verum esse minime concedo quod asserunt Papistae, Christi corpus penetrasse per januas clausas.—Facessant pueriles, istas argutias, quae nihil prorsus habent solidi, et aecum trahunt multa deliria." Comm. in Joh. 20: 19. p. 177, ed. Amstel.

⁴ Luke 24: 37.

sure them? "Behold," he says, "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 when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet."¹ Here are two things asserted by our Lord, which he obviously intended his disciples should believe; *first*, that what they then saw, was not a spirit or phantasm; but, *secondly*, that it was his own very self, the same identical body of flesh and bones which they had before known. On what evidence did he assert this? He appealed to the testimony of their own senses: "Handle me and see;" and showed them his hands and his feet, which the nail-prints attested to be the same that had hung upon the cross. The position, therefore, which we here take, is impregnable, viz. that by this language and this exhibition it was our Lord's deliberate purpose, to persuade his disciples that he himself was before them in the same identical body which had been crucified and laid in the sepulchre.

Still they were not fully assured. "And while they yet believed not for joy," he called for food; "and he took, and did eat before them."² Here was another act belonging to the nature of the human body; but inconsistent with the idea of a spirit and of a glorified body. Our Lord thus ate before the disciples, in order to remove the last remaining shadow of doubt, that it was he himself in the same human body.—The attempt is sometimes made, to evade the force of this latter evidence, in two ways. Olshausen remarks, that "eating and drinking is here spoken of not as a matter of necessity; since the Saviour's only object was to convince those present of the reality of his body."³ I am unable to see, why this is not first to beg the question, and then to admit the validity of the opposing evidence. Again, it is said that the angels who appeared to Abraham (Gen. c. 18) ate and drank; and yet we can conceive of them only as without corporeal substance, as mere appearances presented to the eye.⁴ But the sacred narrative fully implies, that they came to Abraham as wayfarers; that he ran to meet them and brought water to wash their soiled feet; that he prepared a meal and stood by while they ate according to the forms of oriental hospitality. The men rose up and went on their way on foot towards Sodom; and Abraham went with them. Further, the angels who came to Lot at even-

¹ Luke 24: 39, 40.

² Luke 24: 41—43.

³ Comm. II. p. 550, 3te Aug. See also above p. 295.

⁴ Erscheinungsform; Olshausen, *ibid.*

ing, appear to have been two of the same; they ate and drank and lodged with him; and when Lot was pressed by the crowd without, they put forth their hands and pulled him into the house to them, and shut the door. All these circumstances show conclusively, that in this case the angels manifested themselves in real human forms of flesh and blood; and therefore eating and drinking were natural functions, just as in the case of our Lord. In both cases the exercise of this function proves the nature of the body; nor can we by any good logic first assume the superhuman nature of the body, and then reason as to the fallacy of the function.

7. The other disciples were convinced of the reality of the Lord's resurrection-body at their first interview with him. But Thomas was not present. He disbelieved their testimony, and demanded for himself a test, without which he refused to be convinced: "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."¹ This was obviously meant to be the strongest possible test as to the reality and identity of the Saviour's human body. It was intended to decide the question, whether he *was* actually risen from the dead, and in the same body of flesh and blood which had been crucified. Our Lord accords to Thomas this his own test, and in the moment of strong conviction and devoted faith, the abashed disciple exclaims: "My Lord and my God!"

8. On the shores of the lake of Galilee, where the Lord again showed himself to his disciples, he took bread and gave to them, and himself obviously partook with them.² Here was further convincing proof of the reality of his human body.

9. The apostle Peter, while discoursing in the house of Cornelius, affirms that God raised up Jesus of Nazareth the third day, "and showed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."³ Here the "eating and drinking" are presented as evidence of the reality of the resurrection of our Lord's human body; and they afford indeed the same evidence as in the parallel case of Lazarus, John 12: 2.

10. The disciples, like many other Jews, had expected that the Messiah would appear as a temporal Prince and Deliverer; and especially they had hoped that he would set the nation free

¹ John 20: 25 sq.

