A

CRITICAL HISTORY

OF THE

DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

WITH A

Complete Bibliography of the Subject.

WILLIAM ROUNSEVILLE ALGER.

One question, more than others all,
From thoughtful minds implores reply:
It is, as breathed from star and pall,
What fate awaits us when we die?

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PREFACE.

WHO follows truth carries his star in his brain. Even so bold a thought is no inappropriate motto for an intellectual workman, if his heart be filled with loyalty to God, the Author of truth and the Maker of stars. In this double spirit of independence and submission it has been my desire to perform the arduous task now finished and offered to the charitable judgment of the reader. One may be courageous to handle both the traditions and the novelties of men, and yet be modest before the solemn mysteries of fate and nature. He may place no veil before his eyes and no finger on his lips in presence of popular dogmas, and yet shrink from the conceit of esteeming his mind a mirror of the universe. Ideas, like coins, bear the stamp of the age and brain they were struck in. Many a phantom which ought to have vanished at the first cock-crowing of reason still holds its seat on the oppressed heart of faith before the terror-stricken eyes of the multitude. Every thoughtful scholar who loves his fellow-men must feel it an obligation to do what he can to remove painful superstitions, and to spread the peace of a cheerful faith and the wholesome light of truth. The *theories* in theological systems being but philosophy, why should they not be freely subjected to philosophical criticism? I have endeavored, without virulence, arrogance, or irreverence towards any thing sacred, to investigate the various doctrines pertaining to the great subject treated in these pages. Many persons, of course, will find statements from which they dissent,—sentiments disagreeable to them. But, where thought and discussion are so free and the press so accessible as with us, no one but a bigot will esteem this a ground of complaint. May all such passages be charitably perused, fairly weighed, and, if unsound, honorably refuted! If the work be not animated with a mean or false spirit, but be catholic and kindly,—if it be not superficial and

pretentious, but be marked by patience and thoroughness,—is it too much to hope that no critic will assail it with wholesale condemnation simply because in some parts of it there are opinions which he dislikes? One dispassionate argument is more valuable than a shower of missile names. The most vehement revulsion from a doctrine is not inconsistent, in a Christian mind, with the sweetest kindness of feeling towards the persons who hold that doctrine. Earnest theological debate may be carried on without the slightest touch of ungenerous personality. Who but must feel the pathos and admire the charity of these eloquent words of Henry Giles?—

"Every deep and reflective nature looking intently 'before and after,' looking above, around, beneath, and finding silence and mystery to all his questionings of the Infinite, cannot but conceive of existence as a boundless problem, perhaps an inevitable darkness between the limitations of man and the incomprehensibility of God. A nature that so reflects, that carries into this sublime and boundless obscurity 'the large discourse of Reason,' will not narrow its concern in the solution of the problem to its own petty safety, but will brood over it with an anxiety which throbs for the whole of humanity. Such a nature must needs be serious; but never will it be arrogant: it will regard all men with an embracing pity. Strange it should ever be otherwise in respect to inquiries which belong to infinite relations,—that mean enmities, bitter hatreds, should come into play in these fathomless searchings of the soul! Bring what solution we may to this problem of measureless alternatives, whether by Reason, Scripture, or the Church, faith will never stand for fact, nor the firmest confidence for actual consciousness. The man of great and thoughtful nature, therefore, who grapples in real earnest with this problem, however satisfied he may be with his own solution of it, however implicit may be his trust, however assured his convictions, will yet often bow down before the awful veil that shrouds the endless future, put his finger on his lips, and weep in silence."

The present work is, in a sense, an epitome of the thought of mankind on the destiny of man. I have striven to add value to it by *comprehensiveness of plan*,—not confining myself, as most of my predecessors have confined themselves, to one province or a few narrow provinces of the subject, but including the entire subject in one volume; by *carefulness of arrangement*,—not piling the material together or presenting it in a chaos of facts and dreams, but group-

ing it all in its proper relations; by *clearness of explanation*,—not leaving the curious problems presented wholly in the dark with a mere statement of them, but as far as possible tracing the phenomena to their origin and unveiling their purport; by *poetic life of treatment*,—not handling the different topics dryly and coldly, but infusing warmth and color into them; by *copiousness of information*,—not leaving the reader to hunt up every thing for himself, but referring him to the best sources for the facts, reasonings, and hints which he may wish; and by *persevering patience of toil*,—not hastily skimming here and there and hurrying the task off, but searching and re-searching in every available direction, examining and re-examining each mooted point, by the devotion of twelve years of anxious labor. How far my efforts in these particulars have been successful is submitted to the public.

To avoid the appearance of pedantry in the multiplication of foot-notes, I have inserted many authorities incidentally in the text itself, and have omitted all except such as I thought would be desired by the reader. Every scholar knows how easy it is to increase the number of references almost indefinitely, and also how deceptive such an ostensible evidence of wide reading may be.

When the printing of this volume was nearly completed, and I had in some instances made more references than may now seem needful, the thought occurred to me that a full list of the books published up to the present time on the subject of a future life, arranged according to their definite topics and in chronological order, would greatly enrich the work and could not fail often to be of vast service. Accordingly, upon solicitation, a valued friend—Mr. Ezra Abbot, Jr., a gentleman remarkable for his varied and accurate scholarship—undertook that laborious task for me; and he has accomplished it in the most admirable manner. No reader, however learned, but may find much important information in the bibliographical appendix which I am thus enabled to add to this volume. Every student who henceforth wishes to investigate any branch of the historical or philosophical doctrine of the immortality of the soul, or of a future life in general, may thank Mr. Abbot for an invaluable aid.

As I now close this long labor and send forth the result, the oppressive sense of responsibility which fills me is relieved by the consciousness that I have herein written nothing as a bigoted

partisan, nothing in a petty spirit of opinionativeness, but have intended every thought for the furtherance of truth, the honor of God, the good of man.

The majestic theme of our immortality allures yet baffles us. No fleshly implement of logic or cunning tact of brain can reach to the solution. That secret lies in a tissueless realm whereof no nerve can report beforehand. We must wait a little. Soon we shall grope and guess no more, but grasp and know. Meanwhile, shall we not be magnanimous to forgive and help, diligent to study and achieve, trustful and content to abide the invisible issue? In some happier age, when the human race shall have forgotten, in philanthropic ministries and spiritual worship, the bigotries and dissensions of sentiment and thought, they may recover, in its all-embracing unity, that garment of truth which God made originally "seamless as the firmament," now for so long a time torn in shreds by hating schismatics. Oh, when shall we learn that a loving pity, a filial faith, a patient modesty, best become us and fit our state? The pedantic sciolist, prating of his clear explanations of the mysteries of life, is as far from feeling the truth of the case as an ape, seated on the starry summit of the dome of night, chattering with glee over the awful prospect of infinitude. What ordinary tongue shall dare to vociferate egotistic dogmatisms where an inspired apostle whispers, with reverential reserve, "We see through a glass darkly"? There are three things, said an old monkish chronicler, which often make me sad. First, that I know I must die; second, that I know not when; third, that I am ignorant where I shall then be.

> "Est primum durum quod scio me moriturum:
> Secundum, timeo quia hoc nescio quando:
> Hinc tertium, flebo quod nescio ubi manebo."

Man is the lonely and sublime Columbus of the creation, who, wandering on this cloudy strand of time, sees drifted waifs and strange portents borne far from an unknown somewhere, causing him to believe in another world. Comes not death as a means to bear him thither? Accordingly as hope rests in heaven, fear shudders at hell, or doubt faces the dark transition, the future life is a sweet reliance, a terrible certainty, or a pathetic perhaps. But living in the present in the humble and loving discharge of its duties, our souls harmonized with its conditions though aspiring beyond them, why should we ever despair or be troubled overmuch? Have we not eternity in our thought, infinitude in our view, and God for our guide?

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PART FIRST.

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL INTRODUCTORY VIEWS.

CHAPTER I.

THEORIES OF THE SOUL'S ORIGIN.

Pausing, in a thoughtful hour, on that mount of observation whence the whole prospect of life is visible, what a solemn vision greets us! We see the vast procession of existence flitting across the landscape, from the shrouded ocean of birth, over the illuminated continent of experience, to the shrouded ocean of death. Who can linger there and listen, unmoved, to the sublime lament of things that die? Although the great exhibition below endures, yet it is made up of changes, and the spectators shift as often. Each rank of the host, as it advances from the mists of its commencing career, wears a smile caught from the morning light of hope, but, as it draws near to the fatal bourne, takes on a mournful cast from the shadows of the unknown realm. The places we occupy were not vacant before we came, and will not be deserted when we go, but are forever filling and emptying afresh.

> "Still to every draught of vital breath
> Renew'd throughout the bounds of earth and ocean,
> The melancholy gates of death
> Respond with sympathetic motion."

We appear,—there is a short flutter of joys and pains, a bright glimmer of smiles and tears,—and we are gone. But whence did we come? And whither do we go? Can human thought divine the answer?

It adds no little solemnity and pathos to these reflections to remember that every considerate person in the unnumbered successions that have preceded us, has, in his turn, confronted the same facts, engaged in the same inquiry, and been swept from his attempts at a theoretic solution of the problem into the real solution itself, while the constant refrain in the song of existence sounded behind him, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever."

The evanescent phenomena, the tragic plot and scenery of human birth, action, and death, conceived on the scale of reality, clothed in

> "The sober coloring taken from an eye
> That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality,"

and viewed in a susceptible spirit, are, indeed, overwhelmingly impressive. They invoke the intellect to its most piercing thoughts. They swell the heart to its utmost capacity of emotion. They bring us upon the bended knees of wonder and prayer.

> "Between two worlds life hovers, like a star
> 'Twixt night and morn upon the horizon's verge.
> How little do we know that which we are!
> How less what we may be! The eternal surge
> Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
> Our bubbles: as the old burst, new emerge,
> Lash'd from the foam of ages: while the graves
> Of empires heave but like some passing waves."

Widely regarding the history of human life from the beginning, what a visionary spectacle it is! How miraculously permanent in the whole! how sorrowfully ephemeral in the parts! What pathetic sentiments it awakens! Amidst what awful mysteries it hangs!

The subject of the derivation of the soul has been copiously discussed by hundreds of philosophers, physicians, and poets, from Vyasa to Des Cartes, from Galen to Ennemoser, from Orpheus to Henry More, from Aristotle to Frohschammer. German literature during the last hundred years has teemed with works treating of this question from various points of view. The present chapter will present a sketch of these various speculations concerning the commencement and fortunes of man ere his appearance on the stage of this world.

The first theory to account for the origin of souls is that of *emanation*. This is the analogical theory, constructed from the results of sensible observation. There is, it says, one infinite Being, and all finite spirits are portions of his substance, existing a while as separate individuals, and then reassimilated into the general soul. This form of faith, asserting the efflux of all subordinate existence out of one Supreme Being, seems sometimes to rest on an intuitive idea. It is spontaneously suggested whenever man confronts the phenomena of creation with reflective observation, and ponders the eternal round of birth and death. Accordingly, we find traces of this belief all over the world; from the ancient Hindu metaphysics whose fundamental postulate is that the necessary life of God is one constant process of radiation and resorption, "letting out and drawing in," to that modern English poetry which apostrophizes the glad and winsome child as

> "A silver stream
> Breaking with laughter from the lake Divine
> Whence all things flow."

The conception that souls are emanations from God is the most obvious way of accounting for the prominent facts that salute our inquiries. It

plausibly answers some natural questions, and boldly eludes others. For instance, to the early student demanding the cause of the mysterious distinctions between mind and body, it says, the one belongs to the system of passive matter, the other comes from the living Fashioner of the Universe. Again: this theory relieves us from the burden that perplexes the finite mind when it seeks to understand how the course of nature, the succession of lives, can be absolutely eternal without involving an alternating or circular movement. The doctrine of emanation has, moreover, been supported by the supposed analytic similarity of the soul to God. Its freedom, consciousness, intelligence, love, correspond with what we regard as the attributes and essence of Deity. The inference, however unsound, is immediate, that souls are consubstantial with God, dissevered fragments of Him, sent into bodies. But, in actual effect, the chief recommendation of this view has probably been the variety of analogies and images under which it admits of presentation. The annual developments of vegetable life from the bosom of the earth, drops taken from a fountain and retaining its properties in their removal, the separation of the air into distinct breaths, the soil into individual atoms, the utterance of a tone gradually dying away in reverberated echoes, the radiation of beams from a central light, the exhalation of particles of moisture from the ocean, the evolution of numbers out of an original unity,—these are among the illustrations by which an exhaustless ingenuity has supported the notion of the emanation of souls from God. That "something cannot come out of nothing" is an axiom resting on the ground of our rational instincts. And seeing all things within our comprehension held in the chain of causes and effects, one thing always evolving from another, we leap to the conclusion that it is precisely the same with things beyond our comprehension, and that God is the aboriginal reservoir of being from which all the rills of finite existence are emitted.

Against this doctrine the current objections are these two. First, the analogies adduced are not applicable. The things of spirit and those of matter have two distinct sets of predicates and categories. It is, for example, wholly illogical to argue that because the circuit of the waters is from the sea, through the clouds, over the land, back to the sea again, therefore the derivation and course of souls from God, through life, back to God, must be similar. There are mysteries in connection with the soul that baffle the most lynx-eyed investigation, and on which no known facts of the physical world can throw light. Secondly, the scheme of emanation depends on a vulgar error, belonging to the infancy of philosophic thought, and inconsistent with some necessary truths. It implies that God is separable into parts, and therefore both corporeal and finite. Divisible substance is incompatible with the first predicates of Deity,—namely, immateriality and infinity. Before the conception of the illimitable, spiritual unity of God, the doctrine of the emanation of souls from Him fades away, as the mere figment of a

dreaming mind brooding over the suggestions of phenomena and apparent correspondences.

The second explanation of the origin of souls is that which says they come from a *previous existence.* This is the theory of imagination, framed in the free and seductive realm of poetic thought. It is evident that this idea does not propose any solution of the absolute origination of the soul, but only offers to account for its appearance on earth. The pre-existence of souls has been most widely affirmed. Nearly the whole world of Oriental thinkers have always taught it. Many of the Greek philosophers held it. No small proportion of the early Church Fathers believed it.[1] And it is not without able advocates among the scholars and thinkers of our own age. There are two principal forms of this doctrine; one asserting an ascent of souls from a previous existence below the rank of man, the other a descent of souls from a higher sphere. Generation is the true Jacob's ladder, on which souls are ever ascending or descending. The former statement is virtually that of the modern theory of development, which argues that the souls known to us, obtaining their first organic being out of the ground-life of nature, have climbed up through a graduated series of births, from the merest elementary existence, to the plane of human nature. A gifted author, Dr. Hedge, has said concerning pre-existence in these two methods of conceiving it, writing in a half-humorous, half-serious, vein, "It is to be considered as expressing rather an exceptional than a universal fact. If here and there some pure liver, or noble doer, or prophet-voice, suggests the idea of a *revenant* who, moved with pity for human kind, and charged with celestial ministries, has condescended to

> 'Soil his pure ambrosial weeds
> With the rank vapors of this sin-worn mould,'

or if, on the other hand, the 'superfluity of naughtiness' displayed by some abnormal felon seems to warrant the supposition of a visit from the Pit, the greater portion of mankind, we submit, are much *too green* for any plausible assumption of a foregone training in good or evil. This planet is not their missionary station, nor their Botany Bay, but their native soil. Or, if we suppose they pre-existed at all, we must rather believe they pre-existed as brutes, and have travelled into humanity by the fish-fowl-quadruped road with a good deal of the habitudes and dust of that tramp still sticking to them." The theory of development, deriving human souls by an ascension from the lower stages of rudimentary being, considered as a fanciful hypothesis or speculative toy, is interesting, and not destitute of plausible aspects. But, when investigated as a severe thesis, it is found devoid of proof. It is enough here to say that the most authoritative voices in science reject it, declaring that, though there is a development of progress in the plan of nature, from

[1] Keil, Opuscula; De Pre-existentia Animarum. Beausobre, Hist. du Manichéisme, lib. vii. cap. iv.

the more general to the more specific, yet there is no advance from one type or race to another, no hint that the same individual ever crosses the guarded boundaries of *genus* from one rank and kingdom to another. Whatever progress there may be in the upward process of natural creation or the stages of life, yet to suppose that the life-powers of insects and brutes survive the dissolution of their bodies, and, in successive crossings of the death-gulf, ascend to humanity, is a bare assumption. It befits the delirious lips of Beddoes, who says,—

> "Had I been born a four-legg'd child, methinks
> I might have found the steps from dog to man
> And crept into his nature. Are there not
> Those that fall down out of humanity
> Into the story where the four-legg'd dwell?"

The doctrine that souls have descended from an anterior life on high may be exhibited in three forms, each animated by a different motive. The first is the view of some of the Manichean teachers, that spirits were embodied by a hostile violence and cunning, the force and fraud of the apostatized Devil. Adam and Eve were angels sent to observe the doings of Lucifer, the rebel king of matter. He seized these heavenly spies and encased them in fleshly prisons. And then, in order to preserve a permanent union of these celestial natures with matter, he contrived that their race should be propagated by the sexes. Whenever by the procreative act the germ-body is prepared, a fiend hies from bale, or an angel stoops from bliss, or a demon darts from his hovering in the air, to inhabit and rule his growing clay-house for a term of earthly life. The spasm of impregnation thrills in fatal summons to hell or heaven, and resistlessly drags a spirit into the appointed receptacle. Shakspeare, whose genius seems to have touched every shape of thought with adorning phrase, makes Juliet, distracted with the momentary fancy that Romeo is a murderous villain, cry,—

> "O Nature! what hadst thou to do in hell
> When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend
> In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?"

The second method of explaining the descent of souls into this life is by the supposition that the stable bliss, the uncontrasted peace and sameness, of the heavenly experience, at last wearies the people of Paradise, until they seek relief in a fall. The perfect sweetness of heaven cloys, the utter routine and safety tire, the salient spirits, till they long for the edge and hazard of earthly exposure, and wander down to dwell in fleshly bodies and breast the tempest of sin, strife, and sorrow, so as to give a fresh charm once more to the repose and exempted joys of the celestial realm. In this way, by a series of recurring lives below and above, novelty and change with larger experience and more vivid contentment are secured, the tedium and satiety of fixed happiness and protection are modified by the relishing opposition of varied trials of hardship and pain, the insufferable monotony of immortality broken

up and interpolated by epochs of surprise and tingling dangers of probation.

"Mortals, behold! the very angels quit
Their mansions unsusceptible of change,
Amid your dangerous bowers to sit
And through your sharp vicissitudes to range!"

Thus round and round we run through an eternity of lives and deaths. Surfeited with the unqualified pleasures of heaven, we "straggle down to this terrene nativity." When, amid the sour exposures and cruel storms of the world, we have renewed our appetite for the divine ambrosia of peace and sweetness, we forsake the body and ascend to heaven; this constant recurrence illustrating the great truths, that alternation is the law of destiny, and that variety is the spice of life.

But the most common derivation of the present from a previous life is that which explains the descent as a punishment for sin. In that earlier and loftier state, souls abused their freedom, and were doomed to expiate their offences by a banished, imprisoned, and burdensome life on the earth. "The soul," Plutarch writes, "has removed, not from Athens to Sardis, or from Corinth to Lemnos, but from heaven to earth; and here, ill at ease, and troubled in this new and strange place, she hangs her head like a decaying plant." Hundreds of passages to the same purport might easily be cited from as many ancient writers. Sometimes this fall of souls from their original estate was represented as a simultaneous event: a part of the heavenly army, under an apostate leader, having rebelled, were defeated, and sentenced to a chained bodily life. Our whole race were transported at once from their native shores in the sky to the convict-land of this world. Sometimes the descent was attributed to the fresh fault of each individual, and was thought to be constantly happening. A soul tainted with impure desire, drawn downwards by corrupt material gravitation, hovering over the fumes of matter, inhaling the effluvia of vice, grew infected with carnal longings and contagions, became fouled and clogged with gross vapors and steams, and finally fell into a body and pursued the life fitted to it below. A clear human child is a shining seraph from heaven sunk thus low. Men are degraded cherubim.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar."

The theory of the pre-existence of the soul merely removes the mystery one stage further back, and there leaves the problem of our origin as hopelessly obscure as before. It is sufficiently refuted by the open fact that it is absolutely destitute of scientific basis. The explanation of its wide prevalence as a belief is furnished by two considerations. First, there were old authoritative sages and poets who loved to speculate and dream, and who published their speculations and dreams to reign over

the subject fancies of credulous mankind. Secondly, the conception was intrinsically harmonious, and bore a charm to fascinate the imagination and the heart. The fragmentary visions, broken snatches, mystic strains, incongruous thoughts, fading gleams, with which imperfect recollection comes laden from our childish years and our nightly dreams, are referred by self-pleasing fancy to some earlier and nobler existence. We solve the mysteries of experience by calling them the veiled vestiges of a bright life departed, pathetic waifs drifted to these intellectual shores over the surge of feeling from the wrecked orb of an anterior existence. It gratifies our pride to think the soul "a star-travelled stranger," a disguised prince, who has passingly alighted on this globe in his eternal wanderings. The gorgeous glimpses of truth and beauty here vouchsafed to genius, the wondrous strains of feeling that haunt the soul in tender hours, are feeble reminiscences of the prerogatives we enjoyed in those eons when we trod the planets that sail around the upper world of the gods. That *ennui* or plaintive sadness which in all life's deep and lonesome hours seems native to our hearts, what is it but the nostalgia of the soul remembering and pining after its distant home? Vague and forlorn airs come floating into our consciousness, as from an infinitely remote clime, freighted with a luxury of depressing melancholy.

