

it its proper place, and put them all exactly in the same figure and order they were before. And can we think that the Almighty Builder of the world, whose workmanship we are, does not know whereof we are made, or is not acquainted with the several parts of which this earthly tabernacle is composed? All these lay in one vast heap at the creation, till he separated them one from another, and framed them into those distinct bodies, whereof this beautiful world consists. And why not may the same power collect the ruins of our corrupted bodies, and restore them to their former condition? All the parts into which men's bodies are dissolved, however they seem to us carelessly scattered over the face of the earth, are yet carefully laid up by God's wise disposal till the day of the restoration of all things. They are preserved in the waters and fires, in the birds and beasts, till the last trumpet shall summon them to their former habitation.

But, say they, "It may sometimes happen that several men's bodies may consist of the self same matter. For the bodies of men are often devoured by other animals, which are eaten by other men. Nay, there are nations which feed upon human flesh, consequently they borrow a great part of their bodies from other men. And if that which was part of one man's body becomes afterwards part of another man's, how can both rise at the last day with the same bodies they had before?" To this it may easily be replied, that a very small part of what is eaten turns to nourishment, the far greater part goes away according to the order of nature. So that it is not at all impossible for God, who watches over and governs all this, so to order things, that what is part of one man's body, though eaten by another, shall never turn to his nourishment, or if it does, that it shall wear off again, and some time before his death be separated from him, so that it may remain in a capacity of being restored at the last day to its former owner.

2. God can form this dust, so gathered together, into the same body it was before. And it is possible all must own, who believe that God made Adam out of the dust of the earth. Therefore the bodies of men being dust after death, it is no other than it was before; and the same power that at the first made it of dust, may as easily remake it when it is turned into dust again. Nay, it is no more wonderful than the forming of a human body in the womb, which is a thing we have daily experience of, and is doubtless as strange an instance of divine power as the resurrection of it can possibly be. And were it not so common a thing, we should be as hardly brought to think it possible, that such a beautiful fabric as the body of man is, with nerves, and bones, and flesh, and veins, and blood and the several other parts whereof it consists, should be formed, as we know it is, as now we are, that hereafter it should be rebuilt when it has been crumbled into dust. Had we only heard of the wonderful production of the bodies of men, we should have been as ready to ask, How are men made, and with what bodies are they born? as now, when we hear of the resurrection, How are the dead raised up, and with what bodies do they come?

3. When God hath raised this body, he can enliven it with the same soul that inhabited it before. And this we cannot pretend to say is impossible to be done, for it has been done already. Our Saviour himself was dead, rose again, and appeared alive to His disciples and others, who had lived with Him many years, and were then fully convinced, that He was the same person they had seen die upon the cross.

Thus have I shown, that the resurrection of the same body is by no means impossible to God. That what He hath promised He is able also to perform, by that "mighty power by which he is able to subdue all things to Himself." Though therefore, we cannot exactly tell the manner how it shall be done, yet this ought not in the least weaken our belief of this important article of our faith. It is enough, that He to whom all things are possible, hath passed His word, that He will raise us again. Let those who presume to mock at the glorious hope of all good men, and are constantly raising objections against it, first try their skill upon the various appearances of nature. Let them explain everything which they see happen in this world, before they talk of the difficulties of explaining the resurrection. Can they tell me how their own bodies were fashioned, and curiously wrought? Can they give me a plain account, by what orderly steps this glorious stately structure, which discovers so much workmanship and rare contrivance, was at first created? How was the first drop of blood made, and how came the heart and veins, and arteries to receive it? Of what, and by what means, were the nerves and fibres made? What fixed the little springs in their due places, and fitted them for the several uses for which they now serve? How was the brain distinguished from the other parts of the body and filled with spirits to move and animate the whole? How came the body to be fenced with bones and sinews, to be clothed with skin and flesh, distinguished into various muscles? Let them but answer these few questions about the mechanism of our own bodies, and I will answer all the difficulties concerning the resurrection of them. But if they cannot do this without having recourse to the infinite power and wisdom of the First Cause, let them know, that the same power and wisdom can reanimate it, after it is turned into dust. And that there is no reason for our doubting concerning the thing, because there are some circumstances belonging to it which we cannot perfectly comprehend, or give a distinct account of.