² John 21: 12, 13, 15.

³ Acts 10: 41.

from the yoke of Roman bondage. Thus the two on their way to Emmaus declare: "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel."¹ And again, just before the ascension, the assembled disciples inquire, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"² Must we not consider this language as implying, that they regarded their Lord as possessing after his resurrection the same character and the same body, as before?

11. An argument to the same effect may perhaps be derived from the following considerations. Our Lord was transfigured in the mount before Peter and James and John; they were "eye witnesses of his majesty;" and Moses and Elias in glorified forms appeared talking with him. Jesus charged them to tell no man of this vision, until after he should be risen from the dead.³ Now it is natural to suppose, if our Lord's resurrection-body bore any resemblance to that of his transfiguration, that either Peter or John when speaking of the former would have made some allusion to this remarkable event which took place before their own eyes. To a certain extent their silence in itself might be regarded as implying that no such resemblance could have existed. Here, however, taken thus in connection with all the other evidence, this implication is very greatly strengthened, and adds weight to the other considerations.

Such are the main points of evidence presented in the Scriptures respecting the nature of our Lord's resurrection-body. They seem to me to establish convincingly, and beyond gainsaying, two conclusions; *first*, that the disciples believed the body of their Lord after his resurrection to be the same identical body of human flesh and bones, which they had seen crucified and laid in the sepulchre; and *secondly*, that our Lord himself took special pains to impress this very belief upon their minds. Indeed, few facts or doctrines of the Gospel would seem to lie spread out more clearly upon pages of Holy Writ; or to be sustained by a greater amount of direct and positive testimony.

We may even go further and affirm, that we have here just as much and as strong evidence of the reality of our Lord's human body during these forty days after his resurrection, as we have during any other forty days of his whole life. Yea, more and stronger testimony; because our Lord himself here took special pains to bring forward and enforce this evidence; of which there is elsewhere no like example. And if, even supposing a miracle in

¹ Luke 24: 21.² Acts 1: 6.³ Matt. 17: 2 sq. etc. 2 Peter 1: 16.

both his departure at Emmaus and his entrance among his disciples at Jerusalem, it be averred that this goes to disprove the reality of his human body after his resurrection; then, much more do his walking upon the waters and his transfiguration on the mount, go to disprove the reality of his incarnation at any and every previous period of his life on earth.

To this general view it has sometimes been objected, that the same is inconsistent with the idea of our Lord's ascension; inasmuch as it is contrary to the laws of nature to suppose that a human body could thus be taken up into heaven.¹ Hence it is inferred, that since he can have ascended only in a glorified body, he therefore must have risen from the tomb in the same glorified body. But we have the strongest evidence, as above presented, that our Lord, so long as he was on earth, was in his human body; and the evidence is equally strong that he now dwells in heaven in a glorified body.² When did the change take place? The Scriptures indeed contain no express declaration upon this point; but they afford some analogies by which the inquiry may be satisfactorily answered. Elijah while on earth was in a mere human body; he was translated to heaven, and there exists, as is supposed, in a glorified body.³ Christians here on earth are subject to all the evils of their earthly tabernacle; yet those alive at our Lord's coming shall not die, but their vile body shall be changed, that it may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body.⁴ When are we to regard these changes as taking place? Paul answers this question in respect to Christians: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible; and we shall be changed;" and this is to take place when the dead being raised, we "shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."⁵ Here then the change takes place in the bodies of those Christians at the moment of their ascension; and such was doubtless the case in respect to Elijah. With these facts then, we may return to the case of our Lord; and on the ground of these strong analogies infer, not only the possibility, but also the more than probability, that his body assumed its glorified form in the act of his ascension.

¹ See Seiler's Programm in Velthusen Comment. Theol. VI. p. 513.

² Phil. 3: 21. Col. 3: 4. ³ 2 Kings 1: 11. Matt. 17: 2 sq.

⁴ Phil. 3: 21. ⁵ 1 Cor. 15: 51 sq. comp. 1 Thess. 4: 15—17.