> "Ah! not the nectarous poppy lovers use,
> Not daily labor's dull Lethean spring,
> Oblivion in lost angels can infuse
> Of the soil'd glory and the trailing wing."

How attractive all this must be to the thoughts of men, how fascinating to their retrospective and aspiring reveries, it should be needless to repeat. How baseless it is as a philosophical theory demanding sober belief, it should be equally superfluous to illustrate further.

The third answer to the question concerning the origin of the soul is that it is directly *created* by the voluntary power of God. This is the theory of faith, instinctively shrinking from the difficulty of the problem on its scientific grounds, and evading it by a wholesale reference to Deity. Some writers have held that all souls were created by the Divine fiat at the beginning of the world, and laid up in a secret repository, whence they are drawn as occasion calls. The Talmudists say, "All souls were made during the six days of creation; and therefore generation is not by traduction, but by infusion of a soul into body." Others maintain that this production of souls was not confined to any past period, but is continued still, a new soul being freshly created for every birth. Whenever certain conditions meet,—

> "Then God smites his hands together,
> And strikes out a soul as a spark,
> Into the organized glory of things,
> From the deeps of the dark."

This is the view asserted by Vincentius Victor in opposition to the dogmatism of Tertullian on the one hand and to the doubts of Augustine

on the other.[2] It is called the theory of Insufflation, because it affirms that God immediately breathes a soul into each new being: even as in the case of Adam, of whom we read that "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul." The doctrine drawn from this Mosaic text, that the soul is a divine substance, a breath of God, miraculously breathed by Him into every creature at the commencement of its existence, often reappears, and plays a prominent part in the history of psychological opinions. It corresponds with the beautiful Greek myth of Prometheus, who is fabled to have made a human image from the dust of the ground, and then, by fire stolen from heaven, to have animated it with a living soul. So man, as to his body, is made of earthly clay; but the Promethean spark that forms his soul is the fresh breath of God. There is no objection to the real ground and essence of this theory, only to its form and accompaniments. It is purely anthropomorphitic; it conceives God as working, after the manner of a man, intermittently, arbitrarily. It insulates the origination of souls from the fixed course of nature, severs it from all connection with that common process of organic life which weaves its inscrutable web through the universe, that system of laws which expresses the unchanging will of God, and which constitutes the order by whose solemn logic alone He acts. The objection to this view is, in a word, that it limits the creative action of God to human souls. We suppose that He creates our bodies as well; that He is the immediate Author of all life in the same sense in which He is the immediate Author of our souls. The opponents of the creation-theory, who strenuously fought it in the seventeenth century, were accustomed to urge against it the fanciful objection that "it puts God to an invenust employment scarce consistent with his verecundious holiness; for, if it be true, whenever the lascivious consent to uncleanness and are pleased to join in unlawful mixture, God is forced to stand a spectator of their vile impurities, stooping from his throne to attend their bestial practices, and raining down showers of souls to animate the emissions of their concupiscence."[3]

A fourth reply to the inquiry before us is furnished in Tertullian's famous doctrine of Traduction, the essential import of which is that all human souls have been *transmitted*, or brought over, from the soul of Adam. This is the theological theory: for it arose from an exigency in the dogmatic system generally held by the patristic Church. The universal depravity of human nature, the inherited corruption of the whole race, was a fundamental point of belief. But how reconcile this proposition with the conception, entertained by many, that each new-born soul is a fresh creation from the "substance," "spirit," or "breath" of God? Augustine writes to Jerome, asking him to solve this question.[4] Tertullian, whose fervid mind was thoroughly imbued with materialistic

[2] Augustine, De Anima et ejus Origine, lib. iv. [3] Edward Warren, No Pre-Existence, p. 74.
[4] Epistola CLXVI.

notions, unhesitatingly cut this Gordian knot by asserting that our first parent bore within him the undeveloped germ of all mankind, so that sinfulness and souls were propagated together.[5] Thus the perplexing query, "how souls are held in the chain of original sin," was answered. As Neander says, illustrating Tertullian's view, "The soul of the first man was the fountain-head of all human souls: all the varieties of individual human nature are but modifications of that one spiritual substance." In the light of such a thought, we can see how Nature might, when solitary Adam lived, fulfil Lear's wild conjuration, and

"All the germens spill
At once that make ingrateful man."

In the seventh chapter of the Koran it is written, "The Lord drew forth their posterity from the loins of the sons of Adam." The commentators say that God passed his hand down Adam's back, and extracted all the generations which should come into the world until the resurrection. Assembled in the presence of the angels, and endued with understanding, they confessed their dependence on God, and were then caused to return into the loins of their great ancestor. This is one of the most curious doctrines within the whole range of philosophical history. It implies the strict corporeality of the soul; and yet how infinitely fine must be its attenuation when it has been diffused into countless thousands of millions! *Der Urkeim theilt sich ins Unendliche.*

"What! will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?"

The whole thought is absurd. It was not reached by an induction of facts, a study of phenomena, or any fair process of reasoning, but was arbitrarily created to rescue a dogma from otherwise inevitable rejection. It was the desperate clutch of a heady theologian reeling in a vortex of hostile argument, and ready to seize any fancy, however artificial, to save himself from falling under the ruins of his system. Henry Woolner published in London, in 1655, a book called "Extraction of Soul: a sober and judicious inquiry to prove that souls are propagated; because, if they are created, original sin is impossible."

The theological dogma of traduction has been presented in two forms. First, it is declared that all souls are developed out of the one substance of Adam's soul; a view that logically implies an ultimate attenuating diffusion, ridiculously absurd. Secondly, it is held that "the eating of the forbidden fruit corrupted all the vital fluids of Eve; and this corruption carried vicious and chaotic consequences into her *ova*, in which lay the souls of all her posterity, with infinitely little bodies, already existing."[6] This form is as incredible as the other; for it equally implies a limitless distribution of souls from a limited deposit. As Whewell says, "This successive inclusion of germs (Einschachtelungs-Theorie) implies that each soul contains an infinite number of germs."[7] It necessarily ex-

[5] De Anima, cap. x. et xix. [6] Hennings, Geschichte von den Seelen der Menschen, s. 500.
[7] Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences, vol. I. b. ix. ch. iv. sect. 4.

cludes the formation of new spiritual substance: else original transmitted sin is excluded. The doctrine finds no parallelism anywhere else in nature. Who, no matter how wedded to the theology of original sin and transmitted death, would venture to stretch the same thesis over the animal races, and affirm that the dynamic principles, or animating souls, of all serpents, eagles, and lions, were once compressed in the first patriarchal serpent, eagle, or lion? That the whole formative power of all the simultaneous members of our race was concentrated in the first cell-germ of our original progenitor, is a scientific impossibility and incredibleness. The fatal sophistry in the traducian account of the transmission of souls may be illustrated in the following manner. The germs of all the apple-trees now in existence did not lie in the first apple-seed. All the apple-trees now existing were not derived by literal development out of the actual contents of the first apple-seed. No: but the truth is this. There was a power in the first apple-seed to secure certain conditions; that is, to organize a certain *status* in which the plastic vegetative life of nature would posit new and similar powers and materials. So not all souls were latent in Adam's, but only an organizing power to secure the conditions on which the Divine Will that first began, would, in accordance with His creative plan, forever continue, His spirit-creation. The distinction of this statement from that of traduction is the difference between evolution from one original germ or stock and actual production of new beings. Its distinction from the third theory—the theory of immediate creation—is the difference between an intermittent interposition of arbitrary acts and the continuous working of a plan according to laws scientifically traceable.

There is another solution to the question of the soul's origin, which has been propounded by some philosophers and may be called the *speculative* theory. Its statement is that the germs of souls were created simultaneously with the formation of the material universe, and were copiously sown abroad through all nature, waiting there to be successively taken up and furnished with the conditions of development.[8] These latent seeds of souls, swarming in all places, are drawn in with the first breath or imbibed with the earliest nourishment of the new-born child into the already-constructed body which before has only a vegetative life. The Germans call this representation *panspermismus*, or the dissemination-theory. Leibnitz, in his celebrated monadology, carries the same view a great deal further. He conceives the whole created universe, visible and invisible, to consist of monads, which are not particles of matter, but metaphysical points of power. These monads are all souls. They are produced by what he calls *fulgurations* of God. The distinction between fulguration and emanation is this: in the latter case the procession is historically defined and complete; in the former case it is momentaneous. The monads are radiated from the Divine Will, forth through

[8] Ploucquet, De Origine atque Generatione Animæ Humanæ ex Principiis Monadologicis stabilita.

the creation, by the constant flashes of His volition. All nature is composed of them, and nothing is depopulated and dead. Their naked being is force, and their indestructible predicates are perception, desire, tendency to develop. While they lie dormant, their potential capacities all inwrapped, they constitute what we entitle matter. When, by the rising stir of their inherent longing, they leave their passive state and reach a condition of obscure consciousness, they become animals. Finally, they so far unwind their bonds and evolve their facultative potencies as to attain the rank of rational minds in the grade of humanity. Generation is merely the method by which the aspiring monad lays the organic basis for the grouped building of its body. Man is a living union of monads, one regent-monad presiding over the whole organization. That king-monad which has attained to full apperception, the free exercise of perfect consciousness, is the immortal human soul.[9] Any labored attempt to refute this ingenious doctrine is needless, since the doctrine itself is but the developed structure of a speculative conception with no valid basis of observed fact. It is a sheer hypothesis, spun out of the self-fed bowels of *à priori* assumption and metaphysic fancy. It solves the problems only by changes of their form, leaving the mysteries as numerous and deep as before. It is a beautiful and sublime piece of latent poetry, the evolution and architecture of which well display the wonderful genius of Leibnitz. It is a more subtle and powerful process of thought than Aristotle's Organon, a more pure and daring work of imagination than Milton's Paradise Lost. But it spurns the tests of experimental science, and is entitled to rank only among the splendid curiosities of philosophy; a brilliant and plausible theorem, not a sober and solid induction.

One more method of treating the inquiry before us will complete the list. It is what we may properly call the *scientific* theory, though in truth it is hardly a theory at all, but rather a careful statement of the observed facts, and a modest confession of inability to explain the cause of them. Those occupying this position, when asked what is the origin of souls, do not pretend to unveil the final secret, but simply say, everywhere in the world of life, from bottom to top, there is an organic growth in accordance with conditions. This is what is styled the theory of epigenesis, and is adopted by the chief physiologists of the present day. Swammerdam, Malebranche, even Cuvier, had defended the doctrine of successive inclusion; but Wolf, Blumenbach, and Von Baer established in its place the doctrine of epigenesis.[10] Scrupulously confining themselves to the mass of collected facts and the course of scrutinized phenomena, they say there is a natural production of new living beings in conformity to certain laws, and give an exposition of the fixed conditions and sequences of this production. Here they humbly stop, acknowledging

[9] Leibnitz, Monadologie. [10] Ennemoser, Historisch-psychologische Untersuchungen über den Ursprung der menschlichen Seelen, zweite Auflage.

that the causal root of power, which produces all these consequences, is an inexplicable mystery. Their attitude is well represented by Swedenborg when he says, in reference to this very subject, "Any one may form guesses; but let no son of earth pretend to penetrate the mysteries of creation."[11]

Let us notice now the facts submitted to us. First, at the base of the various departments of nature, we see a mass of apparently lifeless matter. Out of this crude substratum of the outward world we observe a vast variety of organized forms produced by a variously-named but unknown Power. They spring in regular methods, in determinate shapes, exist on successive stages of rank, with more or less striking demarcations of endowment, and finally fall back again, as to their physical constituents, into the inorganic stuff from which they grew. This mysterious organizing Power, pushing its animate and builded receptacles up to the level of vegetation, creates the world of plants.

> "Every clod feels a stir of might,
> An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
> And, grasping blindly above it for light,
> Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers."

On the level of sensation, where the obscure rudiments of will, understanding, and sentiment commence, this life-giving Power creates the world of animals. And so, on the still higher level of reason and its concomitants, it creates the world of men. In a word, the great general fact is that an unknown Power—call it what we may, Nature, Vital Force, or God—creates, on the various planes of its exercise, different families of organized beings. Secondly, a more special fact is, that when we have overleaped the mystery of a commencement, every being yields seed according to its kind, wherefrom, when properly conditioned, its species is perpetuated. How much, now, does this second fact imply? It is by adding to the observed phenomena an indefensible hypothesis that the error of traduction is obtained. We observe that human beings are begotten by a deposit of germs through the generative process. To affirm that these germs are transmitted down the generations from the original progenitor of each race, in whom they all existed at first, is an unwarranted assertion and involves absurdities. It is refuted both by Geoffroy St. Hilaire's famous experiments on eggs, and by the crossing of species.[12] In opposition to this theological figment, observation and science require the belief that each being is endowed independently with a germ-forming power.

Organic life requires three things: a fruitful germ; a quickening impulse; a nourishing medium. Science plainly shows us that this primal nucleus is given, in the human species, by the union of the contents of a sperm-cell with those of a germ-cell; that this dynamic start is imparted

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[11] Tract on the Origin and Propagation of the Soul, chap. i.

[12] Flourens, Amount of Life on the Globe, part ii. ch. iii. sect. ii.

from the life-force of the parents; and that this feeding environment is furnished by the circle of co-ordinated relations. That the formative power of the new organism comes from, or at least is wholly conditioned by, the parent organism, should be believed, because it is the obvious conclusion, against which there is nothing to militate. That the soul of the child comes in some way from the soul of the parent, or is stamped by it, is also implied by the normal resemblance of children to parents, not more in bodily form than in spiritual idiosyncrasies. This fact alone furnishes the proper qualification to the acute and significant lines of the Platonizing poet:—

> "Wherefore who thinks from souls new souls to bring,
> The same let presse the sunne-beames in his fist
> And squeeze out drops of light, or strongly wring
> The rainbow till it die his hands, well prest."

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh: that which is born of the spirit is spirit." As the body of the child is the derivative of a germ elaborated in the body of the parent, so the soul of the child is the derivative of a developing impulse of power imparted from the soul of the parent. And as the body is sustained by absorbing nutrition from matter, so the soul is sustained by assimilating the spiritual substances of the invisible kingdom. The most ethereal elements must combine to nourish that consummate plant whose blossom is man's mind. This representation is not materialism; for spirit belongs to a different sphere and is the subject of different predicates from matter, though equally under a constitution of laws. Nor does this view pretend to explain what is inherently transcendent: it leaves the creation of the soul within as wide a depth and margin of mystery as ever. Neither is this mode of exposing the problem atheistic. It refers the forms of life, all growths, all souls, to the indefinable Power that works everywhere, creates each thing, vivifies, governs, and contains the universe. And, however that Power be named, is it not God? And thus we still reverently hold that it is God's own hands

> "That reach through nature, moulding men."

The ancient heroes of Greece and India were fond of tracing their genealogy up directly to their deities, and were proud to deem that in guarding them the gods stooped to watch over a race of kings, a puissant and immortal stock,—

> "Whose glories stream'd from the same cloud-girt founts
> Whence their own dawn'd upon the infant world."

After all the researches that have been made, we yet find the secret of the beginning of the soul shrouded among the fathomless mysteries of the Almighty Creator, and must ascribe our birth to the Will of God as piously as it was done in the eldest mythical epochs of the world. Notwithstanding the careless frivolity of skepticism and the garish light of science abroad in this modern time, there are still

stricken and yearning depths of wonder and sorrow enough, profound and awful shadows of night and fear enough, to make us recognise, in the golden joys that visit us rarely, in the illimitable visions that emancipate us often, in the unearthly thoughts and dreams that ravish our minds, enigmatical intimations of our kinship with God, prophecies of a super-earthly destiny whose splendors already break through the clouds of ignorance, the folds of flesh, and the curtains of time in which our spirits here sit pavilioned. Augustine pointedly observes, "It is no evil that the *origin* of the soul remains obscure, if only its *redemption* be made certain."[13] *Non est periculum si origo animæ lateat, dum redemptio clareat.* No matter how humanity originates, if its object be to produce fruit, and that fruit be immortal souls. When our organism has perfected its intended product, willingly will we let the decaying body return into the ground, if so be we are assured that the ripened spirit is borne into the heavenly garner.

Let us, in close, reduce the problem of the soul's origin to its last terms. The amount of force in the universe is uniform.[14] Action and reaction being equal, no new creation of force is possible: only its directions, deposits, and receptacles may be altered. No combination of physical processes can produce a previously non-existent subject: it can only initiate the modification, development, assimilation, of realities already in being. Something cannot come out of nothing. The quickening formation of a man, therefore, implies the existence, first, of a material germ, the basis of the body; secondly, of a power to impart to that germ a dynamic impulse,—in other words, to deposit in it a spirit-atom, or monad of life-force. Now, the fresh body is originally a detached product of the parent body, as an apple is the detached product of a tree. So the fresh soul is a transmitted force imparted by the parent soul, either directly from itself, or else conditioned by it and drawn from the ground-life of nature, the creative power of God. If filial soul be begotten by procession and severance of conscious force from parental soul, the spiritual resemblance of offspring and progenitors is clearly explained. This phenomenon is also equally well explained if the parent soul, so called, be a die striking the creative substance of the universe into individual form. The latter supposition seems, upon the whole, the more plausible and scientific. Generation is a reflex condition moving the life-basis of the world to produce a soul, as a physical impression moves the soul to produce a perception.[15]

But, however deep the mystery of the soul's origin, whatever our conclusion in regard to it, let us not forget that the inmost essence and verity of the soul is conscious power; and that all power defies annihilation. It is an old declaration that what begins in time must end in time; and with the metaphysical shears of that notion more than

[13] Epist. CLVI. [14] Faraday, Conservation of Force, Phil. Mag., April, 1857. [15] Dr. Frohschammer, Ursprung der menschlichen Seelen, sect. 115.

once the burning faith in eternal life has been snuffed out. Yet how obvious is its sophistry! A being beginning in time need not cease in time, if the Power which originated it intends and provides for its perpetuity. And that such is the Creative intention for man appears from the fact that the grand forms of belief in all ages issuing from his mental organization have borne the stamp of an expected immortality. Our ideas may disappear, but they are always recoverable. If the souls of men are ideas of God, must they not be as enduring as his mind?

The naturalist who so immerses his thoughts in the physical phases of nature as to lose hold on indestructible centres of personality, should beware lest he lose the motive which propels man to begin here, by virtue and culture, to climb that ladder of life whose endless sides are affections, but whose discrete rounds are thoughts.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF DEATH.

Death is not an entity, but an event; not a force, but a state. Life is the positive experience, death the negation. Yet in nearly every literature death has been personified, while no kindred prosopopœia of life is anywhere to be found. With the Greeks, Thanatos was a god; with the Romans, Mors was a goddess: but no statue was ever moulded, no altar ever raised, to Zoê or Vita. At first thought, we should anticipate the reverse of this; but, in truth, the fact is quite naturally as it is. Life is a continuous process; and any one who makes the effort will find how difficult it is to conceive of it as an individual being, with distinctive attributes, functions, and will. It is an inward possession which we familiarly experience, and in the quiet routine of custom we feel no shock of surprise at it, no impulse to give it imaginative shape and ornament. On the contrary, death is an impending occurrence, something which we anticipate and shudder at, something advancing toward us in time to strike or seize us. Its externality to our living experience, its threatening approach, the mystery and alarm enwrapping it, are provocative conditions for fanciful treatment, making personifications inevitable.

With the old Aryan race of India, death is Yama,—the soul of the first man, departed to be the king of the subterranean realm of the subsequent dead, and returning to call after him each of his descendants in turn. To the good he is mild and lovely, but to the impious he is clad in terror and acts with severity. The purely fanciful character of this thought is obvious; for, according to it, death was before death, since Yama himself died. Yama does not really represent death, but its arbiter and messenger. He is the ruler over the dead, who himself carries the summons to each mortal to become his subject.

In the Hebrew conception, death was a majestic angel, named Sammaël, standing in the court of heaven, and flying thence over the earth, armed with a sword, to obey the behests of God. The Talmudists developed and dressed up the thought with many details, half sublime, half fantastic. He strides through the world at a step. From the soles of his feet to his shoulders he is full of eyes. Every person in the moment of dying sees him; and at the sight the soul retreats, running through all the limbs, as if asking permission to depart from them. From his naked sword fall three drops: one pales the countenance, one destroys the vitality, one causes the body to decay. Some Rabbins say he bears a cup from which the dying one drinks, or that he lets fall from the point of his sword a single acrid drop upon the sufferer's tongue: this is what is called "tasting the bitterness of death." Here again, we see, it is not strictly death that is personified. The embodiment is not of the mortal act, but of the decree determining that act. The Jewish angel of death is not a picture of death in itself, but of God's decree coming to the fated individual who is to die.

