

The Resurrection.

BY MRS. M. M. TURNER.

Thoughts suggested by passages in the Rev. Lyman Abbott's article, published in the News, of Dallas, Texas, upon the resurrection, and giving his reasons for believing that it is "perhaps the best attested fact in ancient history".

Mr. Abbott, speaking of the resurrection, says: "In the general belief in a phenomenon transcending experience there is nothing more inconsistent with evolution than in the belief in the separation of the child from the mother at birth, or the belief that the grub issues at a certain stage of its existence from its sub-aqueous existence and enters upon a new existence as a dragon fly."

The child announces its separation from its mother by a cry; it is generally a solid bit of humanity, visible, tangible and can be weighed; all of our senses can have cognizance of it. The dragon fly has passed from one condition of physical life to another, without the cessation of the existence of any part. The same organs are present, eyes, mouth and stomach. The creature "enters upon a new experience", a visible, active being, and is supposed to be an enemy to mosquitoes. I can see no analogy between these well known and well attested existences and the soul of man.

Ecclesiastes iii. 21: "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?"

Who has ever seen a soul? It is an invisible, intangible, impalpable, undemonstrated something supposed to ooze slowly from the dying body and linger around until the last breath, or to hold itself together until the last breath, when it disentangles itself from the nerves and muscles and issues forth in the shape of the deceased to escape into outer space through walls, ceilings, through closed doors and windows, or with the draught up the chimney. The eyes it saw with, the brain which controlled all its physical activities, every part of the body which the mind of man can be conscious of, is dead and will "know no resurrection save in grass and flowers". Had the grub died a physical death as the human being did, there would have been no dragon fly.

The child and dragon fly are not phenomena transcending experience. They obey the laws of nature which sustain the theory of evolution; but evolution and science offer no proof of a soul. No soul has ever yet submitted itself to scientific investigation. W. K. Clifford says, "It is wrong always, everywhere, and for everyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence."

Mr. Abbott claims that, "There is at death an end of the body. It knows no resurrection save in grass and flowers. The resurrection, the

anastasis or up-standing, as the New Testament calls it, is the resurrection of the spirit. The phrase 'resurrection of the body' never occurs in the New Testament. The Christian who holds this view of death and resurrection believes that that occurred to Jesus Christ which occurs to all of God's children at death; the spirit was separated from the body to exist in itself. . . . but it appears to me not at all incredible that either the spirit should have returned to reanimate the body or that it should have given visible evidence of itself as disembodied."

Does it not seem that so great a teacher and preacher as Mr. Abbott is should, in a matter of such vast importance, and in which the teachings of other denominations are involved, make up his mind as to whether the spirit of Christ "returned to reanimate the body", or whether it gave "visible evidence of itself as disembodied"? Would it not make things easier and more harmonious to have one or the other theory proved?

According to St. Luke, the risen Christ himself denied that he was a spirit. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. . . . Have ye here any meat? They gave him a piece of broiled fish and of an honey-comb, and he took it and did eat before them."

The 4th of the 39 articles of the Episcopal church says: "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature; wherewith he ascended into heaven and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day." Founded on this, the creed says, "I believe in the resurrection of the body."

Each of the gospel writers report that Jesus told his disciples that he would rise again. That he had done so was understood by the chief priests and pharisees. According to Matthew, they went to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.'" According to the same authority, the angel at the sepulchre said to the two Marys, "He is risen, as he said." St. Mark puts it that the angel said to the women, "But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you." St. Luke says that the angel said, "He is not here, but risen. Remember what he said to you when he was yet in Galilee." St. John tells about destroying the temple and raising it up in three days, but in chapter 20, verse 9, he says, "For as yet they knew not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead."

This last statement of St. John's must be the most truthful one. Not

knowing of the promised resurrection, or not believing in it, the two women went to the tomb early in the morning with "sweet spices that they might come and anoint him". The disciples were not looking for the resurrection and did not believe it when they heard it. Even when the eleven went to the mountain in Galilee by appointment, "some doubted".

Now, when Science, with her torch of proved and provable knowledge, is flooding the world with a holy light, we are called upon to believe in the violation of the sublime, uniform and changeless laws of the universe, even though those who lived at the time, witnessed the miracles, walked, talked and communed with the Christ through the three years of his ministration, did not believe. "Some doubted." Theologians hold the threat of hell and damnation over the doubters of today, and that in the face of the fact that the gospel writers differ generally in their reports, and very often on most vital points, which would not be the case if the reports were based on truth, even though they were written a hundred or more years after the transaction.

At the death of Christ the "vail of the temple" is said to have been "rent in twain from top to bottom". The earth quaked and the rocks were rent. "There was darkness over the earth from the sixth hour to the ninth" (no eclipse ever lasted so long). The graves opened and the bodies of "many of the saints which slept" sat up, "and came out of the graves after his resurrection". On that morning there was another earthquake. That such stupendous, bewildering, astonishing events, occurring in the space of time between the day before the sabbath and the morning of the first day of the week, have not been mentioned in any of the histories of the time (outside of the gospels, and these not agreeing with each other) is proof that the gospel stories are mostly fabrication.

The Greek and Roman religions had induced a mythological inheritance and environment, which the gospel writers did not object to, while they had learned to discredit the many gods of the Greeks and Romans. Speaking of these gods, W. K. Clifford says: "When we reflect what criminal deities were worshipped all over the empire, we cannot but wonder that any good people were left; that man could still be holy, although every god was vile."

The Greek and Roman mythology is written in starry characters all over the sky. The only gods we can all know of in the heavens are Mars, Jupiter and Saturn.

The promise of a redeemer had been standing over 1900 years. If the bloody, typical scriptures had been kept up all that time it is not

to be wondered at that some of the more advanced minds were desirous of forcing conclusions in the interest of purifying the social life, by bringing the long-promised redeemer to the birth, fitting an ancient eastern savior myth, by strain and force, upon Old Testament passages, "that the gospel might be fulfilled".

W. K. Clifford says: "The followers of the Buddha have at least as much right to appeal to individual and social experience in support of the authority of the eastern savior. . . . And surely no triumph of social morality can be greater than that which has kept nearly half of the human race from persecuting in the name of religion."

The garments of the Christian religion are dyed crimson red with the "blood of the souls of the poor innocent".

In fact the story of the resurrection and ascension are without any reliable authority. Science asserts that gravity, which pervades the universe with resistless and changeless energy, never lost its hold upon a body of "flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature", so that it could leave the earth, pass beyond the clouds into the cold and dark of outer space.

Where is God?

BY D. PRIESTLEY.

The Methodist preacher in Newberg delivered a series of discourses, a short time ago, on theologico-scientific subjects. On Sunday evening, the 20th ult., he delivered a discourse on the subject, "Where is God?" I supposed he was going to try to prove the existence of God, but he didn't. He started in by affirming that "All our reasoning is from assumptions. The existence of man is an assumption. No man can prove his own existence. The existence of God is an assumption."

There are two ways of attempting to elucidate the question of God's existence. The first is to try to make this most abstruse of all problems appear as a mere truism—Paley's watch argument; the other is to obscure everything in the universe so as to show that while the existence of God cannot be proved, it is also impossible to prove anything else.

This last is the cuttle-fish method. He squirts dye-stuff through the water, when he sees an enemy coming, so he can escape in the darkness and obscurity of his own creation.

The man who affirms his own existence to be an assumption is a twin brother to the man who "talks through his hat". He is compelled to use two pronouns referring to himself before he gets to the assumption. To make an assumption is to think. That, I think, proves