Another more imposing objection to the view now under consideration has already been touched upon, and referred to this place.¹ It is said, that we are compelled to regard the body of the risen Lord as already glorified, in order to find in his resurrection that significancy and importance everywhere ascribed to it in the New Testament. If Jesus rose again in his mere human body, it is asked, how did his resurrection differ from that of Lazarus? and how could it be everywhere represented as his final triumph over death and the grave, and as the foundation of our faith and hope? Rather it is said, should then the *ascension* be regarded as this triumph and the foundation of our faith; and yet the apostles never speak of this except as a consequence of the resurrection, which is to them the one great and momentous fact.²

In replying to this objection, it might be sufficient to remark, that, so far as it presents any difficulty, it bears the character of a speculative conclusion set over against the clear and express testimony of those who were appointed to be eye-witnesses of the facts. The true method in such cases is, first to make ourselves acquainted with the facts; and then, if difficulties arise in our minds, to find such explanations of the facts as may, if possible, obviate these difficulties. Speculation must yield before facts. But in the way the present objection is brought forward, a contrary course is pursued; speculation is exalted above facts; and these are left to be frittered away before the "oppositions of science falsely so called."³

The objection assumes, that the resurrection, and that only, is everywhere spoken of by the sacred writers as the great and momentous fact, on which alone rest the faith and hopes of believers in respect to their own future reward and glory. But is this truly so? It is no doubt true, that in many instances the sacred writers do thus specify only the resurrection of our Lord. But does it follow that by this term so used they mean to imply nothing more than the naked fact of his rising from the tomb? Or do they also mean to include the glorious concomitants and consequences of that great fact, his ascension to heaven and his exaltation at the right hand of God, thus to be "Head over all things to the church?" The latter I must believe to be the case in most of the instances, if not in all. Thus in Acts 3: 15, 16 and 4: 10, the lame

¹ See above p. 297.

² Olshausen *Comm.* II. p. 548 sq. 3te Ausg. Compare Neander *Leben Jesu*, p. 727 3te Ausg.

³ 1 Tim. 6: 20.

man is said to have been healed by faith in the name of Christ, "whom God raised from the dead;" but it is immediately added in the latter passage, that this is the stone set at nought by the builders "which is become the head of the corner;" obviously implying the exaltation of the Saviour. In Acts 10: 40, 42 and 17: 31, in like manner, the mention of Christ's resurrection is coupled with the fact, that he is "ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." So too in Acts 13: 30, 33, his resurrection is illustrated by a reference to the declaration of the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Paul also speaks of him, in Rom. 1: 4, as "declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead;" which according to all analogy must include also the idea of his exaltation; since it was only in this state that his power was manifested. In the striking passage by the same apostle in 1 Cor. c. 15, where he dwells upon Christ's resurrection as the pledge and earnest of that of the saints, he goes on in vs. 23—25 to speak of him as reigning "till he hath put all things under his feet;" thus clearly showing that he meant more than the naked fact of the Lord's resuscitation to life, and nothing less than his exaltation at the right hand of God. I might go on to multiply citations of a like kind; but it is sufficient to refer to them in the margin.¹

If in this way it appears from the very passages in which the resurrection alone is mentioned, that the term is thus often used by synecdoche to express also the exaltation and glory which followed our Lord's resurrection; still more clearly is this shown by another class of passages, in which sometimes both the resurrection and exaltation are specified, and sometimes only the latter. Thus Peter, in his discourse after the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 32—36), speaks of Jesus, "whom God hath raised up," as being "by the right hand of God exalted," and so "made both Lord and Christ;" and it was the same Lord thus exalted, who had shed forth those sacred influences and gifts which the disciples had just received. The same connection of the two ideas occurs also, directly or indirectly, in Acts 5: 30, 31. Eph. 1: 20. 1 Thesa. 1: 10. 1 Pet. 1: 3, 4. 21: 3, 21, 22. Again, where the exaltation alone is specified, the idea of the resurrection is nevertheless included or implied; as Phil. 2: 8, 9, "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name