The Greeks sometimes depicted death and sleep as twin boys, one black, one white, borne slumbering in the arms of their mother, night. In this instance the phenomenon of dissolving unconsciousness which falls on mortals, abstractly generalized in the mind, is then concretely symbolized. It is a bold and happy stroke of artistic genius; but it in no way expresses or suggests the scientific facts of actual death. There is also a classic representation of death as a winged boy with a pensive brow and an inverted torch, a butterfly at his feet. This beautiful image, with its affecting accompaniments, conveys to the beholder not the verity, nor an interpretation, of death, but the sentiments of the survivors in view of their bereavement. The sad brow denotes the grief of the mourner, the winged insect the disembodied psyche, the reversed torch the descent of the soul to the under-world; but the reality of death itself is nowhere hinted.

The Romans give descriptions of death as a female figure in dark robes, with black wings, with ravenous teeth, hovering everywhere, darting here and there, eager for prey. Such a view is a personification of the mysteriousness, suddenness, inevitableness, and fearfulness, connected with the subject of death in men's minds, rather than of death itself. These thoughts are grouped into an imaginary being, whose sum of attributes are then ignorantly both associated with the idea of the unknown cause and confounded with the visible effect. It is, in a word, mere poetry, inspired by fear and unguided by philosophy.

Death has been shown in the guise of a fowler spreading his net, setting his snares for men. But this image concerns itself with the accidents of the subject,—the unexpectedness of the fatal blow, the treacherous springing of the trap,—leaving the root of the matter untouched. The circumstances of the mortal hour are infinitely varied, the heart of the experience is unchangeably the same: there are a

thousand modes of dying, but there is only one death. Ever so complete an exhibition of the occasions and accompaniments of an event is no explanation of what the inmost reality of the event is.

The Norse conception of death as a vast, cloudy presence, darkly sweeping on its victims, and bearing them away wrapped in its sable folds, is evidently a free product of imagination brooding not so much on the distinct phenomena of an individual case as on the melancholy mystery of the disappearance of men from the familiar places that knew them once but miss them now. In a somewhat kindred manner, the startling magnificence of the sketch in the Apocalypse, of death on the pale horse, is a product of pure imagination meditating on the wholesale slaughter which was to deluge the earth when God's avenging judgments fell upon the enemies of the Christians. But to consider this murderous warrior on his white charger as literally death, would be as erroneous as to imagine the bare-armed executioner and the guillotine to be themselves the death which they inflict. No more appalling picture of death has been drawn than that by Milton, whose dire image has this stroke of truth in it, that its adumbrate formlessness typifies the disorganizing force which reduces all cunningly-built bodies of life to the elemental wastes of being. The incestuous and miscreated progeny of Sin is thus delineated:—

> "The shape,—
> If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
> Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
> For each seem'd either,—black it stood as night,
> Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
> And shook a dreadful dart: what seem'd his head
> The likeness of a kingly crown had on."

But the most common personification of death is as a skeleton brandishing a dart; and then he is called the grisly king of terrors; and people tremble at the thought of him, as children do at the name of a bugbear in the dark. What sophistry this is! It is as if we should identify the trophy with the conqueror, the vestiges left in the track of a traveller with the traveller himself. Death literally makes a skeleton of man; so man metaphorically makes a skeleton of Death! All these representations of death, however beautiful, or pathetic, or horrible, are based on superficial appearances, misleading analogies, arbitrary fancies, perturbed sensibilities, not on a firm hold of realities, insight of truth, and philosophical analysis. They are all to be brushed aside as phantoms of nightmare or artificial creations of fiction. Poetry has mostly rested, hitherto, on no veritable foundation of science, but on a visionary foundation of emotion. It has wrought upon flitting, sensible phenomena rather than upon abiding substrata of facts. For example, a tender Greek bard personified the life of a tree as a Hamadryad, the moving trunk and limbs her undulating form and beckoning arms, the drooping boughs her hair, the rustling foliage her voice. A modern poet,

endowed with the same strength of sympathy, but acquainted with vegetable chemistry, might personify sap as a pale, liquid maiden, ascending through the roots and veins to meet air, a blue boy robed in golden warmth, descending through the leaves, with a whisper, to her embrace. So the personifications of death in literature, thus far, give us no penetrative glance into what it really is, help us to no acute definition of it, but poetically fasten on some feature, or accident, or emotion, associated with it.

There are in popular usage various metaphors to express what is meant by death. The principal ones are, extinction of the vital spark, departing, expiring, cutting the thread of life, giving up the ghost, falling asleep. These figurative modes of speech spring from extremely imperfect correspondences. Indeed, the unlikenesses are more important and more numerous than the likenesses. They are simply artifices to indicate what is so deeply obscure and intangible. They do not lay the secret bare, nor furnish us any aid in reaching to the true essence of the question. Moreover, several of them, when sharply examined, involve a fatal error. For example, upon the admitted supposition that in every case of dying the soul departs from the body, still, this separation of the soul from the body is not what constitutes death. Death is the state of the body when the soul has left it. An act is distinct from its effects. We must, therefore, turn from the literary inquiry to the metaphysical and scientific method, to gain any satisfactory idea and definition of death.

A German writer of extraordinary acumen and audacity has said, "Only before death, but not in death, is death death. Death is so unreal a being that he only is when he is not, and is not when he is."[1] This—paradoxical and puzzling as it may appear—is susceptible of quite lucid interpretation and defence. For death is, in its naked significance, the state of not-being. Of course, then, it has no existence save in the conceptions of the living. We compare a dead person with what he was when living, and instinctively personify the difference as death. Death, strictly analyzed, is only this abstract conceit or metaphysical nonentity. Death, therefore, being but a conception in the mind of a living person, when that person dies death ceases to be at all. And thus the realization of death is the death of death. He annihilates himself, dying with the dart he drives. Having in this manner disposed of the personality or entity of death, it remains as an effect, an event, a state. Accordingly, the question next arises, What is death when considered in this its true aspect?

A positive must be understood before its related negative can be intelligible. Bichât defined life as the sum of functions by which death is resisted. It is an identical proposition in verbal disguise, with the fault that it makes negation affirmation, passiveness action. Death is not a dynamic agency warring against life, but simply an occurrence. Life is the operation of an organizing force producing an organic form according to an ideal type, and persistently preserving that form amidst the

[1] Feuerbach, Gedanken über Tod und Unsterblichkeit, sect. 84.

incessant molecular activity and change of its constituent substance. That operation of the organic force which thus constitutes life is a continuous process of waste, casting off the old exhausted matter, and of replacement by assimilation of new material. The close of this process of organific metamorphosis and desquamation is death, whose finality is utter decomposition, restoring all the bodily elements to the original inorganic conditions from which they were taken. The organic force with which life begins constrains chemical affinity to work in special modes for the formation of special products: when it is spent or disappears, chemical affinity is at liberty to work in its general modes; and that is death. "Life is the co-ordination of actions; the imperfection of the co-ordination is disease, its arrest is death." In other words, "life is the continuous adjustment of relations in an organism with relations in its environment." Disturb that adjustment, and you have malady; destroy it, and you have death. Life is the performance of functions by an organism; death is the abandonment of an organism to the forces of the universe. No function can be performed without a waste of the tissue through which it is performed: that waste is repaired by the assimilation of fresh nutriment. In the balancing of these two actions life consists. The loss of their equipoise soon terminates them both; and that is death. Upon the whole, then, scientifically speaking, to cause death is to stop "that continuous differentiation and integration of tissues and of states of consciousness" constituting life.[2] Death, therefore, is no monster, no force, but the act of completion, the state of cessation; and all the bugbears named death are but poor phantoms of the frightened and childish mind.

Life consisting in the constant differentiation of the tissues by the action of oxygen, and their integration from the blastema furnished by the blood, why is not the harmony of these processes preserved forever? Why should the relation between the integration and disintegration going on in the human organism ever fall out of correspondence with the relation between the oxygen and food supplied from its environment? That is to say, whence originated the sentence of death upon man? Why do we not live immortally as we are? The current reply is, we die because our first parent sinned. Death is a penalty inflicted upon the human race because Adam disobeyed his Maker's command. We must consider this theory a little.

The narrative in Genesis, of the creation of man and of the events in the Garden of Eden, cannot be traced further back than to the time of Solomon, three thousand years after the alleged occurrences it describes. This portion of the book of Genesis, as has long been shown, is a distinct document, marked by many peculiarities, which was inserted in its present place by the compiler of the elder Hebrew Scriptures somewhere

[2] Spencer, Principles of Psychology, pp. 334–378.

between seven and ten centuries before Christ.[3] Ewald has fully demonstrated that the book of Genesis consists of many separate fragmentary documents of different ages, arranged together by a comparatively late hand. Among the later of these pieces is the account of the primeval pair in paradise. Grotefend argues, with much force and variety of evidence, that this story was derived from a far more ancient legend-book, only fragments of which remained when the final collection was made of this portion of the Old Testament.[4] Many scholars have thought the account was not of Hebrew origin, but was borrowed from the literary traditions of some earlier Oriental nation. Rosenmüller, Von Bohlen, and others, say it bears unmistakable relationship to the Zendavesta which tells how Ahriman, the old Serpent, beguiled the first pair into sin and misery. These correspondences, and also that between the tree of life and the Zoroastrian plant *hom*, which gives life and will produce the resurrection, are certainly striking. Buttmann sees in God's declaration to Adam, "Behold, I have given you for food every herb bearing seed, and every tree in which is fruit bearing seed," traces of a prohibition of animal food. This was not the vestige of a Hebrew usage, but the vegetarian tradition of some sect eschewing meat, a tradition drawn from South Asia, whence the fathers of the Hebrew race came.[5] Gesenius says, "Many things in this narrative were drawn from older Asiatic tradition."[6] Knobel also affirms that numerous matters in this relation were derived from traditions of East Asian nations.[7] Still, it is not necessary to suppose that the writer of the account in Genesis borrowed any thing from abroad. The Hebrew may as well have originated such ideas as anybody else. The Egyptians, the Phœnicians, the Chaldeans, the Persians, the Etruscans, have kindred narratives held as most ancient and sacred.[8] The Chinese, the Sandwich Islanders, the North American Indians, also have their legends of the origin and altered fortunes of the human race. The resemblances between many of these stories are better accounted for by the intrinsic similarities of the subject, of the mind, of nature, and of mental action, than by the supposition of derivation from one another.

Regarding the Hebrew narrative as an indigenous growth, then, how shall we explain its origin, purport, and authority? Of course we cannot receive it as a miraculous revelation conveying infallible truth. The Bible, it is now acknowledged, was not given in the providence of God to teach astronomy, geology, chronology, and the operation of organic forces, but to help educate men in morality and piety. It is a religious, not a scientific, work. Some unknown Hebrew poet, in the early dawn

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[3] Tuch, Kommentar über Genesis, s. xcviii. [4] Zur ältesten Sagenpoesie des Orients. Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, band viii. ss. 772–779.

[5] Mythologus, (Schöpfung und Sündenfall,) band i. s. 137.

[6] Article "Adam," in Encyclopædia by Ersch and Gruber.

[7] Die Genesis erklärt, s. 28. [8] Palfrey's Academical Lectures, vol. ii. pp. 21–28.

of remembered time, knowing little metaphysics and less science, musing upon the fortunes of man, his wickedness, sorrow, death, and impressed with an instinctive conviction that things could not always have been so, casting about for some solution of the dim, pathetic problem, at last struck out the beautiful and sublime poem recorded in Genesis, which has now for many a century, by Jews, Christians, Mohammedans, been credited as authentic history. With his own hands God moulds from earth an image in his own likeness, breathes life into it,—and new-made man moves, lord of the scene, and lifts his face, illuminated with soul, in submissive love to his Creator. Endowed with free-will, after a while he violated his Maker's command: the divine displeasure was awakened, punishment ensued, and so rushed in the terrible host of ills under which we suffer. The problem must early arise: the solution is, to a certain stage of thought, at once the most obvious and the most satisfactory conceivable. It is the truth. Only it is cast in imaginative, not scientific, form, arrayed in emblematic, not literal, garb. The Greeks had a lofty poem by some early unknown author, setting forth how Prometheus formed man of clay and animated him with fire from heaven, and how from Pandora's box the horrid crew of human vexations were let into the world. The two narratives, though most unequal in depth and dignity, belong in the same literary and philosophical category. Neither was intended as a plain record of veritable history, each word a naked fact, but as a symbol of its author's thoughts, each phrase the metaphorical dress of a speculative idea.

Eichhorn maintains, with no slight plausibility, that the whole account of the Garden of Eden was derived from a series of allegorical pictures which the author had seen, and which he translated from the language of painting into the language of words. At all events, we must take the account as symbolic, a succession of figurative expressions. Many of the best minds have always so considered it, from Josephus to Origen, from Ambrose to Kant. What, then, are the real thoughts which the author of this Hebrew poem on the primal condition of man meant to convey beneath his legendary forms of imagery? These four are the essential ones. First, that God created man; secondly, that he created him in a state of freedom and happiness surrounded by blessings; third, that the favored subject violated his Sovereign's order; fourth, that in consequence of this offence he was degraded from his blessed condition, beneath a load of retributive ills. The composition shows the characteristics of a philosopheme or a myth, a scheme of conceptions deliberately wrought out to answer an inquiry, a story devised to account for an existing fact or custom. The picture of God performing his creative work in six days and resting on the seventh, may have been drawn after the septenary division of time and the religious separation of the Sabbath, to explain and justify that observance. The creation of Eve out of the side of Adam was either meant by the author as an allegoric illustration that the love of husband and wife is the most powerful of social bonds, or as

a pure myth seeking to explain the incomparable cleaving together of husband and wife by the entirely poetic supposition that the first woman was taken out of the first man, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. All early literatures teem with exemplifications of this process,—a spontaneous secretion by the imagination to account for some presented phenomenon. Or perhaps this part of the relation—"and he called her woman [manness], because she was taken out of man"—may be an instance of those etymological myths with which ancient literature abounds. Woman is named Isha because she was taken out of man, whose name is Ish. The barbarous treatment the record under consideration has received, the utter baselessness of it in the light of truth as foundation for literal belief, find perhaps no fitter exposure than in the fact that for many centuries it was the prevalent faith of Christendom that every woman has one rib more than man, a permanent memorial of the Divine theft from his side. Unquestionably, there are many good persons now who, if Richard Owen should tell them that man has the same number of ribs as woman, would think of the second chapter of Genesis and doubt his word!

There is no reason for supposing the serpent in this recital to be intended as a representative of Satan. The earliest trace of such an interpretation is in the Wisdom of Solomon, an anonymous and apocryphal book composed probably a thousand years later. What is said of the snake is the most plainly mythical of all the portions. What caused the snake to crawl on his belly in the dust, while other creatures walk on feet or fly with wings? Why, the sly, winding creature, more subtle, more detestable, than any beast of the field, deceived the first woman; and this is his punishment! Such was probably the mental process in the writer. To seek a profound and true theological dogma in such a statement is as absurd as to seek it in the classic myth that the lapwing with his sharp beak chases the swallow because he is the descendant of the enraged Tereus who pursued poor Progne with a drawn sword. Or, to cite a more apposite case, as well might we seek a reliable historical narrative in the following Greek myth. Zeus once gave man a remedy against old age. He put it on the back of an ass and followed on foot. It being a hot day, the ass grew thirsty, and would drink at a fount which a snake guarded. The cunning snake knew what precious burden the ass bore, and would not, except at the price of it, let him drink. He obtained the prize; but with it, as a punishment for his trick, he incessantly suffers the ass's thirst. Thus the snake, casting his skin, annually renews his youth, while man is borne down by old age.[9] In all these cases the mental action is of the same kind in motive, method, and result.

The author of the poem contained in the third chapter of Genesis does not say that man was made immortal. The implication plainly is

[9] Ælian, De Nat. Animal., lib. vi. cap. 51.

that he was created mortal, taken from the dust and naturally to return again to the dust. But by the power of God a tree was provided whose fruit would immortalize its partakers. The penalty of Adam's sin was directly, not physical death, but being forced in the sweat of his brow to wring his subsistence from the sterile ground cursed for his sake; it was indirectly literal death, in that he was prevented from eating the fruit of the tree of life. "God sent him out of the garden, lest he eat and live forever." He was therefore, according to the narrative, made originally subject to death; but an immortalizing antidote was prepared for him, which he forfeited by his transgression. That the writer made use of the trees of life and knowledge as embellishing allegories is most probable. But, if not, he was not the only devout poet who, in the early times, with sacred reverence believed the wonders the inspiring muse gave him as from God. It is not clear from the Biblical record that Adam was imagined the first man. On the contrary, the statement that Cain was afraid that those who met him would kill him, also that he went to the land of Nod and took a wife and builded a city, implies that there was another and older race. Father Peyrère wrote a book, called "Præadamitæ," more than two hundred years ago, pointing out this fact and arguing that there really were men before Adam. If science should thoroughly establish the truth of this view, religion need not suffer; but the common theology, inextricably built upon and intertangled with the dogma of "original sin," would be hopelessly ruined. But the leaders in the scientific world will not on that account shut their eyes nor refuse to reason. Christians should follow their example of truth-seeking, with a deeper faith in God, fearless of results, but resolved upon reaching reality.

It is a very singular and important fact that, from the appearance in Genesis of the account of the creation and sin and punishment of the first pair, not the faintest explicit allusion to it is subsequently found anywhere in literature until about the time of Christ. Had it been all along credited in its literal sense, as a divine revelation, could this be so? Philo Judæus gives it a thoroughly figurative meaning. He says, "Adam was created mortal in body, immortal in mind. Paradise is the soul, piety the tree of life, discriminative wisdom the tree of knowledge; the serpent is pleasure, the flaming sword turning every way is the sun revolving round the world."[10] Jesus himself never once alludes to Adam or to any part of the story of Eden. In the whole New Testament there are but two important references to the tradition, both of which are by Paul. He says, in effect, "As through the sin of Adam all are condemned unto death, so by the righteousness of Christ all shall be justified unto life." It is not a guarded doctrinal statement, but an unstudied, rhetorical illustration of the affiliation of the sinful and unhappy generations of the past with their offending progenitor, Adam, of the believing and blessed family of

[10] De Mundi Opificio, liv–lvi. De Cherub. viii.

the chosen with their redeeming head, Christ. He does not use the word death in the Epistle to the Romans prevailingly in the narrow sense of physical dissolution, but in a broad, spiritual sense, as appears, for example, in these instances:—"To be carnally-minded is death;" "The law of the spirit of life in Christ hath made me free from the law of sin and death." For the spiritually-minded were not exempt from bodily death. Paul himself died the bodily death. His idea of the relations of Adam and Christ to humanity is more clearly expressed in the other passage already alluded to. It is in the Epistle to the Corinthians, and appears to be this. The first man, Adam, was of the earth, earthy, the head and representative of a corruptible race whose flesh and blood were never meant to inherit the kingdom of God. The second man, Christ the Lord, soon to return from heaven, was a quickening spirit, head and representative of a risen spiritual race for whom is prepared the eternal inheritance of the saints in light. As by the first man came death, whose germ is transmitted with the flesh, so by the second man comes the resurrection of the dead, whose type is seen in his glorified ascension from Hades to heaven. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Upon all the line of Adam sin has entailed, what otherwise would not have been known, moral death and a disembodied descent to the under-world. But the gospel of Christ, and his resurrection as the first-fruits of them that slept, proclaim to all those that are his, at his speedy coming, a kindred deliverance from the lower gloom, an investiture with spiritual bodies, and an admission into the kingdom of God. According to Paul, then, physical death is not the retributive consequence of Adam's sin, but is the will of the Creator in the law of nature, the sowing of terrestrial bodies for the gathering of celestial bodies, the putting off of the image of the earthy for the putting on of the image of the heavenly. The specialty of the marring and punitive interference of sin in the economy is, in addition to the penalties in moral experience, the interpolation, between the fleshly "unclothing" and the spiritual "clothing upon," of the long, disembodied, subterranean residence, from the descent of Abel into its palpable solitude to the ascent of Christ out of its multitudinous world. From Adam, in the flesh, humanity sinks into the grave-realm; from Christ, in the spirit, it shall rise into heaven. Had man remained innocent, death, considered as change of body and transition to heaven, would still have been his portion; but all the suffering and evil now actually associated with death would not have been.

Leaving the Scriptures, the first man appears in literature, in the history of human thought on the beginning of our race, in three forms. There is the Mythical Adam, the embodiment of poetical musings, fanciful conceits, and speculative dreams; there is the Theological Adam, the central postulate of a group of dogmas, the support of a fabric of controversial thought, the lay-figure to fill out and wear the hypothetical dresses of a doctrinal system; and there is the Scientific Adam, the first

specimen of the genus man, the supposititious personage who, as the earliest product, on this grade, of the Creative organic force or Divine energy, commenced the series of human generations. The first is a hypostatized legend, the second a metaphysical personification, the third a philosophical hypothesis. The first is an attractive heap of imaginations, the next a dialectic mass of dogmatisms, the last a modest set of theories.