2. I now proceed to the second thing I proposed, which was, to describe the difference the Scripture makes between the qualities of a mortal, and of a glorified body.

The change which shall be made in our bodies at the resurrection, according to the Scripture account, will consist chiefly in these four things: 1. That our bodies shall be raised immortal and incorruptible. 2. That they shall be raised in glory. 3. That they shall be raised in power. 4. That they shall be raised spiritual bodies.

1. The body that we shall have at the resurrection shall be immortal and incorruptible: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Now these words immortal and incorruptible not only signify that we shall die no more; for in that sense the damned are immortal and incorruptible; but that we shall be perfectly free from all the bodily evils which sin brought into the world. That our bodies shall not be subject to sickness, or pain, or any other inconveniences we are daily exposed to. This the Scripture calls "the redemption of our bodies;" the freeing of them from all our maladies. Were we to receive them again subject to all the frailties and miseries which we are forced to wrestle with, I much doubt whether a wise man, were he left to his choice, would willingly take his again—whether he would not choose to let his still lie rotting in the grave, rather than be again chained to such a cumbersome clod of

earth. Such a resurrection would be, as a wise heathen calls it, "A resurrection to another sleep." It would look more like a redemption to death again, than a resurrection to life.

The best thing we can say of this house of earth, is, That it is a ruinous building, and will not be long before it tumbles into dust; that it is not our home; we look for another house, eternal in the heavens. That we shall not always be confined here, but that in a little time we shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, from this burden of flesh, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. What frail things these bodies of ours are! How soon are they disordered? To what a troop of diseases, pains and other infirmities are they constantly subject! And how does the least distemper disturb our minds, and make life itself a burden! Of how many parts do our bodies consist! And if one of these be disordered, the whole man suffers. If but one of these slender threads, whereof our flesh is made up, be stretched beyond its due proportion, or fretted by any sharp humour, or broken, what torment does it create? Nay, when our bodies are at the best, what pains do we take to answer their necessities, to provide for their sustenance, to preserve them in health, and to keep them tenantable, in some tolerable fitness for our soul's use! And what time we can spare from our labor is taken up in rest, and refreshing our jaded bodies and fitting them for work again. How are we forced, even naturally, into the confines of death; even to cease to be—at least to pass so many hours without any useful or reasonable thoughts, merely to keep them in repair! But our hope and comfort are, that we shall shortly be delivered from this burthen of flesh. When "God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Oh, when shall we arrive at that happy land where no complaints were ever heard, where we shall all enjoy uninterrupted health both of body and mind, and never more be exposed to any of those inconveniences that disturb our present pilgrimage! When we shall have once passed from death unto life, we shall be eased of all the troublesome care of our bodies, which now takes up so much of our time and thoughts. We shall be set free from all those mean and tiresome labors which we must now undergo to support our lives. Yon robes of light, with which we shall be clothed at the resurrection of the just, will not stand in need of those careful provisions which it is so troublesome to us here either to procure, or to be without. But then, as our Lord tells us, "Those who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more, but they are equal to the angels." Their bodies are neither subject to disease, nor want that daily sustenance, which these mortal bodies cannot do without. "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God will destroy both it and them." This is that perfect happiness which all good men shall enjoy in the other world. A mind free from all trouble and guilt, in a body free from all pains and diseases. Thus our mortal bodies shall be raised immortal. They shall not only be always preserved from death, (for so these might be, if God pleased), but the nature of them shall be wholly changed, so that they shall not retain the same seeds of mortality; they cannot die any more. (Continued in next issue.)

Class pictures, class registers and certificates of membership all stimulate interest in the Sunday school class.