¹ Acts 3: 26. 4: 33. Rom. 4: 24, 25. 8: 11. 1 Cor. 6: 14. 2 Cor. 4: 14 coll. 10 seq. Phil. 3: 10. Col. 1: 18 coll. 16: 2, 12. 2 Tim. 2: 8 coll. 11 seq.

which is above every name."¹ This mode of statement is particularly prominent in the Epistle to the Hebrews; as Heb. 2: 9, 10, "We see Jesus—for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." Also Heb. 4: 14. 7: 26, 26. 8: 1. The assumption of the objector, therefore, that our Lord's resurrection only is everywhere spoken of as the foundation of the believer's hope, turns out to be unfounded; the ascension and exaltation of Christ being, if less frequently, yet not less prominently, everywhere brought into view.

Again, the objection assumes, that, if the resurrection of our Lord was merely the resuscitation of his former human body, there was nothing to distinguish it in character or importance from that of Lazarus; and that thus all force is taken away from the language of Paul in Rom. 6: 9: "Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." Was there then no difference in the two cases? Lazarus was raised to be a witness of the divine power of Christ on earth; Christ himself was raised that he might thus vanquish death and be exalted at the right hand of God. In the former case the whole object of the miracle was accomplished in the act itself, and Lazarus afterwards lived and died like any other mortal. In the latter, the resurrection of Jesus was but the beginning of an immortal state of power and majesty; and his abode of forty days on earth was, so to speak, simply a momentary transition-state between the grave and glory. In judging of Paul's language above cited, it must also be borne in mind, that the Apostle wrote at least five and twenty years after the resurrection and ascension of our Lord; and would therefore naturally have before his mind, not Jesus still on earth, but the Lord of glory and immortality in heaven, over whom death of course could have no more dominion. Or, even admitting that the Apostle did also include in his own mind the forty days on earth; is it necessary, when he thus declares that death had lost his power over Jesus, to suppose that this was caused by some change of corporeal organization? Might it not have been simply dependent on the will of God? When our Lord said of John: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee, the saying went abroad among the brethren that John should not die."² But did any of them suppose, that for this end any change had taken place, or would take place, in his physical organization? Did they not refer it directly and solely to the will of their Lord and Master?

¹ Comp. Phil. 3: 20, 21.

² John 21: 22, 23.

What difference is there then in the two cases? And why may we not assume, on the strength of this analogy, that Paul, in thus affirming as to Christ the further impotence of death, intended nothing more than to refer it solely to the divine will and purpose?

In regard to the general tenor of the preceding objection to the view under consideration, that it essentially detracts from the significance and importance of the great fact of our Lord's resurrection, it seems to me that it belongs not to us to sit in judgment upon the wisdom of the divine counsels; and then, because of the darkness of our own minds, to call in question what we cannot comprehend. It is enough for us to know the facts,—those facts which forced conviction upon the minds of the unwilling disciples; and which they have recorded with all the simplicity of their own belief, under the guidance of the Spirit of truth. Those simple facts we have endeavored to bring out and place in a clear light. In a calm review of them, may we not, to some extent at least, mark and comprehend the wisdom of God in the adaptation of the means to the end? What was the object of our Lord's sojourn of forty days on earth? He indeed held converse with his disciples; he gave them their commission to preach the gospel; but they were not endued with power from on high until after his ascension. His abode on earth was not necessary simply for that purpose in respect to them; any more than in the case of Paul. What then was the object? May we not find a satisfactory answer in considerations like the following. May we not regard it as in accordance with the divine plan and wisdom, that full and complete evidence of the great fact of Christ's resurrection and exaltation, his triumph over death and the grave,—evidence adapted to the constitution and feeble capacities of the human mind and to human experience,—should exist and be presented, first to his disciples, and through them to the world? Was not such evidence necessary, in order that men might believe on him as Lord and Christ; and so become assured of his power to save all who come unto him, and to bestow upon them a like reward of bliss and glory? What then was this appropriate evidence? The eleven apostles, who were appointed to be witnesses, were slow to believe. They had disbelieved the testimony of the women, and of the disciples returning from Emmaus. Suppose no further evidence of Christ's resurrection had ever been given; would the apostles have believed that he was risen? Would the world now have any valid ground