Philo says God made Adam not from any chance earth, but from a carefully-selected portion of the finest and most sifted clay, and that, as being directly created by God, he was superior to all others generated by men, the generations of whom deteriorate in each remove from him, as the attraction of a magnet weakens from the iron ring it touches along a chain of connected rings. The Rabbins say Adam was so large that when he lay down he reached across the earth, and when standing his head touched the firmament: after his fall he waded through the ocean, Orion-like. Even a French Academician, Nicolas Fleurion, held that Adam was one hundred and twenty-three feet and nine inches in height. All creatures except the angel Eblis, as the Koran teaches, made obeisance to him. Eblis, full of envy and pride, refused, and was thrust into hell by God, where he began to plot the ruin of the new race. One effect of the forbidden fruit he ate was to cause rotten teeth in his descendants. He remained in Paradise but one day. After he had eaten from the prohibited tree, Eve gave of the fruit to the other creatures in Eden, and they all ate of it, and so became mortal, with the sole exception of the phœnix, who refused to taste it, and consequently remained immortal.

The Talmud teaches that Adam would never have died had he not sinned. The majority of the Christian fathers and doctors, from Tertullian and Augustine to Luther and Calvin, have maintained the same opinion. It has been the orthodox—that is, the prevailing—doctrine of the Church, affirmed by the Synod at Carthage in the year four hundred and eighteen, and by the Council of Trent in the year fifteen hundred and forty-five. All the evils which afflict the world, both moral and material, are direct results of Adam's sin. He contained all the souls of men in himself; and they all sinned in him, their federal head and legal representative. When the fatal fruit was plucked,—

> "Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
> Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
> That all was lost."

Earthquakes, tempests, pestilences, poverty, war, the endless brood of distress, ensued. For then were

> "Turn'd askance
> The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
> From the sun's axle, and with labor push'd
> Oblique the centric globe."

Adam's transcendent faculties and gifts were darkened and diminished

in his depraved posterity, and all base propensities let loose to torment, confuse, and degrade them. We can scarcely form a conception of the genius, the beauty, the blessedness, of the first man, say the theologians in chorus.[11] Augustine declares, "The most gifted of our time must be considered, when compared with Adam in genius, as tortoises to birds in speed." Adam, writes Dante, "was made from clay, accomplished with every gift that life can teem with." Thomas Aquinas teaches that "he was immortal by grace though not by nature, had universal knowledge, fellowshipped with angels, and saw God." South, in his famous sermon on "Man the Image of God," after an elaborate panegyric of the wondrous majesty, wisdom, peacefulness, and bliss of man before the fall, exclaims, "Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens the rudiments of Paradise!" Jean Paul has amusingly burlesqued these conceits. "Adam, in his state of innocence, possessed a knowledge of all the arts and sciences, universal and scholastic history, the several penal and other codes of law, and all the old dead languages, as well as the living. He was, as it were, a living Pegasus and Pindus, a movable lodge of sublime light, a royal literary society, a pocket-seat of the Muses, and a short golden age of Louis the Fourteenth!"

Adam has been called the Man without a Navel, because, not being born of woman, there could be no umbilical cord to cut. The thought goes deep. In addition to the mythico-theological pictures of the mechanical creation and superlative condition of the first man, two forms of statement have been advanced by thoughtful students of nature. One is the theory of chronological progressive development; the other is the theory of the simultaneous creation of organic families of different species or typical forms. The advocate of the former goes back along the interminable vistas of geologic time, tracing his ancestral line through the sinking forms of animal life, until, with the aid of a microscope, he sees a closed vesicle of structureless membrane; and this he recognises as the scientific Adam. This theory has been brought into fresh discussion by Mr. Darwin in his rich and striking work on the Origin of Species.[12] The other view contrasts widely with this, and is not *essentially* different from the account in Genesis. It shows God himself creating by regular methods, in natural materials, not by a vicegerent law, not with the anthropomorphitic hands of an external potter. Every organized fabric, however complex, originates in a single physiological cell. Every individual organism—from the simple plant known as red snow to the oak, from the zoophyte to man—is developed from such a cell. This is unquestionable scientific knowledge. The phenomenal process of organic advancement is through growth of the cell by selective appropriation of

[11] Strauss gives a multitude of apposite quotations in his Christliche Glaubenslehre, band i. s. 691, sect. 51, ff.

[12] The most forcible defence of this hypothesis is that made by Herbert Spencer. See, in his volume of Essays, No. 2 of the Haythorne Papers. Also see Oken, Entstehung des ersten Menschen, Isis, 1819, ss. 1117–1123.

material, self-multiplication of the cell, chemical transformations of the pabulum of the cell, endowment of the muscular and nervous tissues produced by those transformations with vital and psychical properties.

But the essence of the problem lies in the question, Why does one of these simple cells become a cabbage, another a rat, another a whale, another a man? Within the limits of known observation during historic time, every organism yields seed or bears progeny after its own kind, Between all neighboring species there are impassable, discrete chasms. The direct reason, therefore, why one cell stops in completion at any given vegetable stage, another at a certain animal stage, is that its producing parent was that vegetable or that animal. Now, going back to the first individual of each kind, which had no determining parent like itself, the theory of the gradually ameliorating development of one species out of the next below it is one mode of solving the problem. Another mode—more satisfactory at least to theologians and their allies—is to conclude that God, the Divine Force, by whom the life of the universe is given, made the world after an ideal plan, including a systematic arrangement of all the possible modifications. This plan was in his thought, in the unity of all its parts, from the beginning; and the animate creation is the execution of its diagrams in organic life. Instead of the lineal extraction of the complicated scheme out of one cell, there has been, from epoch to epoch, the simultaneous production of all included in one of its sections. The Creator, at his chosen times, calling into existence a multitude of cells, gave each one the amount and type of organic force which would carry it to the destined grade and form. In this manner may have originated, at the same time, the first sparrow, the first horse, the first man,—in short, a whole circle of congeners.

> "The grassy clods now calved; now half appear'd
> The tawny lion, pawing to get free
> His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
> And rampant shakes his brinded mane."

Each creature, therefore, would be distinct from others from the first. "Man, though rising from not-man, came forth sharply defined." The races thus originated in their initiative representatives by the creative power of God, thenceforth possess in themselves the power, each one, in the generative act, to put its typical dynamic stamp upon the primordial cells of its immediate descendants. Adam, then, was a wild man, cast in favoring conditions of climate, endowed with the same faculties as now, only not in so high a degree. For, by his peculiar power of forming habits, accumulating experience, transmitting acquirements and tendencies, he has slowly risen to his present state with all its wealth of wisdom, arts, and comforts.

By either of these theories, that of Darwin, or that of Agassiz, man, the head of the great organic family of the earth,—and it matters not at all whether there were only one Adam and Eve, or whether each

separate race had its own Adams and Eves,[12] not merely a solitary pair, but simultaneous hundreds,—man, physically considered, is indistinguishably included in the creative plan under the same laws and forces, and visibly subject to the same destination, as the lower animals. He starts with a cell as they do, grows to maturity by assimilative organization and endowing transformation of foreign nutriment as they do, his life is a continuous process of waste and repair of tissues as theirs is, and there is, from the scientific point of view, no conceivable reason why he should not be subject to physical death as they are. They have always been subject to death,—which, therefore, is an aboriginal constituent of the Creative plan. It has been estimated, upon data furnished by scientific observation, that since the appearance of organic life on earth, millions of years ago, animals enough have died to cover all the lands of the globe with their bones to the height of three miles. Consequently, the historic commencement of death is not to be found in the sin of man. We shall discover it as a necessity in the first organic cell that was ever formed.

The spherule of force which is the primitive basis of a cell spends itself in the discharge of its work. In other words, "the amount of vital action which can be performed by each living cell has a definite limit." When that limit is reached, the exhausted cell is dead. To state the fact differently: no function can be performed without "the disintegration of a certain amount of tissue, whose components are then removed as effete by the excretory processes." This final expenditure on the part of a cell of its modification of force is the act of molecular death, the germinal essence of all decay. That this organic law should rule in every living structure is a necessity inherent in the actual conditions of the creation. And wherever we look in the realm of physical man, even "from the red outline of beginning Adam" to the amorphous adipocere of the last corpse when fate's black curtain falls on our race, we shall discern death. For death is the other side of life. Life and death are the two hands with which the organic power works.

The threescore simple elements known to chemists die,—that is, surrender their peculiar powers and properties, and enter into new combinations to produce and support higher forms of life. Otherwise these inorganic elemental wastes would be all that the material universe could show. The simple plant consists of single cells, which, in its development, give up their independent life for the production of a more exalted vegetable form. The formation of a perfectly organized plant is made possible only through the continuous dying and replacement of its cells. Similarly, in the development of an animal, the constituent cells die for the good of the whole creature; and the more perfect the animal the greater the subordination of the parts. The cells of the human body

[12] The Diversity of Origin of the Human Races, by Louis Agassiz, Christian Examiner, July, 1850.

are incessantly dying, being borne off and replaced. The epidermis or scarf-skin is made of millions of insensible scales, consisting of former cells which have died in order with their dead bodies to build this guardian wall around the tender inner parts. Thus, death, operating within the individual, seen in the light of natural science, is a necessity, is purely a form of self-surrendering beneficence, is, indeed, but a hidden and indirect process and completion of life.[14]

And is not the death of the total organism just as needful, just as benignant, as the death of the component atoms? Is it not the same law, still expressing the same meaning? The chemical elements wherein individuality is wanting, as Wagner says, die that vegetable bodies may live. Individual vegetable bodies die that new individuals of the species may live, and that they may supply the conditions for animals to live. The individual beast dies that other individuals of his species may live, and also for the good of man. The plant lives by the elements and by other plants: the animal lives by the elements, by the plants, and by other animals: man lives and reigns by the service of the elements, of the plants, and of the animals. The individual man dies—if we may trust the law of analogy—for the good of his species, and that he may furnish the conditions for the development of a higher life elsewhere. It is quite obvious that, if individuals did not die, new individuals could not live, because there would not be room. It is also equally evident that, if individuals did not die, they could never have any other life than the present. The foregoing considerations, fathomed and appreciated, transform the institution of death from caprice and punishment into necessity and benignity. In the timid sentimentalist's view, death is horrible. Nature unrolls the chart of organic existence, a convulsed and lurid list of murderers, from the spider in the window to the tiger in the jungle, from the shark at the bottom of the sea to the eagle against the floor of the sky. As the perfumed fop, in an interval of reflection, gazes at the spectacle through his dainty eyeglass, the prospect swims in blood and glares with the ghastly phosphorus of corruption, and he shudders with sickness. In the philosophical naturalist's view, the dying panorama is wholly different. Carnivorous violence prevents more pain than it inflicts; the wedded laws of life and death wear the solemn beauty and wield the merciful functions of God; all is balanced and ameliorating; above the slaughterous struggle safely soar the dove and the rainbow; out of the charnel blooms the rose to which the nightingale sings love; nor is there poison which helps not health, nor destruction which supplies not creation with nutriment for greater good and joy.

By painting such pictures as that of a woman with "Sin" written on her forehead in great glaring letters, giving to Death a globe entwined by a serpent,—or that of Death as a skeleton, waving a black banner over the world and sounding through a trumpet, "Woe, woe to the inhabit-

[14] Hermann Wagner, Der Tod, beleuchtet vom Standpunkte der Naturwissenschaften.

ants of the earth!" by interpreting the great event as punishment instead of fulfilment, extermination instead of transition,—men have elaborated, in the faith of their imaginations, a melodramatic death which nature never made. Truly, to the capable observer, death bears the double aspect of necessity and benignity: necessity, because it is an ultimate fact, as the material world is made, that, since organic action implies expenditure of force, the modicum of force given to any physical organization must finally be spent; benignity, because a bodily immortality on earth would both prevent all the happiness of perpetually-rising millions and be an unspeakable curse upon its possessors.

The benevolence of death appears from this fact,—that it boundlessly multiplies the numbers who can enjoy the prerogatives of life. It calls up ever fresh generations, with wondering eyes and eager appetites, to the perennial banquet of existence. Had Adam not sinned and been expelled from Paradise, some of the Christian Fathers thought, the fixed number of saints foreseen by God would have been reached and then no more would have been born.[15] Such would have been the necessity, there being no death. But, by the removal of one company as they grow tired and sated, room is made for a new company to approach and enjoy the ever-renewing spectacle and feast of the world. Thus all the delightful boons life has, instead of being cooped within a little stale circle, are ceaselessly diffused and increased. Vivacious claimants advance, see what is to be seen, partake of what is furnished, are satisfied, and retire; and their places are immediately taken by hungry successors. Thus the torch of life is passed briskly, with picturesque and stimulating effect, along the manifold race of running ages, instead of smouldering stagnantly forever in the moveless grasp of one. The amount of enjoyment, the quantity of conscious experience, gained from any given exhibition by a million persons to each of whom it is successively shown for one hour, is, beyond all question, immensely greater and keener than one person could have from it in a million hours. The generations of men seem like fire-flies glittering down the dark lane of History; but each swarm had its happy turn, fulfilled its hour, and rightfully gave way to its followers. The disinterested beneficence of the Creator ordains that the same plants, insects, men, shall not unsurrenderingly monopolize and stop the bliss of breath. Death is the echo of the voice of love reverberated from the limit of life.

The cumulative fund of human experience, the sensitive affiliating line of history, like a cerebral cord of personal identity traversing the centuries, renders a continual succession of generations equivalent to the endless existence of one generation; but with this mighty difference,—that it preserves all the edge and spice of novelty. For consider what would be the result if death were abolished and men endowed with an earthly immortality. At first they might rejoice, and think their last,

[15] Augustine, Op. Imp. iii. 196.

dreadest enemy destroyed. But what a mistake! In the first place, since none are to be removed from the earth, of course none must come into it. The space and material are all wanted by those now in possession. All are soon mature men and women,—not another infant ever to hang upon a mother's breast or be lifted in a father's arms. All the prattling music, fond cares, yearning love, and gushing joys and hopes associated with the rearing of children, gone! What a stupendous fragment is stricken from the fabric of those enriching satisfactions which give life its truest value and its purest charm! Ages roll on. They see the same everlasting faces, confront the same returning phenomena, engage in the same worn-out exercises, or lounge idly in the unchangeable conditions which bear no stimulant which they have not exhausted. Thousands of years pass. They have drunk every attainable spring of knowledge dry. Not a prize stirs a pulse. All pleasures, permutated till ingenuity is baffled, disgust them. No terror startles them. No possible experiment remains untried; nor is there any unsounded fortune left. No dim marvels and boundless hopes beckon them with resistless lures into the future. *They have no future.* One everlasting now is their all. At last the incessant repetition of identical phenomena, the unmitigated sameness of things, the eternal monotony of affairs, become unutterably burdensome and horrible. Full of loathing and immeasurable fatigue, a weariness like the weight of a universe oppresses them; and what would they not give for a change! any thing to break the nightmare-spell of ennui,—to fling off the dateless flesh,—to die,—to pass into some unguessed realm,—to lie down and sleep forever: it would be the infinite boon!

Take away from man all that is dependent on, or interlinked with, the appointment of death, and it would make such fundamental alterations of his constitution and relations that he would no longer be man. It would leave us an almost wholly different race. If it is a divine boon that men should be, then death is a good to us; for it enables us to be men. Without it there would neither be husband and wife, nor parent and child, nor family hearth and altar; nor, indeed, would hardly any thing be as it is now. The existent phenomena of nature and the soul would comprise all. And when the jaded individual, having mastered and exhausted this finite sum, looked in vain for any thing new or further, the world would be a hateful dungeon to him, and life an awful doom; and how gladly he would give all that lies beneath the sun's golden round and top of sovereignty to migrate into some untried region and state of being, or even to renounce existence altogether and lie down forever in the attractive slumber of the grave! Without death, mankind would undergo the fate of Sisyphus,—no future, and in the present the oppression of an intolerable task with an aching vacuum of motive. The certainty and the mystery of death create the stimulus and the romance of life. Give the human race an earthly immortality, and you exclude them from every thing greater and diviner than the earth

affords. Who could consent to that? Take away death, and a brazen wall girds in our narrow life, against which, if we remained men, we should dash and chafe in the climax of our miserable longing, as the caged lion or eagle beats against his bars.

The gift of an earthly immortality conferred on a single person—a boon which thoughtless myriads would clasp with frantic triumph—would prove, perhaps, a still more fearful curse than if distributed over the whole species. Retaining his human affections, how excruciating and remediless his grief must be, to be so cut off from all equal community of experience and destiny with mankind,—to see all whom he loves, generation after generation, fading away, leaving him alone, to form new ties again to be dissolved,—to watch his beloved ones growing old and infirm, while he stands without a change! His love would be left, in agony of melancholy grandeur, "a solitary angel hovering over a universe of tombs" on the tremulous wings of memory and grief, those wings incapacitated, by his madly-coveted prerogative of deathlessness, ever to move from above the sad rows of funereal urns. Zanoni, in Bulwer's magnificent conception, says to Viola, "The flower gives perfume to the rock on whose breast it grows. A little while, and the flower is dead; but the rock still endures, the snow at its breast, the sunshine on its summit." A deathless individual in a world of the dying, joined with them by ever-bereaved affections, would be the wretchedest creature conceivable. As no man ever yet prayed for any thing he would pray to be released, to embrace dear objects in his arms and float away with them to heaven, or even to lie down with them in the kind embrace of mother earth. And if he had no affections, but lived a stoic existence, exempt from every sympathy, in impassive solitude, he could not be happy, he would not be man: he must be an intellectual marble of thought or a monumental mystery of woe.

Death, therefore, is benignity. When men wish there were no such appointed event, they are deceived, and know not what they wish. Literature furnishes a strange and profound, though wholly unintentional, confirmation of this view. Every form in which literary genius has set forth the conception of an earthly immortality represents it as an evil. This is true even down to Swift's painful account of the Struldbrugs in the island of Laputa. The legend of the Wandering Jew,[16] one of the most marvellous products of the human mind in imaginative literature, is terrific with its blazoned revelation of the contents of an endless life on earth. This story has been embodied, with great variety of form and motive, in more than a hundred works. Every one is, without the writer's intention, a disguised sermon of gigantic force on the benignity of death. As in classic fable poor Tithôn became immortal in the dawning arms of Eôs only to lead a shrivelled, joyless,

[16] Bibliographical notice of the legend of the Wandering Jew, by Paul Lacroix; trans. into English by G. W. Thornbury. Grässe, Der ewige Jude.

repulsive existence; and the fair young witch of Cumæ had ample cause to regret that ever Apollo granted her request for as many years as she held grains of dust in her hand; and as all tales of successful alchemists or Rosicrucians concur in depicting the result to be utter disappointment and revulsion from the accursed prize; we may take it as evidence of a spontaneous conviction in the depths of human nature—a conviction sure to be brought out whenever the attempt is made to describe in life an opposite thought—that death is benign for man as he is constituted and related on earth. The voice of human nature speaks truth through the lips of Cicero, saying, at the close of his essay on Old Age, "*Quodsi non sumus immortales futuri, tamen exstingui homini suo tempore optabile est.*"

In a conversation at the house of Sappho, a discussion once arose upon the question whether death was a blessing or an evil. Some maintained the former alternative; but Sappho victoriously closed the debate by saying, If it were a blessing to die, the immortal gods would experience it. The gods live forever: therefore, death is an evil.[17] The reasoning was plausible and brilliant. Yet its sophistry is complete. To men, conditioned as they are in this world, death may be the greatest blessing; while to the gods, conditioned so differently, it may have no similar application. Because an earthly eternity in the flesh would be a frightful calamity, is no reason why a heavenly eternity in the spirit would be other than a blissful inheritance. Thus the remonstrance which may be fallaciously based on some of the foregoing considerations—namely, that they would equally make it appear that the immortality of man in any condition would be undesirable—is met. A conclusion drawn from the facts of the present scene of things, of course, will not apply to a scene inconceivably different. Those whose only bodies are their minds may be fetterless, happy, leading a wondrous life, beyond our deepest dream and farthest fancy, and eternally free from trouble or satiety.

Death is to us, while we live, what we think it to be. If we confront it with analytic and defiant eye, it is that nothing which ever ceases in beginning to be. If, letting the superstitious senses tyrannize over us and cow our better part of man, we crouch before the imagination of it, it assumes the shape of the skeleton-monarch who takes the world for his empire, the electric fluid for his chariot, and time for his sceptre. In the contemplation of death, hitherto, fancy inspired by fear has been by far too much the prominent faculty and impulse. The literature of the subject is usually ghastly, appalling, and absurd, with point of view varying from that of the credulous Hindu, personifying death as a monster with a million mouths devouring all creatures and licking them in his flaming lips as a fire devours the moths or as the sea swallows the torrents,[18] to that of the atheistic German dreamer, who converts nature into an immeasurable corpse worked by galvanic forces, and that of the

[17] Fragment X. Quoted in Mure's Hist. Lit. Greece, book iii. chap. v. sect. 18.
[18] Thomson's trans. of Bhagavad Gita, p. 77.

bold French philosopher, Carnot, whose speculations have led to the theory that the sun will finally expend all its heat, and constellated life cease, as the solar system hangs, like a dead orrery, ashy and spectral, the ghost of what it was. So the extravagant author of Festus says,—

> "God tore the glory from the sun's broad brow
> And flung the flaming scalp away."

The subject should be viewed by the unclouded intellect, guided by serene faith, in the light of scientific knowledge. Then death is revealed, first, as an organic necessity in the primordial life-cell; secondly, as the cessation of a given form of life in its completion; thirdly, as a benignant law, an expression of the Creator's love; fourthly, as the inaugurating condition of another form of life. What we are to refer to sin is all the seeming lawlessness and untimeliness of death. Had not men sinned, all would reach a good age and pass away without suffering. Death is benignant necessity; the irregularity and pain associated with it are an inherited punishment. Finally, it is a condition of improvement in life. Death is the incessant touch with which the artist, Nature, is bringing her works to perfection.

Physical death is experienced by man in common with the brute. Upon grounds of physiology there is no greater evidence for man's spiritual survival through that overshadowed crisis than there is for the brute's. And on grounds of sentiment man ought not to shrink from sharing his open future with these mute comrades. Des Cartes and Malebranche taught that animals are mere machines, without souls, worked by God's arbitrary power. Swedenborg held that "the souls of brutes are extinguished with their bodies."[19] Leibnitz, by his doctrine of eternal monads, sustains the immortality of all creatures. Coleridge defended the same idea. Agassiz, with much power and beauty, advocates the thought that animals as well as men have a future life.[20] The old traditions affirm that at least four beasts have been translated to heaven; namely, the ass that spoke to Balaam, the white foal that Christ rode into Jerusalem, the steed Borak that bore Mohammed on his famous night-journey, and the dog that wakened the Seven Sleepers. To recognise, as Goethe did, brothers in the green-wood and in the teeming air,—to sympathize with all lower forms of life, and hope for them an open range of limitless possibilities in the hospitable home of God,—is surely more becoming to a philosopher, a poet, or a Christian, than that careless scorn which commonly excludes them from regard and contemptuously leaves them to annihilation. This subject has been genially treated by Richard Dean in his "Essay on the Future Life of Brutes."

But on moral and psychological grounds the distinction is vast between the dying man and the dying brute. Bretschneider, in a beautiful sermon on this point, specifies four particulars. Man foresees and provides

[19] Outlines of the Infinite, chap. ii. sect. iv. 13.

[20] Contributions to the Natural History of the United States, vol. i. pp. 64–66.

for his death: the brute does not. Man dies with unrecompensed merit and guilt: the brute does not. Man dies with faculties and powers fitted for a more perfect state of existence: the brute does not. Man dies with the expectation of another life: the brute does not. Two contrasts may be added to these. First, man inters his dead with burial-rites, rears a memorial over them, cherishes fondest recollections of them which often change his subsequent character and life: but who ever heard of a deer watching over an expiring comrade, a deer-funeral winding along the green glades of the forest, or a mermaid-funeral in the coral-groves of the sea? The barrows of Norway, the mounds of Yucatan, the mummy-pits of Memphis, the rural cemeteries of our own day, speak the human thoughts of sympathetic reverence and posthumous survival, typical of something superior to decaying dust. Secondly, man often makes death an active instead of a passive experience, his will as it is his fate, a victory instead of a defeat.[21] As Mirabeau sank towards his end, he ordered them to pour perfumes and roses on him, and to bring music; and so, with the air of a haughty conqueror, amidst the volcanic smoke and thunder of reeling France, his giant spirit went forth. The patriot is proud to lay his body a sacrifice on the altar of his country's weal. The philanthropist rejoices to spend himself without pay in a noble cause,—to offer up his life in the service of his fellow-men. Thousands of generous students have given their lives to science and clasped death amidst their trophied achievements. Who can count the confessors who have thought it bliss and glory to be martyrs for truth and God? Creatures capable of such deeds must inherit eternity. Their transcendent souls step from their rejected mansions through the blue gateway of the air to the lucid palace of the stars. Any meaner allotment would be discordant and unbecoming their rank.

Contemplations like these exorcise the spectre-host of the brain and quell the horrid brood of fear. The noble purpose of self-sacrifice enables us to smile upon the grave, "as some sweet clarion's breath stirs the soldier's scorn of danger." Death parts with its false frightfulness, puts on its true beauty, and becomes at once the evening star of memory and the morning star of hope, the Hesper of the sinking flesh, the Phosphor of the rising soul. Let the night come, then: it shall be welcome. And, as we gird our loins to enter the ancient mystery, we will exclaim, with vanishing voice, to those we leave behind,—

> "Though I stoop
> Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
> It is but for a time. I press God's lamp
> Close to my breast: its splendor, soon or late,
> Will pierce the gloom: I shall emerge somewhere."

[21] Umbreit, über das Sterben als einen Akt menschlich-persönlicher Selbständigkeit. Studien und Kritiken, 1837.

CHAPTER III.

GROUNDS OF THE BELIEF IN A FUTURE LIFE.

It is the purpose of the following chapter to describe the originating supports of the common belief in a future life; not to probe the depth and test the value of the various grounds out of which the doctrine grows, but only to give a descriptive sketch of what they are, and a view of the process of growth. The objections urged by unbelievers belong to an open discussion of the question of immortality, not to an illustrative statement of the suggesting grounds on which the popular belief rests. When, after sufficient investigation, we ask ourselves from what causes the almost universal expectation of another life springs, and by what influences it is nourished, we shall not find adequate answer in less than four words: feeling, imagination, faith, and reflection. The doctrine of a future life for man has been created by the combined force of instinctive desire, analogical observation, prescriptive authority, and philosophical speculation. These are the four pillars on which the soul builds the temple of its hopes; or the four glasses through which it looks to see its eternal heritage.

First, it is obvious that man is endowed at once with foreknowledge of death and with a powerful love of life. It is not a love of being here; for he often loathes the scene around him. It is a love of self-possessed existence; a love of his own soul in its central consciousness and bounded royalty. This is an inseparable element of his very entity. Crowned with free will, walking on the crest of the world, enfeoffed with individual faculties, served by vassal nature with tributes of various joy, he cannot bear the thought of losing himself, of sliding into the general abyss of matter. His interior consciousness is permeated with a self-preserving instinct, and shudders at every glimpse of danger or hint of death. The soul, pervaded with a guardian instinct of life, and seeing death's steady approach to destroy the body, necessitates the conception of an escape into another state of existence. Fancy and reason, thus set at work, speedily construct a thousand theories filled with details. Desire first fathers thought, and then thought woos belief.

Secondly, man, holding his conscious being precious beyond all things, and shrinking with pervasive anxieties from the moment of destined dissolution, looks around through the realms of nature, with thoughtful eye, in search of parallel phenomena further developed, significant sequels in other creatures' fates, whose evolution and fulfilment may

haply throw light on his own. With eager vision and heart-prompted imagination he scrutinizes whatever appears related to his object. Seeing the snake cast its old slough and glide forth renewed, he conceives, so in death man but sheds his fleshly exuviæ, while the spirit emerges, regenerate. He beholds the beetle break from its filthy sepulchre and commence its summer work; and straightway he hangs a golden scarabæus in his temples as an emblem of a future life. After vegetation's wintry deaths, hailing the returning spring that brings resurrection and life to the graves of the sod, he dreams of some far-off spring of Humanity, yet to come, when the frosts of man's untoward doom shall relent, and all the costly seeds sown through ages in the great earth-tomb shall shoot up in celestial shapes. On the moaning sea-shore, weeping some dear friend, he perceives, now ascending in the dawn, the planet which he lately saw declining in the dusk; and he is cheered by the thought that

> "As sinks the day-star in the ocean-bed,
> And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
> And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
> Flames in the forehead of the morning sky,
> So Lycidas, sunk low, shall mount on high."

Some traveller or poet tells him fabulous tales of a bird which, grown aged, fills its nest with spices, and, spontaneously burning, soars from the aromatic fire, rejuvenescent for a thousand years; and he cannot but take the phœnix for a miraculous type of his own soul springing, free and eternal, from the ashes of his corpse. Having watched the silkworm, as it wove its cocoon and lay down in its oblong grave apparently dead, until at length it struggles forth, glittering with rainbow colors, a winged moth, endowed with new faculties and living a new life in a new sphere, he conceives that so the human soul may, in the fulness of time, disentangle itself from the imprisoning meshes of this world of larvæ, a thing of spirit-beauty, to sail through heavenly airs; and henceforth he engraves a butterfly on the tombstone in vivid prophecy of immortality. Thus a moralizing observation of natural similitudes teaches man to hope for an existence beyond death.

Thirdly, the prevailing belief in a future life is spread and upheld by the influence of authority. The doctrine of the soul's survival and transference to another world, where its experience depends on conditions observed or violated here, conditions somewhat within the control of a select class of men here,—such a doctrine is the very hiding-place of the power of priestcraft, a vast engine of interest and sway which the shrewd insight of priesthoods has often devised and the cunning policy of states subsidized. In most cases of this kind the asserted doctrine is placed on the basis of a divine revelation, and must be implicitly received. God proclaims it through his anointed ministers: therefore, to doubt it or logically criticize it is a crime. History bears witness to such a procedure wherever an organized priesthood has flourished, from primeval

pagan India to modern papal Rome. It is traceable from the dark Osirian shrines of Egypt and the initiating temple at Eleusis to the funeral fires of Gaul and the Druidic conclave in the oak-groves of Mona; from the reeking altars of Mexico in the time of Montezuma to the masses for souls in Purgatory said this day in half the churches of Christendom. Much of the popular faith in immortality which has prevailed in all ages has been owing to the authority of its promulgators, a deep and honest trust on the part of the people in the authoritative dicta of their religious teachers.

In all the leading nations of the earth, the doctrine of a future life is a tradition handed down from immemorial antiquity, embalmed in sacred books which are regarded as infallible revelations from God. Of course the thoughtless never think of questioning it; the reverent piously embrace it; all are educated to receive it. In addition to the proclamation of a future life by the sacred books and by the priestly hierarchies, it has also been affirmed by countless individual saints, philosophers, and prophets. Most persons readily accept it on trust from them as a demonstrated theory or an inspired knowledge of theirs. It is natural for modest unspeculative minds, busied with worldly cares, to say, These learned sages, these theosophic seers, so much more gifted, educated, and intimate with the divine counsels and plan than we are, with so much deeper experience and purer insight than we have, must know the truth: we cannot in any other way do so well as to follow their guidance and confide in their assertions. Accordingly, multitudes receive the belief in a life to come on the authority of the world's intellectual and religious leaders.

Fourthly, the belief in a future life results from philosophical meditation, and is sustained by rational proofs.[1] For the completion of the present outline, it now remains to give a brief exposition of these arguments. For the sake of convenience and clearness, we must arrange these reasonings in five classes; namely, the physiological, the analogical, the psychological, the theological, and the moral.

There is a group of considerations drawn from the phenomena of our bodily organization, life and death, which compose the *physiological argument* for the separate existence of the soul. In the first place, it is contended that the human organization, so wondrously vitalized, developed, and ruled, could not have grown up out of mere matter, but implies a pre-existent mental entity, a spiritual force or idea, which constituted the primeval impulse, grouped around itself the organic conditions of our existence, and constrained the material elements to the subsequent processes and results, according to a prearranged plan.[2] This dynamic agent, this ontological cause, may naturally survive when the fleshly

[1] Wohlfarth, Triumph des Glaubens an Unsterblichkeit und Wiedersehen über jeden Zweifel. Oporinus, Historia Critica Doctrinæ de Immortalitate Mortalium.

[2] Müller, Elements of Physiology, book vi. sect. I. ch. 1.

organization which it has built around itself dissolves. Its independence before the body began involves its independence after the body is ended. Stahl has especially illustrated in physiology this idea of an independent soul-monad.

Secondly, as some potential being must have preceded our birth, to assimilate and construct the physical system, so the great phenomena attending our conscious life necessitate, both to our instinctive apprehension and in our philosophical conviction, the distinctive division of man into body and soul, tabernacle and tenant. The illustrious Boerhaave wrote a valuable dissertation on the distinction of the mind from the body, which is to be found among his works. Every man knows that he dwells in the flesh but is not flesh. He is a free, personal mind, occupying and using a material body, but not identified with it. Ideas and passions of purely immaterial origin pervade every nerve with terrific intensity, and shake his encasing corporeity like an earthquake. A thought, a sentiment, a fancy, may prostrate him as effectually as a blow on his brain from a hammer. He wills to move a palsied limb: the soul is unaffected by the paralysis, but the muscles refuse to obey his volition: the distinction between the person willing and the instrument to be wielded is unavoidable.

Thirdly, the fact of death itself irresistibly suggests the duality of flesh and spirit. It is the removal of the energizing mind that leaves the frame so empty and meaningless. Think of the undreaming sleep of a corpse which dissolution is winding in its chemical embrace. A moment ago that hand was uplifted to clasp yours, intelligent accents were vocal on those lips, the light of love beamed in that eye. One shuddering sigh,—and how cold, vacant, forceless, dead, lies the heap of clay! It is impossible to prevent the conviction that an invisible power has been liberated; that the flight of an animating principle has produced this awful change. Why may not that untraceable something which has gone still exist? Its vanishing from our sensible cognizance is no proof of its perishing. Not a shadow of genuine evidence has ever been afforded that the real life-powers of any creature are destroyed.[3] In the absence of that proof, a multitude of considerations urge us to infer the contrary. Surely there is room enough for the contrary to be true; for, as Jacobi profoundly observes, "life is not a form of body; but body is one form of life." Therefore the soul which now exists in this form, not appearing to be destroyed on its departure hence, must be supposed to live hereafter in some other form.[4]

A second series of observations and reflections, gathered from partial similarities elsewhere in the world, are combined to make the *analogical argument* for a future life. For many centuries, in the literature of many nations, a standard illustration of the thought that the soul survives the decay of its earthy investiture has been drawn from the metamorphosis

[3] Sir Humphry Davy, Proteus or Immortality. [4] Bakewell, Natural Evidence of a Future State.

of the caterpillar into the butterfly.[5] This world is the scene of our grub-state. The body is but a chrysalis of soul. When the preliminary experience and stages are finished and the transformation is complete, the spirit emerges from its cast-off cocoon and broken cell into the more ethereal air and sunnier light of a higher world's eternal day. The emblematic correspondence is striking, and the inference is obvious and beautiful. Nor is the change, the gain in endowments and privileges, greater in the supposed case of man than it is from the slow and loathsome worm on the leaf to the swift and glittering insect in the air.

Secondly, in the material world, so far as we can judge, nothing is ever absolutely destroyed. There is no such thing as annihilation. Things are changed, transformations abound; but essences do not cease to be. Take a given quantity of any kind of matter; divide and subdivide it in ten thousand ways, by mechanical violence, by chemical solvents. Still it exists, as the same quantity of matter, with unchanged qualities as to its essence, and will exist when Nature has manipulated it in all her laboratories for a billion ages. Now, as a solitary exception to this, are minds absolutely destroyed? are will, conscience, thought, and love annihilated? Personal intelligence, affection, identity, are inseparable components of the idea of a soul. And what method is there of crushing or evaporating these out of being? What force is there to compel them into nothing? Death is not a substantive cause working effects. It is itself merely an effect. It is simply a change in the mode of existence. That this *change* puts an *end* to existence is an assertion against analogy, and wholly unsupported.

Thirdly, following the analogy of science and the visible order of being, we are led to the conception of an ascending series of existences rising in regular gradation from coarse to fine, from brutal to mental, from earthly composite to simply spiritual, and thus pointing up the rounds of life's ladder, through all nature, to the angelic ranks of heaven. Then, feeling his kinship and common vocation with supernal beings, man is assured of a loftier condition of existence reserved for him. There are no such immense, vacantly yawning chasms, as that would be, between our fleshly estate and the Godhead. Nature takes no such enormous jumps. Her scaling advance is by staid and normal steps.

> "There's lifeless matter. Add the power of shaping,
> And you've the crystal: add again the organs
> Wherewith to subdue sustenance to the form
> And manner of one's self, and you've the plant:
> Add power of motion, senses, and so forth,
> And you've all kinds of beasts: suppose a pig.
> To pig add reason, foresight, and such stuff,
> Then you have man. What shall we add to man
> To bring him higher?"

Freedom from the load of clay, emancipation of the spirit into the full range and masterdom of a spirit's powers!

[5] Butler, Analogy, part i. ch. 1.

Fourthly, many strong similarities between our entrance into this world and our departure out of it would make us believe that death is but another and higher birth.[6] Any one acquainted with the state of an unborn infant—deriving its sole nutriment, its very existence, from its vascular connection with its mother—could hardly imagine that its separation from its mother would introduce it to a new and independent life. He would rather conclude that it would perish, like a twig wrenched from its parent limb. So it may be in the separation of the soul from the body. Further, as our latent or dimly-groping senses were useless while we were developing in embryo, and then implied this life, so we now have, in rudimentary condition, certain powers of reason, imagination, and heart, which prophesy heaven and eternity; and mysterious intimations ever and anon reach us from a diviner sphere,—

> "Like hints and echoes of the world
> To spirits folded in the womb."

The Persian poet, Buzurgi, says on this theme,—

> "What is the soul? The seminal principle from the loins of destiny.
> This world is the womb: the body, its enveloping membrane:
> The bitterness of dissolution, dame Fortune's pangs of childbirth.
> What is death? To be born again, an angel of eternity."

Fifthly, many cultivated thinkers have firmly believed that the soul is not so young as is usually thought, but is an old *stager* on this globe, having lived through many a previous existence, here or elsewhere.[7] They sustain this conclusion by various considerations, either drawn from premises presupposing the necessary eternity of spirits, or resting on dusky reminiscences, "shadowy recollections," of visions and events vanished long ago. Now, if the idea of foregone conscious lives, personal careers oft repeated with unlost being, be admitted,—as it frequently has been by such men as Plato and Wordsworth,—all the connected analogies of the case carry us to the belief that immortality awaits us. We shall live through the next transition, as we have lived through the past ones.

Sixthly, rejecting the hypothesis of an anterior life, and entertaining the supposition that there is no creating and overruling God, but that all things have arisen by spontaneous development or by chance, still, we are not consistently obliged to expect annihilation as the fate of the soul. Fairly reasoning from the analogy of the past, across the facts of the present, to the impending contingencies of the future, we may say that the next stage in the unfolding processes of nature is not the destruction of our consciousness, but issues in a purer life, elevates us to a spiritual rank. It is just to argue that if mindless law or boundless fortuity made this world and brought us here, it may as well make, or have made, another world, and bear us there. Law or chance—excluding God from

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[6] Bretschneider, Predigten über Tod, Unsterblichkeit, und Auferstehung.

[7] James Parker, Account of the Divine Goodness concerning the Pre-existence of Souls.

the question—may as easily make us immortal as mortal. Reasoning by analogy, we may affirm that, as life has been given us, so it will be given us again and forever.

Seventhly, faith in immortality is fed by another analogy, not based on reflection, but instinctively felt. Every change of material in our organism, every change of consciousness, is a kind of death. We partially die as often as we leave behind forgotten experiences and lost states of being. We die successively to infancy, childhood, youth, manhood. The past is the dead: but our course is still on, forever on. Having survived so many deaths, we expect to survive all others and to be ourselves eternally.

There is a third cluster of reasonings, deduced from the distinctive nature of spirit, constituting the *psychological argument* for the existence of the soul independent of the body. In the outset, obviously, if the soul be an immaterial entity, its natural immortality follows; because death and decay can only be supposed to take effect in dissoluble combinations. Several ingenious reasons have been advanced in proof of the soul's immateriality,—reasons cogent enough to have convinced a large class of philosophers.[8] It is sufficient here to notice the following one. All motion implies a dynamic mover. Matter is dormant. Power is a reality entirely distinct from matter in its nature. But man is essentially an active power, a free will. Consequently there is in him an immaterial principle, since all power is immaterial. That principle is immortal, because subsisting in a sphere of being whose categories exclude the possibility of dissolution.[9]

Secondly, should we admit the human soul to be material, yet if it be an ultimate monad, an indivisible atom of mind, it is immortal still, defying all the forces of destruction. And that it actually is an uncompounded unit may be thus proved. Consciousness is simple, not collective. Hence the power of consciousness, the central soul, is an absolute integer. For a living perceptive whole cannot be made of dead imperceptive parts. If the soul were composite, each component part would be an individual, a distinguishable consciousness. Such not being the fact, the conclusion results that the soul is one, a simple substance.[10] Of course it is not liable to death, but is naturally eternal.