of belief? But the Lord afforded further proof. He presented himself to the eyes of his amazed disciples; and they thought it was a spirit. Suppose the Lord had left them in this belief; should we now have any good evidence of his resurrection? He did not thus leave them; but appealed to the evidence of their own senses,—to the visible, tangible, palpable evidence before them,—that it was he himself in his own body of flesh and bones. Here was evidence which they could not gainsay nor resist; and yet they doubted until he ate before them. The same evidence in a more striking and convincing form, was repeated to them in the presence of Thomas. They believed, that it was their Lord indeed, who was thus risen in his own body from the dead; and they beheld him afterwards ascend to his heavenly glory. Not a doubt remained upon their minds; and they, the appointed witnesses, have so recorded their own convictions, that no one who reads can doubt the truth and conscientiousness of their testimony. Would they, or could they, according to the constitution of the human mind, have received the same unwavering convictions, and borne the same convincing testimony, had our Lord not presented himself to them in his own human body? In other words, would the chain of evidence, in any other way, have been as full and complete?—If these remarks are well founded, we see at once a momentous and sufficient object and motive, why the Saviour should have remained on earth for forty days in his human body. And this being shown, the objection raised against the significancy of this mode of our Lord's resurrection, falls to the ground.

It may be said, and it sometimes is said, that Paul brings forward his own vision of the glorified Saviour as evidence of the Lord's resurrection; and that therefore we must regard this species of proof as being in itself just as valid and convincing as any other. This statement seems to me to overlook the facts of the case. The other apostles testify to their having seen and, at the behest of their Lord, handled his real and veritable body of flesh and bones, as raised again from the dead, after they had seen him crucified and laid in the tomb. Paul testifies that several years afterwards he saw the glorified Redeemer, who gave him an express commission to be an apostle to the Gentiles. This vision was to him a confirmation of the testimony of the witnesses to the Lord's resurrection; and he presents it to others in the

¹ 1 Cor. 15: 8.

same light. Paul was not and does not claim to have been, a witness of our Lord's resurrection; Matthias had long before been selected for that office. Indeed, had we only the isolated evidence afforded by Paul's vision, what valid ground should we have for believing that Christ rose at all from the tomb? Paul did not see the body laid in the sepulchre; he did not see nor know the Lord during his forty days on earth; he saw him only in glory. Did his testimony stand alone, an isolated vision unsupported by the array of other and stronger evidence, I see not wherein it would much differ in kind from the alleged evidence of the Korân.

The resurrection of our Lord is often brought forward by the sacred writers as the pledge and pattern of the future resurrection of the saints to glory.¹ On this ground an objection is sometimes taken to that view, which we have been considering. The saints, it is said, are everywhere represented as being raised at once in their glorified bodies; and if this be so, then our Lord, their pattern, must also have been so raised from the dead. If this objection have any force, it applies obviously and directly to the fact of the Lord's forty days' manifestation upon earth; and only indirectly or not at all to the nature of his resurrection-body. The Saviour, when he rose, had a mission to fulfil on earth; he rose in his human body, fulfilled this mission, and assumed a glorified body in his ascension to heaven. The saints have no such future mission upon earth; the moment of their resurrection and ascension is one and the same; and in this moment their bodies also are to be glorified. The promise and their hope is, not that they shall rise in the same manner in all respects as the Lord rose; but that as he was raised up and entered into his glory, so they too shall rise and enter into the same glory.

With the main subject of this discussion is closely connected another inquiry, which has of late been again brought into notice, viz. Whether our Lord ascended more than once into heaven? Such an opinion was maintained in the beginning of the last century by W. Whiston, the Socinian;² was repeated doubtfully by Kaiser of Erlangen five and twenty years ago;³ and has recently been advanced, as if wholly new, by Kinkel, a private teacher at

¹ See espec. 1 Cor. c. 15.

² *Sermons and Essays*, Lond. 1709, p. 156 sq. Replied to by J. SCHMID, *Diss. Theol. Whistoni, multiplicam Christi in coelos ascensionem propugnanti, opposita*. Lips. 1712.

³ *Monogrammata theol. Christ. dogmat.* Erlang. 1819, p. 147.

the University of Bonn, in an article in the *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*,¹ translated and published in the *Bibliotheca Sacra and Theological Review* for Feb. 1844.² This whole hypothesis of repeated ascensions, as stated by Kinkel, rests on two propositions; *first*, "that the notices which the New Testament furnishes on the ascension of Christ, in respect to the time, place, and circumstances are wholly inconsistent with each other;" and *secondly*, "that Christ's glorification, and consequently the ascension, must have taken place immediately after the resurrection."³ If the discussions of the present Article, and of that in the last Number of this work, upon the resurrection and ascension of Christ, are worth anything, both these propositions are shown to be without foundation; and of course the hypothesis of several ascensions built upon them, falls of itself. And further, the very language of Peter in Acts 1: 22, necessarily implies that there was but a single ascension: "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." That *same day* is but a single day; or, if not, what day is meant?—It is also somewhat remarkable that Kinkel, if he wrote in sober earnest, should have omitted all notice of our Lord's appearance to the women, who embrace his feet; and also of his appearance to the assembled disciples, both in the absence and presence of Thomas, when Jesus gives them convincing proofs of the reality of his human body. It is easy to maintain any and every opinion or theory, if we may thus leave out of view all opposing evidence.

My task is ended. But there is one inference from this whole discussion, so solemn and momentous, that I cannot forbear to present it, and to press it upon the attention of the reader. I would not charge this inference upon those pure and holy men in every age, who may have held a different view; for they did not carry out in their own minds the consequences of their speculations. I have already stated the two conclusions which follow irresistibly from the facts recorded by the chosen witnesses of our Lord's resurrection; *first*, that the disciples believed the body of their Lord after his resurrection to be the same identical

¹ Theol. Stud. u. Krit. 1841. Heft 3.

² The only reply I have seen to the article of Kinkel is by the Pastor Koerner in the *Biblischen Studien von Geistlichen des Königr. Sachsen*, 1str. Jahrg. 1842, p. 161 sq.

³ *Biblioth. Sacra and Theol. Review*, Feb. 1844, p. 155, 162.

body of flesh and bones, which they had seen crucified and laid in the sepulchre; and *secondly*, that our Lord himself took special pains to impress this very belief upon their minds.¹ No candid inquirer can call in question the completeness of the evidence on these two points. If then our Lord was not thus in his human body, it follows that he took special pains to deceive his disciples, and that they were actually deceived. This then is the tremendous result;—I shudder while I write;—our holy and blessed Redeemer was a deceiver; the holy apostles were false witnesses of God; and our holy religion, the sacred fabric of Christianity, with all its blessed and wide-spread influences, is the most stupendous delusion the world ever saw. From such a consummation may God deliver us!

ARTICLE V.

SOUTH'S SERMONS.

Sermons preached upon several occasions. By Robert South, D. D. Prebendary of Westminster, and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford. A New Edition, in Four Volumes.—Philadelphia: 1844.

By Leonard Withington, Newbury, Mass.

THERE cannot be a greater proof of the triumph of genius over all its obstacles than the republication of these Sermons, in this country, one century and more than three quarters of another after their delivery; this bitter, this sarcastic, this snarly churchman, who never spared his foes and was dreaded even by his friends, here appears in this land of the Puritans, with all his abominations on his head. We, Dissenters, have every reason to hate him; and the heart sometimes influences the taste; and makes us slow to admire the abilities which we find it impossible to love. But Dryden has remarked, that, "if a poem have genius it will force its own reception in the world. For there's a sweetness in good verse which tickles while it hurts; and no man can be heartily angry with him, who pleases him against his

¹ See p. 304 above.