Thirdly, the indestructibleness of the soul is a direct inference from its ontological characteristics. Reason, contemplating the elements of the soul, cannot but embrace the conviction of its perpetuity and its essential independence of the fleshly organization. Our life in its innermost substantive essence is best defined as a conscious force. Our present existence is the organic correlation of that personal force with the phy-

[8] Astruc, Dissertation sur l'Immatérialité et l'Immortalité de l'Âme. Broughton, Defence of the Doctrine of the Human Soul as an Immaterial and Naturally Immortal Principle. Marstaller, Von der Unsterblichkeit der Menschlichen Seele.

[9] Andrew Baxter, Inquiry into the Nature of the Soul.

[10] Herbart, Lehrbuch zur Psychologie, sect. 150.

sical materials of the body, and with other forces. The cessation of that correlation at death by no means involves, so far as we can see, the destruction or the disindividualization of the primal personal force. It is a fact of striking significance, often noticed by psychologists, that we are unable to conceive ourselves as dead. The negation of itself is impossible to consciousness. The reason we have such a dread of death is that we conceive ourselves as still alive, only in the grave, or wandering through horrors and shut out from wonted pleasures. It belongs to material growths to ripen, loosen, decay; but what is there in sensation, reflection, memory, volition, to crumble in pieces and rot away? Why should the power of hope, and joy, and faith, change into inanity and oblivion? What crucible shall burn up the ultimate of force? What material processes shall ever disintegrate the simplicity of spirit? Earth and plant, muscle, nerve, and brain, belong to one sphere, and are subject to the temporal fates that rule there; but reason, imagination, love, will, belong to another, and, immortally fortressed there, laugh to scorn the fretful sieges of decay.

Fourthly, the surviving superiority of the soul, inferred from its contrast of qualities to those of its earthy environment, is further shown by another fact,—the mind's dream-power, and the ideal realm it freely soars or walks at large in when it pleases.[11] This view has often been enlarged upon, especially by Bonnet and Sir Henry Wotton. The unhappy Achilles, exhausted with weeping for his friend, lay, heavily moaning, on the shore of the far-sounding sea, in a clear spot where the waves washed in upon the beach, when sleep took possession of him. The ghost of miserable Patroclus came to him and said, "Sleepest thou and art forgetful of me, O Achilles?" And the son of Peleus cried, "Come nearer: let us embrace each other, though but for a little while." Then he stretched out his friendly hands, but caught him not; for the spirit, shrieking, vanished beneath the earth like smoke. Astounded, Achilles started up, clasped his hands, and said, dolefully, "Alas! there is then indeed in the subterranean abodes a spirit and image, but there is no body in it."[12] The realm of dreams is a world of mystic realities, intangible, yet existent, and all-prophetic, through which the soul nightly floats while the gross body slumbers. It is everlasting, because there is nothing in it for corruption to take hold of. The appearances and sounds of that soft inner sphere, veiled so remote from sense, are reflections and echoes from the spirit-world. Or are they a direct vision and audience of it? The soul really is native resident in a world of truth, goodness, and beauty, fellow-citizen with divine ideas and affections. Through the senses it has knowledge and communion with the hard outer-world of matter. When the senses fall away, it is left, imperishable denizen of its own appropriate world of idealities.

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[11] Schubert, Die Symbolik des Traumes. [12] Iliad, lib. xxiii. ll. 60–105.

Another assemblage of views, based on the character of God, form the *theological argument* for the future existence of man.[13] Starting with the idea of a God of infinite perfections, the immortality of his children is an immediate deduction from the eternity of his purposes. For whatever purpose God originally gave man being,—for the disinterested distribution of happiness, for the increase of his own glory, or whatever else,—will he not for that same purpose continue him in being forever? In the absence of any reason to the contrary, we must so conclude. In view of the unlimited perfections of God, the fact of conscious responsible creatures being created is sufficient warrant of their perpetuity. Otherwise God would be fickle. Or, as one has said, he would be a mere drapery-painter, nothing within the dress.

Secondly, leaving out of sight this illustration of an eternal purpose in eternal fulfilment, and confining our attention to the analogy of the divine works and the dignity of the divine Worker, we shall be freshly led to the same conclusion. Has God moulded the dead clay of the material universe into gleaming globes and ordered them to fly through the halls of space forever, and has he created, out of his own omnipotence, mental personalities reflecting his own attributes, and doomed them to go out in endless night after basking, poor ephemera, in the sunshine of a momentary life? It is not to be imagined that God ever works in vain. Yet if a single consciousness be extinguished in everlasting nonentity, so far as the production of that consciousness is concerned he has wrought for nothing. His action was in vain, because all is now, to that being, exactly the same as if it had never been. God does nothing in sport or unmeaningly: least of all would he create filial spirits, dignified with the solemn endowments of humanity, without a high and serious end.[14] To make men, gifted with such a transcendent largess of powers, wholly mortal, to rot forever in the grave after life's swift day, were work far more unworthy of God than the task was to Michael Angelo—set him in mockery by Pietro, the tyrant who succeeded Lorenzo the Magnificent in the dukedom of Florence,—that he should scoop up the snow in the Via Larga, and with his highest art mould a statue from it, to dissolve ere night in the glow of the Italian sun.

Thirdly, it is an attribute of Infinite Wisdom to proportion powers to results, to adapt instruments to ends with exact fitness. But if we are utterly to die with the ceasing breath, then there is an amazing want of symmetry between our endowments and our opportunity; our attainments are most superfluously superior to our destiny. Can it be that an earth house of six feet is to imprison forever the intellect of a La Place, whose telescopic eye, piercing the unfenced fields of immensity, systematized more worlds than there are grains of dust in this globe?—the heart

[13] Aebli, Unsterblichkeit der menschlichen Seele, sechster Brief.

[14] Ulrici, Unsterblichkeit der menschlichen Seele aus dem Wesen Gottes erwiesen.

of a Borromeo, whose seraphic love expanded to the limits of sympathetic being?—the soul of a Wycliffe, whose undaunted will, in faithful consecration to duty, faced the fires of martyrdom and never blenched?—the genius of a Shakspeare, whose imagination exhausted worlds and then invented new? There is vast incongruity between our faculties and the scope given them here. On all it sees below the soul reads "Inadequate," and rises dissatisfied from every feast, craving, with divine hunger and thirst, the ambrosia and nectar of a fetterless and immortal world. Were we fated to perish at the goal of threescore, God would have harmonized our powers with our lot. He would never have set such magnificent conceptions over-against such poor possibilities, nor have kindled so insatiable an ambition for so trivial a prize of—dust to dust.

Fourthly, one of the weightiest supports of the belief in a future life is that yielded by the benevolence of God. Annihilation is totally irreconcilable with this. That He whose love for his creatures is infinite will absolutely destroy them after their little span of life, when they have just tasted the sweets of existence and begun to know the noble delights of spiritual progress, and while illimitable heights of glory and blessedness are beckoning them, is incredible. We are unable to believe that while his children turn to him with yearning faith and gratitude, with fervent prayer and expectation, he will spurn them into unmitigated night, blotting out those capacities of happiness which he gave them with a virtual promise of endless increase. Will the affectionate God permit humanity, ensconced in the field of being, like a nest of ground-sparrows, to be trodden in by the hoof of annihilation? Love watches to preserve life. It were Moloch, not the universal Father, that could crush into death these multitudes of loving souls supplicating him for life, dash into silent fragments these miraculous personal harps of a thousand strings, each capable of vibrating a celestial melody of praise and bliss.

Fifthly, the apparent claims of justice afford presumptive proof, hard to be resisted, of a future state wherein there are compensations for the unmerited ills, a complement for the fragmentary experiences, and rectification for the wrongs, of the present life.[15] God is just; but he works without impulse or caprice, by laws whose progressive evolution requires time to show their perfect results. Through the brief space of this existence, where the encountering of millions of free intelligences within the fixed conditions of nature causes a seeming medley of good and evil, of discord and harmony, wickedness often triumphs, villany often outreaches and tramples ingenuous nobility and helpless innocence. Some saintly spirits, victims of disease and penury, drag out their years in agony, neglect, and tears. Some bold minions of selfishness, with seared consciences and nerves of iron, pluck the coveted fruits of pleasure, wear the diadems of society, and sweep through the world in pomp.

[15] M. Jules Simon, La Religion Naturelle, liv. iii.: L'Immortalité.

The virtuous suffer undeservedly from the guilty. The idle thrive on the industrious. All these things sometimes happen. In spite of the compensating tendencies which ride on all spiritual laws, in spite of the mysterious Nemesis which is throned in every bosom and saturates the moral atmosphere with influence, the world is full of wrongs, sufferings, and unfinished justice.[16] There must be another world, where the remunerating processes interiorly begun here shall be openly consummated. Can it be that Christ and Herod, Paul and Nero, Timour and Fénelon, drop through the blind trap of death into precisely the same condition of unwaking sleep? Not if there be a God!

There is a final assemblage of thoughts pertaining to the likelihood of another life, which, arranged together, may be styled the *moral argument* in behalf of that belief.[17] These considerations are drawn from the seeming fitness of things, claims of parts beseeching completion, vaticinations of experience. They form a cumulative array of probabilities whose guiding forefingers all indicate one truth, whose consonant voices swell into a powerful strain of promise. First, consider the shrinking from annihilation naturally felt in every breast. If man be not destined for perennial life, why is this dread of non-existence woven into the soul's inmost fibres? Attractions are co-ordinate with destinies, and every normal desire foretells its own fulfilment. Man fades unwillingly from his natal haunts, still longing for a life of eternal remembrance and love, and confiding in it. All over the world grows this pathetic race of forget-me-nots. Shall not Heaven pluck and wear them on her bosom?

Secondly, an emphatic presumption in favor of a second life arises from the premature mortality prevalent to such a fearful extent in the human family. Nearly one-half of our race perish before reaching the age of ten years. In that period they cannot have fulfilled the total purposes of their creation. It is but a part we see, and not the whole. The destinies here seen segmentary will appear full circle beyond the grave. The argument is hardly met by asserting that this untimely mortality is the punishment for non-observance of law; for, denying any further life, would a scheme of existence have been admitted establishing so awful a proportion of violations and penalties? If there be no balancing sphere beyond, then all should pass through the experience of a ripe and rounded life. But there is the most perplexing inequality. At one fell swoop, infant, sage, hero, reveller, martyr, are snatched into the invisible state. There is, as a noble thinker has said, an apparent "caprice in the dispensation of death strongly indicative of a hidden sequel." Immortality unravels the otherwise inscrutable mystery.

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[16] Dr. Chalmers, Bridgewater Treatise, chap. 10.

[17] Crombie, Natural Theology, Essay IV.: The Arguments for Immortality. Bretschneider, Die Religiöse Glaubenslehre, sect. 20–21.

Thirdly, the function of conscience furnishes another attestation to the continued existence of man. This vicegerent of God in the breast, arrayed in splendors and terrors, which shakes and illumines the whole circumference of our being with its thunders and lightnings, gives the good man, amidst oppressions and woes, a serene confidence in a future justifying reward, and transfixes the bad man, through all his retinue of guards and panoplied defences, with icy pangs of fear and with a horrid looking for judgment to come. The sublime grandeur of moral freedom, the imperilling dignities of probation, the tremendous responsibilities and hazards of man's felt power and position, are all inconsistent with the supposition that he is merely to cross this petty stage of earth and then wholly expire. Such momentous endowments and exposures imply a corresponding arena and career. After the trial comes the sentence; and that would be as if a palace were built, a prince born, trained, crowned, solely that he might occupy the throne five minutes! The consecrating, royalizing idea of duty cannot be less than the core of eternal life. Conscience is the sensitive corridor along which the mutual whispers of a divine communion pass and repass. A moral law and a free will are the root by which we grow out of God, and the stem by which we are grafted into him.

Fourthly, all probable surmisings in favor of a future life, or any other moral doctrine, are based on that primal postulate which, by virtue of our rational and ethical constitution, we are authorized and bound to accept as a commencing axiom,—namely, that the scheme of creation is as a whole the best possible one, impelled and controlled by wisdom and benignity. Whatever, then, is an inherent part of the plan of nature cannot be erroneous nor malignant, a mistake nor a curse. Essentially and in the finality, every fundamental portion and element of it must be good and perfect. So far as science and philosophy have penetrated, they confirm by facts this *à priori* principle, telling us that there is no pure and uncompensated evil in the universe. Now, death is a regular ingredient in the mingled world, an ordered step in the plan of life. If death be absolute, is it not an evil? What can the everlasting deprivation of all good be called but an immense evil to its subject? Such a doom would be without possible solace, standing alone in steep contradiction to the whole parallel moral universe. Then might man utter the most moving and melancholy paradox ever expressed in human speech:—

> "*What good came to my mind I did deplore,*
> Because it perish must, and not live evermore."

Fifthly, the soul, if not outwardly arrested by some hostile agent, seems capable of endless progress without ever exhausting either its own capacity or the perfections of infinitude.[18] There are before it unlimited

[18] Addison, Spectator, Nos. 3 and 210.

truth, beauty, power, nobleness, to be contemplated, mastered, acquired. With indefatigable alacrity, insatiable faculty and desire, it responds to the infinite call. The obvious inference is that its destiny is unending advancement. Annihilation would be a sequel absurdly incongruous with the facts. True, the body decays, and all manifested energy fails; but that is the fault of the mechanism, not of the spirit. Were we to live many thousands of years, as Martineau suggests, no one supposes new souls, but only new organizations, would be needed. And what period can we imagine to terminate the unimpeded spirit's abilities to learn, to enjoy, to expand? Kant's famous demonstration of man's eternal life on the grounds of practical reason is similar. The related ideas of absolute virtue and a moral being necessarily imply the infinite progress of the latter towards the former. That progress is impossible except on condition of the continued existence of the same being. Therefore the soul is immortal.[19]

Sixthly, our whole life here is a steady series of growing preparations for a continued and ascending life hereafter. All the spiritual powers we develop are so much athletic training, all the ideal treasures we accumulate are so many preliminary attainments, for a future life. They have this appearance and superscription. Man alone foreknows his own death and expects a succeeding existence; and that foresight is given to prepare him. There are wondrous impulses in us, constitutional convictions prescient of futurity, like those prevising instincts in birds leading them to take preparatory flights before their actual migration. Eternity is the stuff of which our love, flying forward, builds its nest in the eaves of the universe. If we saw wings growing out upon a young creature, we should be forced to conclude that he was intended some time to fly. It is so with man. By exploring thoughts, disciplinary sacrifices, supernal prayers, holy toils of disinterestedness, he fledges his soul's pinions, lays up treasures in heaven, and at last migrates to the attracting clime.

> "Here sits he, shaping wings to fly:
> His heart forebodes a mystery;
> He names the name eternity."

Seventhly, in the degree these preparations are made in obedience to obscure instincts and the developing laws of experience, they are accompanied by significant premonitions, lucid signals of the future state looked to, assuring witnesses of its reality. The more one lives for immortality, the more immortal things he assimilates into his spiritual substance, the more confirming tokens of a deathless inheritance his faith finds. He becomes conscious of his own eternity.[20] When hallowed imagination weighs anchor and spreads sail to coast the dim shores of the other world, it hears cheerful voices of welcome from the headlands and discerns beacons burning in the port. When in earnest communion with our

[19] Jacob, Beweis für die Unsterblichkeit der Seele aus dem Begriffe der Pflicht.
[20] Theodore Parker, Sermon of Immortal Life.

inmost selves, solemn meditations of God, mysterious influences shed from unseen spheres, fall on our souls, and many a "strange thought, transcending our wonted themes, into glory peeps." A vague, constraining sense of invisible beings, by whom we are engirt, fills us. We blindly feel that our rank and destination are with them. Lift but one thin veil, we think, and the occult Universe of Spirit would break to vision with cloudy crowds of angels. Thousand "hints chance-dropped from nature's sphere," pregnant with friendly tidings, reassure us. "Strange," said a gifted metaphysician once, "that the barrel-organ, man, should terminate every tune with the strain of immortality!" Not strange, but divinely natural. It is the tentative prelude to the thrilling music of our eternal bliss written in the score of destiny. When at night we gaze far out into immensity, along the shining vistas of God's abode, and are almost crushed by the overwhelming prospects that sweep upon our vision, do not some pre-monitions of our own unfathomed greatness also stir within us? Yes: "the sense of Existence, the ideas of Right and Duty, awful intuitions of God and immortality,—these, the grand facts and substance of the spirit, are independent and indestructible. The bases of the Moral Law, they shall stand in every tittle, although the stars should pass away. For their relations and root are in that which upholds the stars, even with worlds unseen from the finite, whose majestic and everlasting arrangements shall burst upon us—as the heavens do through the night—when the light of this garish life gives place to the solemn splendors of eternity."

Eighthly, the belief in a life beyond death has virtually prevailed everywhere and always. And the argument from universal consent, as it is termed, has ever been esteemed one of the foremost testimonies, if not indeed the most convincing testimony, to the truth of the doctrine. Unless the belief can be shown to be artificial or sinful, it must seem conclusive. Its innocence is self-evident, and its naturalness is evidenced by its universality. The rudest and the most polished, the simplest and the most learned, unite in the expectation, and cling to it through every thing. It is like the ruling presentiment implanted in those insects that are to undergo metamorphosis. This believing instinct, so deeply seated in our consciousness, natural, innocent, universal, whence came it, and why was it given? There is but one fair answer. God and nature deceive not.

Ninthly, the conscious, practical faith of civilized nations, to-day, in a future life, unquestionably, in a majority of individuals, rests directly on the basis of authority, trust in a foreign announcement. There are two forms of this authority. The authority of revelation is most prominent and extensive. God has revealed the truth from heaven. It has been exemplified by a miraculous resurrection. It is written in an infallible book, and sealed with authenticating credentials of supernatural purport. It is therefore to be accepted with implicit trust. Secondly, with some, the authority of great minds, renowned for scientific

knowledge and speculative acumen, goes far. Thousands of such men, ranking among the highest names of history, have positively affirmed the immortality of the soul as a reliable truth. For instance, Goethe says, on occasion of the death of Wieland, "The destruction of such high powers is something which can never, and under no circumstances, even come into question." Such a dogmatic expression of conviction resting on bare philosophical grounds, from a mind so equipped, so acute, and so free, has great weight, and must influence a modest student who hesitates in confessed incompetence.[21] The argument is justly powerful when but humanly considered, and when divinely derived, of course, it absolutely forecloses all doubts.

Tenthly, there is another life, because a belief in it is necessary to order this world, necessary as a comfort and an inspiration to man now. A good old author writes, "the very nerves and sinews of religion is hope of immortality." The conviction that there is a retributive life hereafter is the moral cement of the social fabric. Take away this truth, and one great motive of patriots, martyrs, thinkers, saints, is gone. Take it away, and to all low-minded men selfishness becomes the law, earthly enjoyment the only good, suffering and death the only evil. Life then is to be supremely coveted and never put in risk for any stake. Self-indulgence is to be secured at any hazard, little matter by what means. Abandon all hope of a life to come, and "from that instant there is nothing serious in mortality." In order that the world should be governable, ethical, happy, virtuous, magnanimous, is it possible that it should be necessary for the world to believe in an untruth?

> "So, thou hast immortality in mind?
> Hast grounds that will not let thee doubt it?
> The strongest ground herein I find:—
> That we could never do without it!"

Finally, the climax of these argumentations is capped by that grand closing consideration which we may entitle the force of congruity, the convincing results of a confluence of harmonious reasons. The hypothesis of immortality accords with the cardinal facts of observation, meets all points of the case, and satisfactorily answers every requirement. It is the solution of the problem,—as the fact of Neptune explained the perturbations of the adjacent planets. Nothing ever gravitates towards nothing; and it must be an unseen orb that so draws our yearning souls. If it be not so, then what terrible contradictions stagger us, and what a chilling doom awaits us! Oh, what mocking irony then runs through the loftiest promises and hopes of the world! Just as the wise and good have learned to live, they disappear amidst the unfeeling waves of oblivion, like snow-flakes in the ocean. "The super-earthly desires of man are then created in him only, like swallowed diamonds, to cut slowly through his material shell" and destroy him.

[21] Lewis, Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion.

The denial of a future life introduces discord, grief, and despair in every direction, and, by making each step of advanced culture the ascent to a wider survey of tantalizing glory and experienced sorrow, as well as the preparation for a greater fall and a sadder loss, turns faithful affection and heroic thought into "blind furies slinging flame." Unless immortality be true, man appears a dark riddle, not made for that of which he is made capable and desirous: every thing is begun, nothing ended; the facts of the present scene are unintelligible; the plainest analogies are violated; the delicately-rising scale of existence is broken off abrupt; our best reasonings concerning the character and designs of God, also concerning the implications of our own being and experience, are futile; and the soul's proud faculties tell glorious lies as thick as stars. Such, at least, is the usual way of thinking.

However formidable a front may be presented by the spectral array of doubts and difficulties, seeming impediments to faith in immortality, the faithful servant of God, equipped with philosophical culture and a saintly life, will fearlessly advance upon them, scatter them right and left, and win victorious access to the prize. So the mariner sometimes, off Sicilian shores, sees a wondrous island ahead, apparently stopping his way with its cypress and cedar groves, glittering towers, vine-wreathed balconies, and marble stairs sloping to the water's edge. He sails straight forward, and, severing the pillared porticos and green gardens of Fata Morgana, glides far on over a glassy sea smiling in the undeceptive sun.

CHAPTER IV.

THEORIES OF THE SOUL'S DESTINATION.

Before examining, in their multifarious detail, the special thoughts and fancies respecting a future life prevalent in different nations and times, it may be well to take a sort of bird's-eye view of those general theories of the destination of the soul under which all the individual varieties of opinion may be classified. Vast and incongruous as is the heterogeneous mass of notions brought forth by the history of this province of the world's belief, the whole may be systematized, discriminated, and reduced to a few comprehensive heads. Such an architectural grouping or outlining of the chief schemes of thought on this subject will yield several advantages.

Showing how the different views arose from natural speculations on the correlated phenomena of the outward world and facts of human experience, it affords an indispensable help towards a philosophical analysis and explanation of the popular faith as to the destiny of man

after death, in all the immense diversity of its contents. An orderly arrangement and exposition of these cardinal theories also form an epitome holding a bewildering multitude of particulars in its lucid and separating grasp, changing the fruits of learned investigation from a cumbersome burden on the memory to a small number of connected formularies in the reason. These theories serve as a row of mirrors hung in a line of historic perspective, reflecting every relevant shape and hue of meditation and faith humanity has known, from the ideal visions of the Athenian sage to the instinctive superstitions of the Fejee savage. When we have adequately defined these theories,—of which there are *seven*,—traced their origin, comprehended their significance and bearings, and dissected their supporting pretensions, then the whole field of our theme lies in light before us; and, however grotesque or mysterious, simple or subtle, may be the modes of thinking and feeling in relation to the life beyond death revealed in our subsequent researches, we shall know at once where to refer them and how to explain them. The precise object, therefore, of the present chapter is to set forth the comprehensive theories devised to solve the problem, What becomes of man when he dies?

But a little while man flourishes here in the bosom of visible nature. Soon he disappears from our scrutiny, missed in all the places that knew him. Whither has he gone? What fate has befallen him? It is an awful question. In comparison with its concentrated interest, all other affairs are childish and momentary. Whenever that solemn question is asked, earth, time, and the heart, natural transformations, stars, fancy, and the brooding intellect, are full of vague oracles. Let us see what intelligible answers can be constructed from their responses.

The first theory which we shall consider propounds itself in one terrible word, *annihilation*. Logically this is the earliest, historically the latest, view. The healthy consciousness, the eager fancy, the controlling sentiment, the crude thought,—all the uncurbed instinctive conclusions of primitive human nature,—point forcibly to a continued existence for the soul, in some way, when the body shall have perished. And so history shows us in all the savage nations a vivid belief in a future life. But to the philosophical observer, who has by dint of speculation freed himself from the constraining tendencies of desire, faith, imagination, and authority, the thought that man totally ceases with the destruction of his visible organism must occur as the first and simplest settlement of the question.[1] The totality of manifested life has absolutely disappeared: why not conclude that the totality of real life has actually lost its existence and is no more? That is the natural inference, unless by some means the contrary can be proved. Accordingly, among all civilized people, every age has had its skeptics, metaphysical disputants who have mournfully or scoffingly denied the separate survival of the soul. This

[1] Lalande, Dictionnaire des Athées Anciens et Modernes.

is a necessity in the inevitable sequences of observation and theory; because, when the skeptic, suppressing or escaping his biassed wishes, the trammels of traditional opinion, and the spontaneous convictions prophetic of his own uninterrupted being, first looks over the wide scene of human life and death, and reflectingly asks, What is the sequel of this strange, eventful history? obviously the conclusion suggested by the immediate phenomena is that of entire dissolution and blank oblivion. This result is avoided by calling in the aid of deeper philosophical considerations and of inspiring moral truths. But some will not call in that aid; and the whole superficial appearance of the case—regarding that alone, as they then will—is fatal to our imperial hopes. The primordial clay claims its own from the disanimated frame; and the vanished life, like the flame of an outburnt taper, has ceased to be. Men are like bubbles or foam-flakes on the world's streaming surface: glittering in a momentary ray, they break and are gone, and only the dark flood remains still flowing forward. They are like tones of music, commencing and ending with the unpurposed breath that makes them. Nature is a vast congeries of mechanical substances pervaded by mindless forces of vitality. Consciousness is a production which results from the fermentation and elaboration of unconscious materials; and after a time it deceases, its conditions crumbling into their inorganic grounds again. From the abyss of silence and dust intelligent creatures break forth, shine, and sink back, like meteor-flashes in a cloud. The generations of sentient being, like the annual growths of vegetation, by spontaneity of dynamic development, spring from dead matter, flourish through their destined cycle, and relapse into dead matter. The bosom of nature is, therefore, at once the wondrous womb and the magnificent mausoleum of man. Fate, like an iron skeleton seated at the summit of the world on a throne of fresh-growing grass and mouldering skulls, presides over all, and annihilation is the universal doom of individual life. Such is the atheistic naturalist's creed. However indefensible or shocking it is, it repeatedly appears in the annals of speculation; and any synopsis of the possible conclusions in which the inquiry into man's destiny may rest that should omit this, would be grossly imperfect.

This scheme of disbelief is met by insuperable objections. It excludes some essential elements of the case, confines itself to a wholly empirical view; and consequently the relentless solution it announces applies only to a mutilated problem. To assert the cessation of the soul because its physical manifestations through the body have ceased, is certainly to affirm without just warrant. It would appear impossible for volition and intelligence to originate save from a free parent mind. Numerous cogent evidences of design seem to prove the existence of a God by whose will all things are ordered according to a plan. Many powerful impressions and arguments, instinctive, critical, or moral, combine to teach that in the wreck of matter the spirit emerges, deathless, from the closing waves of decay. The confirmation of that truth becomes irresistible when

we see how reason and conscience, with delighted avidity, seize upon its adaptedness alike to the brightest features and the darkest defects of the present life, whose imperfect symmetries and segments are harmoniously filled out by the adjusting complement of a future state.[1]

The next representation of the fate of the soul disposes of it by *re-absorption* into the essence from which it emanated. There is an eternal fountain of unmade life, from which all individual, transient lives flow, and into which they return. This conception arose in the outset from a superficial analogy which must have obtruded itself upon primitive notice and speculation; for man is led to his first metaphysical inquiries by a feeling contemplation of outward phenomena. Now, in the material world, when individual forms perish, each sensible component relapses into its original element and becomes an undistinguishable portion of it. Our exhaled breath goes into the general air and is united with it: the dust of our decaying frames becomes part of the ground and vegetation. So, it is strongly suggested, the lives of things, the souls of men, when they disappear from us, are remerged in the native spirit whence they came. The essential longing of every part for union with its whole is revealed and vocal throughout all nature. Water is sullen in stillness, murmurs in motion, and never ceases its gloom or its complaining until it sleeps in the sea. Like spray on the rock, the stranding generations strike the sepulchre and are dissipated into universal vapor. As lightnings slink back into the charged bosom of the thunder-cloud, as eager waves, spent, subside in the deep, as furious gusts die away in the great atmosphere, so the gleaming ranks of genius, the struggling masses of toil, the pompous hosts of war, fade and dissolve away into the peaceful bosom of the all-engulfing SOUL. This simplest, earliest philosophy of mankind has had most extensive and permanent prevalence.[2] For immemorial centuries it has possessed the mind of the countless millions of India. Baur thinks the Egyptian identification of each deceased person with Osiris and the burial of him under that name, were meant to denote the reception of the individual human life into the universal nature-life. The doctrine has been implicitly held wherever pantheism has found a votary, from Anaximander, to whom finite creatures were "disintegrations or decompositions from the Infinite," to Alexander Pope, affirming that

> "All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body nature is, and God the soul."

The first reasoners, who gave such an ineradicable direction and tinge to the thinking of after-ages, were furthermore driven to the supposition of a final absorption, from the impossibility, in that initiatory stage of thought, of grasping any other theory which would apparently meet the

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[1] Drossbach, Die Harmonie der Ergebnisse der Naturforschung mit den Forderungen des Menschlichen Gemüthes.

[2] Blount, Anima Mundi; or, The Opinions of the Ancients concerning Man's Soul after this Life.

case so well or be more satisfactory. They, of course, had not yet arrived at the idea that God is a personal Spirit whose nature is revealed in the constitutive characteristics of the human soul, and who carries on his works from eternity to eternity without monotonous repetition or wearisome stagnancy, but with perpetual variety in never-ceasing motion. Whatever commences must also terminate, they said,—forgetting that number begins with one but has no end. They did not conceive of the universe of being as an eternal line, making immortality desirable for its endless novelty, but imaged it to themselves as a circle, making an everlasting individual consciousness dreadful for its intolerable sameness,—an immense round of existence, phenomena, and experience, going forth and returning into itself, over and over, forever and ever. To escape so repulsive a contemplation, they made death break the fencing integument of consciousness and empty all weary personalities into the absolute abyss of being.

Again: the extreme difficulty of apprehending the truth of a Creator literally infinite, and of a limitless creation, would lead to the same result in another way. Without doubt, it seemed to the naïve thinkers of antiquity, that if hosts of new beings were continually coming into life and increasing the number of the inhabitants of the future state, the fountain from which they proceeded would some time be exhausted, or the universe grow plethoric with population. There would be no more substance below or no more room above. The easiest method of surmounting this problem would be by the hypothesis that all spirits come out of a great World-Spirit, and, having run their mortal careers, are absorbed into it again. Many—especially the deepest Oriental dreamers—have also been brought to solace themselves with this conclusion by a course of reasoning based on the exposures, and assumed inevitable sufferings, of all finite being. They argue that every existence below the absolute God, because it is set around with limitations, is necessarily obnoxious to all sorts of miseries. Its pleasures are only "honey-drops scarce tasted in a sea of gall." This conviction, with its accompanying sentiment, runs through the sacred books of the East, is the root and heart of their theology, the dogma that makes the cruelest penances pleasant if a renewed existence may thus be avoided. The sentiment is not alien to human longing and surmise, as witnesses the night-thought of the English poet who, world-sated, and sadly yearning, cries through the starry gloom to God,—

> "When shall my soul her incarnation quit,
> And, readopted to thy blest embrace,
> Obtain her apotheosis in thee?"

Having stated and traced the doctrine of absorption, it remains to investigate the justice of its grounds. The doctrine starts from a premise partly true and ends in a conclusion partly false. We emanate from the creative power of God, and are sustained by the in-flowing presence

of his life, but are not discerptions from his own being, any more than beams of light are distinct substances shot out and shorn off from the sun to be afterwards drawn back and assimilated into the parent orb. We are destined to a harmonious life in his unifying love, but not to be fused and lost as insentient parts of his total consciousness. We are products of God's will, not component atoms of his soul. Souls are to be in God as stars are in the firmament, not as lumps of salt are in a solvent. This view is confirmed by various arguments.

In the first place, it is supported by the philosophical distinction between emanation and creation. The conception of creation gives us a personal God who wills to certain ends; that of emanation reduces the Supreme Being to a ghastly array of laws, revolving abysses, galvanic forces, nebular star-dust, dead ideas, and vital fluids. According to the latter supposition, finite existences flow from the Infinite as consequences from a principle, or streams from a fountain; according to the former, they proceed as effects from a cause, or thoughts from a mind. That is pantheistic, fatal, and involves absorption by a logical necessity; this is creative, free, and does not presuppose any circling return. Material things are thoughts which God transiently contemplates and dismisses; spiritual creatures are thoughts which he permanently expresses in concrete immortality. The soul is a thought; the body is the word in which it is clothed.

Secondly, the analogy which first leads to belief in absorption is falsely interpreted. Taken on its own ground, rightly appreciated, it legitimates a different conclusion. A grain of sand thrown into the bosom of Sahara does not lose its individual existence. Distinct drops are not annihilated as to their simple atoms of water, though sunk in the midst of the sea. The final particles or monads of air or granite are not dissolvingly blended into continuity of unindividualized atmosphere or rock when united with their elemental masses, but are thrust unapproachably apart by molecular repulsion. Now, a mind, being, as we conceive, no composite, but an ultimate unity, cannot be crushed or melted from its integral persistence of personality. Though plunged into the centre of a surrounding wilderness or ocean of minds, it must still retain itself unlost in the multitude. Therefore, if we admit the existence of an inclusive mundane Soul, it by no means follows that lesser souls received into it are deprived of their individuality. It is "one not otherwise than as the sea is one, by a similarity and contiguity of parts, being composed of an innumerable host of distinct spirits, as that is of aqueous particles; and as the rivers continually discharge into the sea, so the vehicular people, upon the disruption of their vehicles, discharge and incorporate into that ocean of spirits making the mundane Soul."[4]

[4] Tucker, Light of Nature, Part II. chap. xxii.

Thirdly, every consideration furnished by the doctrine of final causes as applied to existing creatures makes us ask, What use is there in calling forth souls merely that they may be taken back again? To justify their creation, the fulfilment of some educative aim, and then the lasting fruition of it, appear necessary. Why else should a soul be drawn from out the unformed vastness, and have its being struck into bounds, and be forced to pass through such appalling ordeals of good and evil, pleasure and agony? An individual of any kind is as important as its race; for it contains in possibility all that its type does. And the purposes of things, so far as we can discern them,—the nature of our spiritual constitution, the meaning of our circumstances and probation, the resulting tendencies of our experience,—all seem to prophesy, not the destruction, but the perfection and perpetuation, of individual being.

Fourthly, the same inference is yielded by applying a similar consideration to the Creator. Allowing him consciousness and intentions, as we must, what object could he have either in exerting his creative power or in sending out portions of himself in new individuals, save the production of so many immortal personalities of will, knowledge, and love, to advance towards the perfection of holiness, wisdom, and blessedness, —filling his mansions with his children? By thus multiplying his own image he adds to the number of happy creatures who are to be bound together in bands of glory, mutually receiving and returning his affection, and swells the tide of conscious bliss which fills and rolls forever through his eternal universe.

Nor, finally, is it necessary to expect personal oblivion in God in order to escape from evil and win exuberant happiness. Those ends are as well secured by the fruition of God's love in us as by the drowning of our consciousness in his plenitude of delight. Precisely herein consists the fundamental distinction of the Christian from the Brahmanic doctrine of human destiny. The Christian hopes to dwell in blissful union with God's will, not to be annihilatingly sunk in his essence. To borrow an illustration from Scotus Erigena,[5] as the air when thoroughly illumined by sunshine still keeps its aerial nature and does not become sunshine, or as iron all red in the flame still keeps its metallic substance and does not turn to fire itself, so a soul fully possessed and moved by God does not in consequence lose its own sentient and intelligent being. It is still a bounded entity, though recipient of boundless divinity. Thus evil ceases, each personality is preserved and intensely glorified, and, at the same time, God is all in all. The totality of perfected, enraptured, immortalized humanity in heaven may be described in this manner, adopting the masterly expression of Coleridge:—

> "And as one body seems the aggregate
> Of atoms numberless, each organized,

[5] Philosophy and Doctrines of Erigena, Universalist Quarterly Review, vol. vii. p. 100.

So, by a strange and dim similitude,
Infinite myriads of self-conscious minds
In one containing Spirit live, who fills
With absolute ubiquity of thought
All his involvèd monads, that yet seem
Each to pursue its own self-centring end."

A third mode of answering the question of human destiny is by the conception of a general *resurrection*. Souls, as fast as they leave the body, are gathered in some intermediate state, a starless grave-world, a ghostly limbo. When the present cycle of things is completed, when the clock of time runs down and its lifeless weight falls in the socket, and "Death's empty helmet yawns grimly over the funeral hatchment of the world," the gates of this long-barred receptacle of the deceased will be struck open, and its pale prisoners, in accumulated hosts, issue forth, and enter on the immortal inheritance reserved for them. In the sable land of Hades all departed generations are bivouacking in one vast army. On the resurrection-morning, striking their shadowy tents, they will scale the walls of the abyss, and, reinvested with their bodies, either plant their banners on the summits of the earth in permanent encampment, or storm the battlements of the sky and colonize heaven with flesh and blood. All advocates of the doctrine of psychopannychism, or the sleep of souls from death till the last day, in addition to the general body of orthodox Christians, have been supporters of this conclusion.[6]

Three explanations are possible of the origination of this belief. First, a man musing over the affecting panorama of the seasons as it rolls through the year,—budding life alternating with deadly desolation, spring still bringing back the freshness of leaves, flowers, and carolling birds, as if raising them from an annual interment in winter's cold grave,—and then thinking of the destiny of his own race,—how many generations have ripened and decayed, how many human crops have been harvested from the cradle and planted in the tomb, might naturally —especially if he had any thing of the poet's associating and creative mind—say to himself, Are we altogether perishable dust, or are we seed sown for higher fields,—seed lying dormant now, but at last to sprout into swift immortality when God shall make a new sunshine and dew omnipotently penetrate the dry mould where we tarry? No matter how partial the analogy, how forced the process, how false the result, such imagery would sooner or later occur; and, having occurred, it is no more strange that it should get literal acceptance than it is that many other popular figments should have secured the firm establishment they have.

Secondly, a mourner just bereaved of one in whom his whole love was garnered, distracted with grief, his faculties unbalanced, his soul a chaos, is of sorrow and fantasy all compact; and he solaces himself with

[6] Baumgarten, Beantwortung des Sendschreibens Heyns vom Schlafe der abgeschiedenen Seelen. Chalmers, Astronomical Discourses, iv.

the ideal embodiment of his dreams, half seeing what he thinks, half believing what he wishes. His desires pass through unconscious volition into supposed facts. Before the miraculous power of his grief-wielded imagination the world is fluent, and fate runs in the moulds he conceives. The adored form on which corruption now banquets, he sees again, animated, beaming, clasped in his arms. He cries, It cannot be that those holy days are forever ended, that I shall never more realize the blissful dream in which we trod the sunny world together! Oh, it must be that some time God will give me back again that beloved one! the sepulchre closed so fast shall be unsealed, the dead be restored, and all be as it was before! The conception thus once born out of the delirium of busy thought, anguished love, and regnant imagination, may in various ways win a fixed footing in faith.

Thirdly, the notion which we are now contemplating is one link in a chain of thought which, in the course of time and the range of speculation, the theorizing mind could not fail to forge. The concatenation of reflections is this. Death is the separation of soul and body. That separation is repulsive, an evil. Therefore it was not intended by the Infinite Goodness, but was introduced by a foe, and is a foreign, marring element. Finally God will vanquish his antagonist, and banish from the creation all his thwarting interferences with the primitive perfection of harmony and happiness. Accordingly, the souls which Satan has caused to be separated from their bodies are reserved apart until the fulness of time, when there shall be a universal resurrection and restoration. So far as reason is competent to pronounce on this view considered as a sequel to the disembodying doom of man, it is an arbitrary piece of fancy. Philosophy ignores it. Science gives no hint of it. It sprang from unwarranted metaphors, perverted, exaggerated, based on analogies not parallel. So far as it assumes to rest on revelation it will be examined in another place.

4 Fourthly, after the notion of a great, epochal resurrection, as a reply to the inquiry, What is to become of the soul? a dogma is next encountered which we shall style that of a local and irrevocable *conveyance*. The disembodied spirit is conveyed to some fixed region,[1] a penal or a blissful abode, where it is to tarry unalterably. This idea of the banishment or admission of souls, according to their deserts, or according to an elective grace, into an anchored location called hell or heaven, a retributive or rewarding residence for eternity, we shall pass by with few words, because it recurs for fuller examination in other chapters. In the first place, the whole picture is a gross simile drawn from occurrences of this outward world and unjustifiably applied to the fortunes of the mind in the invisible sphere of the future. The figment of a judicial transportation of the soul from one place or planet to another, as if by a Charon's boat, is a clattering and repulsive conceit, inadmissible by one who apprehends

[1] Lange, Das Land der Herrlichkeit.

the noiseless continuity of God's self-executing laws. It is a jarring mechanical clash thrust amidst the smooth evolution of spiritual destinies. It compares with the facts as the supposition that the planets are swung around the sun by material chains compares with the law of gravitation. Moral compensation is no better secured by imprisonment or freedom in separate localities than it is, in a common environment, by the fatal working of their interior forces of character, and their relations with all things else. Moreover, these antagonist kingdoms, Tartarean and Elysian, defined as the everlasting habitations of departed souls, have been successively driven, as dissipated visions, from their assumed latitudes and longitudes, one after another, by progressive discovery, until now the intelligent mind knows of no assignable spot for them. Since we are not acquainted with any fixed locations to which the soul is to be carried, to abide there forever in appointed joy or woe, and since there is no scientific necessity nor moral use for the supposition of such places and of the transferrence of the departed to them, we cannot hesitate to reject the associated belief as a deluding mistake. The truth, as we conceive it, is not that different souls are borne by constabulary apparitions to two immured dwellings, manacled and hurried into Tophet or saluted and ushered into Paradise, but that all souls spontaneously pass into one immense empire, drawn therein by their appropriate attractions, to assimilate a strictly discriminative experience. But, as to this, let each thinker form his own conclusion.

5. The fifth view of the destination of the soul may be called the theory of *recurrence*.[8] When man dies, his surviving spirit is immediately born again in a new body. Thus the souls, assigned in a limited number to each world, continually return, each one still forgetful of his previous lives. This seems to be the specific creed of the Druses, who affirm that all souls were created at once, and that the number is unchanged, while they are born over and over. A Druse boy, dreadfully alarmed by the discharge of a gun, on being asked by a Christian the cause of his fear, replied, "I was born murdered;" that is, the soul of a man who had been shot passed into his body at the moment of his birth.[9] The young mountaineer would seem, from the sudden violence with which he was snatched out of his old house, to have dragged a trail of connecting consciousness over into his new one. As a general rule, in distinction from such an exception, memory is like one of those passes which the conductors of railroad-trains give their passengers, "good for this trip only." The notion of an endless succession of lives on the familiar stage of this dear old world, commencing each with clean-wiped tablets, possesses for some minds a fathomless allurement; but others wish for no return-pass on their ticket to futurity, preferring an adventurous abandonment "to fresh fields and pastures new," in unknown immensity, to a

[8] Schmidius, Diss. de Multiplici Animarum Reditu in Corpora.
[9] Churchill, Mount Lebanon, vol. ii. ch. 12.

renewed excursion through landscapes already traversed and experiences drained before.

Fourier's doctrine of immortality belongs here. According to his idea, the Great Soul of this globe is a composite being, comprising about ten billions of individual souls. Their connection with this planet will be for nearly eighty thousand years. Then the whole sum of them will swarm to some higher planet,—Fourier himself, perhaps, being the old gray gander that will head the flock, pilot-king of their flight. Each man is to enjoy about four hundred births on earth, poetic justice leading him successively through all the grades and phases of fortune, from cripplehood and beggary to paragonship and the throne. The invisible residence of spirits and the visible are both on this globe, the former in the Great Soul, the latter in bodies. In the other life the soul becomes a sharer in the woes of the Great Soul, which is as unhappy as seven-eighths of the incarnated souls; for its fate is a compound of the fates of the human souls taken collectively. Coming into this outward scene at birth, we lose anew all memory of past existence, but wake up again in the Great Soul with a perfect recollection of all our previous lives both in the invisible and in the visible world. These alternating passages between the two states will continue until the final swooping of total humanity from this exhausted planet in search of a better abode.[10]

The idea of the recurrence of souls is the simplest means of meeting a difficulty stated thus by the ingenious Abraham Tucker in his "Light of Nature Pursued." "The numbers of souls daily pouring in from hence upon the next world seem to require a proportionable drain from it somewhere or other; for else the country might be overstocked." The objection urged against such a belief from the fact that we do not remember having lived before is rebutted by the assertion that

> "Some draught of Lethe doth await,
> As old mythologies relate,
> The slipping through from state to state."

The theory associated with this Lethean draught is confirmed by its responsive correspondence with many unutterable experiences, vividly felt or darkly recognised, in our deepest bosom. It seems as if occasionally the poppied drug or other oblivious antidote administered by nature had been so much diluted that reason, only half baffled, struggles to decipher the dim runes and vestiges of a foregone state;—

> "And ever something is or seems
> That touches us with mystic gleams,
> Like glimpses of forgotten dreams."

In those excursive reveries, fed by hope and winged with dream, which scour the glens and scale the peaks of the land of thought, this nook of hypothesis must some time be discovered. And, brought to light, it has

[10] Fourier, Passions of the Human Soul, (Morell's translation,) Introduction, vol. i. pp. 14–18; also pp. 233–236.

much to interest and to please; but it is too destitute of tangible proof to be successfully maintained against assault.[11]

There is another faith as to the fate of souls, best stated, perhaps, in the phrase perpetual *migration*. The soul, by successive deaths and births, traverses the universe, an everlasting traveller through the rounds of being and the worlds of space, a transient sojourner briefly inhabiting each.[12] All reality is finding its way up towards the attracting, retreating Godhead. Minerals tend to vegetables, these to animals, these to men. Blind but yearning matter aspires to spirit, intelligent spirits to divinity. In every grain of dust sleep an army of future generations. As every thing below man gropes upward towards his conscious estate, "the trees being imperfect men, that seem to bemoan their imprisonment, rooted in the ground," so man himself shall climb the illimitable ascent of creation, every step a star. The animal organism is a higher kind of vegetable, whose development begins with those substances with the production of which the life of an ordinary vegetable ends.[13] The fact, too, that embryonic man passes through ascending stages undistinguishable from those of lower creatures, is full of meaning. Does it not betoken a preserved epitome of the long history of slowly-rising existence? What unplummeted abysses of time and distance intervene from the primary rock to the Victoria Regia! and again from the first crawling spine to the fetterless mind of a Schelling! But, snail-pace by snail-pace, those immeasurable separations have been bridged over; and so every thing that now lies at the dark basis of dust shall finally reach the transplendent apex of intellect. The objection of theological prejudice to this developing succession of ascents—that it is degrading—is an unhealthy mistake. Whether we have risen or fallen to our present rank, the actual rank itself is not altered. And in one respect it is better for man to be an advanced oyster than a degraded god; for in the former case the path is upwards, in the latter it is downwards. "We wake," observes a profound thinker, "and find ourselves on a stair: there are other stairs below us, which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one, which go upward and out of sight." Such was plainly the trust of the author of the following exhortation:—

> "Be worthy of death; and so learn to live
> That every incarnation of thy soul
> In other realms, and worlds, and firmaments
> Shall be more pure and high."

Bulwer likewise has said, "Eternity may be but an endless series of those emigrations which men call *deaths*, abandonments of home after home, ever to fairer scenes and loftier heights. Age after age, the spirit—that glorious nomad—may shift its tent, fated not to rest in the dull

[11] Bertram, Prüfung der Meinung von der Präexistens der menschlichen Seele.
[12] Nürnberger, Still-Leben, oder über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele.
[13] Liebig, Animal Chemistry, ch. ix.

Elysium of the heathen, but carrying with it evermore its twin elements, activity and desire."

But there is something unsatisfactory, even sad and dreary, in this prospect of incessant migration. Must not the pilgrim pine and tire for a goal of rest? Exhausted with wanderings, sated with experiments, will he not pray for the exempted lot of a contented fruition in repose? One must weary at last of being even so sublime a vagabond as he whose nightly hostelries are stars. And, besides, how will sundered friends and lovers, between whom, on the road, races and worlds interpose, ever overtake each other, and be conjoined to journey hand in hand again or build a bower together by the way? A poet of finest mould, in happiest mood, once saw a leaf drop from a tree which overhung a mirroring stream. The reflection of the leaf in the watery sky-hollow far below seemed to rise from beneath as swiftly as the object fell from above; and the two, encountering at the surface, became one. Then he sang,—touching with *his strain* the very marrow of deepest human desire,—

"How speeds, from in the river's thought,
The spirit of the leaf that falls,
Its heaven in that calm bosom wrought,
As mine among yon crimson walls!
From the dry bough it spins, to greet
Its shadow on the placid river:
So might I my companions meet,
Nor roam the countless worlds forever!"

Moreover, some elements of this theory are too grotesque, are the too rash inferences from a too crude induction, to win sober credit to any extent. It is easy to devise and carry out in consistent descriptive details the hypothesis that the soul has risen, through ten thousand transitions, from the condition of red earth or a tadpole to its present rank, and that,—

"As it once crawl'd upon the sod,
It yet shall grow to be a god;"

but what scientific evidence is there to confirm and establish the supposition as a truth? Why, if it be so,—to borrow the humorous satire of good old Henry More,—

"Then it will follow that cold-stopping curd
And harden'd moldy cheese, when they have rid
Due circuits through the heart, at last shall speed
Of life and sense, look thorough our thin eyes
And view the close wherein the cow did feed
Whence they were milk'd: grosse pie-crust will grow wise,
And pickled cucumbers sans doubt philosophize!"

The form of this general outline stalks totteringly on stilts of fancy, and sprawls headlong with a logical crash at the first critical probe.

The final theory of the destination of souls, now left to be set forth, may be designated by the word *transition*.[14] It affirms that at death they

[14] Taylor, Physical Theory of Another Life, ch. xii.

pass from the separate material worlds, which are their initiating nurseries, into the common spiritual world, which is everywhere present. Thus the visible peoples the invisible, each person in his turn consciously rising from this world's rudimentary darkness to that world's universal light. Dwelling here, free souls, housed in frames of dissoluble clay,—

> "We hold a middle rank 'twixt heaven and earth,
> On the last verge of mortal being stand,
> Close to the realm where angels have their birth,
> Just on the boundaries of the spirit-land."

Why has God "broken up the solid material of the universe into innumerable little globes, and swung each of them in the centre of an impassable solitude of space," unless it be to train up in the various spheres separate households for final union as a single diversified family in the boundless spiritual world?[15] The surmise is not unreasonable, but recommends itself strongly, that,—

> "If yonder stars be fill'd with forms of breathing clay like ours,
> Perchance *the space which spreads between* is for a spirit's powers."

The soul encased in flesh is thereby confined to one home, its natal nest; but, liberated at death, it wanders at will, unobstructed, through every world and cerulean deep; and wheresoever it is, there, in proportion to its own capacity and fitness, is heaven and is God.[16] All those world-spots so thickly scattered through the Yggdrasill of universal space are but the brief sheltering-places where embryo intelligences clip their shells, and whence, as soon as fledged through the discipline of earthly teaching and essays, the broodlet souls take wing into the mighty airs of immensity, and thus enter on their eternal emancipation. This conjecture is, of all which have been offered yet, perhaps the completest, least perplexed, best recommended by its harmony with our knowledge and our hope. And so one might wish to rest in it with humble trust.

The final destiny of an immortal soul, after its transition into the other world, must be either unending progress towards infinite perfection, or the reaching of its perihelion at last and then revolving in uninterrupted fruition. In the former case, pursuing an infinite aim, with each degree of its attainment the flying goal still recedes. In the latter case, it will in due season touch its bound and there be satisfied,—

> "When weak Time shall be pour'd out
> Into Eternity, and circular joys
> Dance in an endless round."

This result seems the more probable of the two; for the assertion of countless decillions of personalities all progressing beyond every conceivable limit, on, still on, forever, is incredible. If endless linear progress were the destiny of each being, the whole universe would at last become

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[15] Taylor, Saturday Evening, pp. 95–111.

[16] Taylor, Physical Theory of Another Life, ch. xvii.

a line! And though it is true that the idea of an ever-novel chase attracts and refreshes the imagination, while the idea of a monotonous revolution repels and wearies it, this is simply because we judge after our poor earthly experience and its flagging analogies. It will not be so if that revolution is the vivid realization of all our being's possibilities.

Annihilation, absorption, resurrection, conveyance, recurrence, migration, transition,—these seven answers to the question of our fate, and of its relation to the course of nature, are thinkable in words. We may choose from among them, but can construct no real eighth. First, there is a constant succession of growth and decay. Second, there is a perpetual flow and ebb of personal emanation and impersonal resumption. Third, there is a continual return of the same persistent entities. Fourth, all matter may be sublimated to spirit, and souls alone remain to occupy boundless space. Fifth, the power of death may cease, all the astronomic orbs be populated and enjoyed, each by one generation of everlasting inhabitants,—the present order continuing in each earth until enough have lived to fill it, then all of them, physically restored, dwelling on it, with no more births or deaths. Sixth, if matter be not transmutable to soul, when that peculiar reality from which souls are developed is exhausted, and the last generation of incarnated beings have risen from the flesh, the material creation may, in addition to the inter-stellar region, be eternally appropriated by the spirit-races to their own free range and use, through adaptations of faculty unknown to us now; else it may vanish as a phantasmal spectacle. Or, finally, souls may be absolutely created out of nothing by the omnipotence of God, and the universe may be infinite: then the process may proceed forever.

But men's beliefs are formed rather by the modes of thought they have learned to adopt than by any proofs they have tested; not by argumentation about a subject, but by the way of looking at it. The moralist regards all creation as the work of a personal God, a theatre of moral ends, —a just Providence watching over the parts, and the conscious immortality of the actors an inevitable accompaniment. The physicist contemplates the universe as constituted of atoms of attraction and repulsion, which subsist in perfect mobility through space, but are concreted in the molecular masses of the planets. The suns are vast engines for the distribution of heat or motion, the equivalent of all kinds of force. This, in its diffusion, causes innumerable circulations and combinations of the original atoms. Organic growth, life, is the fruition of a force derived from the sun. Decay, death, is the rendering up of that force in its equivalents. Thus, the universe is a composite unity of force, a solidarity of ultimate unities which are indestructible, though in constant circulation of new groupings and journeys. To the religious faith of the moralist, man is an eternal person, reaping what he has sowed. To the speculative intellect of the physicist, man is an atomic force, to be liberated into the ethereal medium until again harnessed in some organism. In both cases he is immortal: but in that, as a free citizen of the ideal world; in this, as a flying particle of the dynamic immensity.

PART SECOND.

ETHNIC THOUGHTS CONCERNING A FUTURE LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

BARBARIAN NOTIONS OF A FUTURE LIFE.

PROCEEDING now to give an account of the fancies and opinions in regard to a future life which have been prevalent, in different ages, in various nations of the earth, it will be best to begin by presenting, in a rapid series, some sketches of the conceits of those uncivilized tribes who did not—so far as our knowledge reaches—possess a doctrine sufficiently distinctive and full, or important enough in its historical relations, to warrant a detailed treatment in separate chapters.

We will glance first at the negroes. According to all accounts, while there are, among the numerous tribes, diversities and degrees of superstition, there is yet, throughout the native pagan population of Africa, a marked general agreement of belief in the survival of the soul, in spectres, divination, and witchcraft; and there is a general similarity of funeral usages. Early travellers tell us that the Bushmen conceived the soul to be immortal, and as impalpable as a shadow, and that they were much afraid of the return of deceased spirits to haunt them. They were accustomed to pray to their departed countrymen not to molest them, but to stay away in quiet. They also employed exorcisers to lay these ill-omened ghosts. Meiners relates of some inhabitants of the Guinea coast that their fear of ghosts and their childish credulity reached such a pitch that they threw their dead into the ocean, in the expectation of thus drowning *soul and body* together.

Superstitions as gross and lawless still have full sway. Wilson, whose travels and residence there for twenty years have enabled him to furnish the most reliable information, says, in his recent work,[1] "A native African would as soon doubt his present as his future state of being." Every dream, every stray suggestion of the mind, is interpreted, with un-

[1] Western Africa, ch. xii.

questioning credence, as a visit from the dead, a whisper from a departed soul. If a man wakes up with pains in his bones or muscles, it is because his spirit has wandered abroad in the night and been flogged by some other spirit. On certain occasions the whole community start up at midnight, with clubs, torches, and hideous yells, to drive the evil spirits out of the village. They seem to believe that the souls of dead men take rank with good or bad spirits, as they have themselves been good or bad in this life. They bury with the deceased clothing, ornaments, utensils, and statedly convey food to the grave for the use of the revisiting spirit. With the body of king Weir of the Cavalla towns, who was buried in December of 1854, in presence of several missionaries, was interred a quantity of rice, palm-oil, beef, and rum: it was supposed the ghost of the sable monarch would come back and consume these articles. The African tribes, where their notions have not been modified by Christian or by Mohammedan teachings, appear to have no definite idea of a heaven or of a hell; but future reward or punishment is considered under the general conception of an association, in the disembodied state, with the benignant or with the demoniacal powers.

The New Zealanders imagine that the souls of the dead go to a place beneath the earth, called Reinga. The path to this region is a precipice close to the sea-shore at the North Cape. It is said that the natives who live in the neighborhood can at night hear sounds caused by the passing of spirits thither through the air. After a great battle they are thus warned of the event long before the news can arrive by natural means.[2] It is a common superstition with them that the left eye of every chief, after his death, becomes a star. The Pleiades are seven New Zealand chiefs, brothers, who were slain together in battle and are now fixed in the sky, one eye of each, in the shape of a star, being the only part of them that is visible. It has been observed that the mythological doctrine of the glittering host of heaven being an assemblage of the departed heroes of earth never received a more ingenious version.[3] Certainly it is a magnificent piece of insular egotism. It is noticeable here that, in the Norse mythology, Thor, having slain Thiasse, the giant genius of winter, throws his eyes up to heaven, and they become stars. Shungie, a celebrated New Zealand king, said he had on one occasion eaten the left eye of a great chief whom he had killed in battle, for the purpose of thus increasing the glory of his own eye when it should be transferred to the firmament. Sometimes, apparently, it was thought that there was a separate immortality for each of the eyes of the dead,—the left ascending to heaven as a star, the right, in the form of a spirit, taking flight for Reinga.

The custom, common in Africa and in New Zealand, of slaying the slaves or the wives of an important person at his death and burying

[2] Shortland, Traditions of the New Zealanders, ch. vii.

[3] Library of Ent. Knowl.: The New Zealanders, pp. 223–237.

them with him, prevails also among the inhabitants of the Feejee Islands. A chief's wives are sometimes strangled on these occasions, sometimes buried alive. One cried to her brother, "I wish to die, that I may accompany my husband to the land where he has gone. Love me, and make haste to strangle me, that I may overtake him."[4] Departing souls go to the tribunal of Ndengei, who either receives them into bliss, or sends them back, as ghosts, to haunt the scenes of their former existence, or distributes them as food to devils, or imprisons them for a period and then dooms them to annihilation. The Feejees are also very much afraid of Samiulo, ruler of a subterranean world, who sits at the brink of a huge fiery cavern, into which he hurls the souls he dislikes. In the road to Ndengei stands an enormous giant, armed with an axe, who tries to maim and murder the passing souls. A powerful chief, whose gun was interred with him, loaded it, and, when he came near the giant, shot at him, and ran by while the monster was dodging the bullet.

The people of the Sandwich Islands held a confused medley of notions as to another life. In different persons among them were found, in regard to this subject, superstitious terror, blank indifference, positive unbelief. The current fancy was that the souls of the chiefs were led, by a god whose name denotes the "eyeball of the sun," to a life in the heavens, while plebeian souls went down to Akea, a lugubrious underground abode. Some thought spirits were destroyed in this realm of darkness; others, that they were eaten by a stronger race of spirits there; others still, that they survived there, subsisting upon lizards and butterflies.[5] What a piteous life they must have led here whose imaginations could only soar to a future so unattractive as this!

The Kamtschadales send all the dead alike to a subterranean elysium, where they shall find again their wives, clothes, tools, huts, and where they shall fish and hunt. All is there as here, except that *there* are no fire-spouting mountains, no bogs, streams, inundations, and impassable snows; and neither hunting nor fishing is ever pursued in vain there. This lower paradise is but a beautified Kamtschatka, freed from discommoding hardships and cleansed of tormenting Cossacks and Russians. They have no hell for the rectification of the present wrong relations of virtue and misery, vice and happiness. The only distinction they appear to make is that all who in Kamtschatka are poor, and have few small and weak dogs, shall there be rich and be furnished with strong and fat dogs. The power of imagination is very remarkable in this raw people, bringing the future life so near, and awakening such an impatient longing for it and for their former companions that they often, the sooner to secure a habitation there, anticipate the natural time of their death by suicide.[6]

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[4] Wilkes, Narrative of the U. S. Exploring Expedition, vol. iii. ch. 3.

[5] Jarves, Hist. of the Sandwich Islands, p. 42.

[6] Christoph Meiners, Vermischte Schriften, thl. i. sects. 169–173.

The Esquimaux betray the influence of their clime and habits, in the formation of their ideas of the life to come, as plainly as the Kamtschadales do. The employments and enjoyments of their future state are rude and earthy. They say the soul descends through successive places of habitation, the first of which is full of pains and horrors. The good, —that is, the courageous and skilful, those who have endured severe hardships and mastered many seals,—passing through this first residence, find that the other mansions regularly improve. They finally reach an abode of perfect satisfaction, far beneath the storms of the sea, where the sun is never obscured by night, and where reindeer wander in great droves beside waters that never congeal, and wherein the whale, the walrus, and the best sea-fowls always abound.[7] Hell is deep, but heaven deeper still. Hell, they think, is among the roots, rocks, monsters, and cold of the frozen or vexed and suffering waters; but

> "*Beneath* tempestuous seas and fields of ice
> Their creed has placed a lowlier paradise."

The Greenlanders, too, located their elysium beneath the abysses of the ocean, where the good Spirit Torngarsuk held his reign in a happy and eternal summer. The wizards, who pretended to visit this region at will, described the disembodied souls as pallid, and, if one sought to seize them, unsubstantial.[8] Some of these people, however, fixed the site of paradise in the sky, and regarded the aurora borealis as the playing of happy souls. So Coleridge pictures the Laplander

> "Marking the streamy banners of the North,
> And thinking he those spirits soon should join
> Who there, in floating robes of rosy light,
> Dance sportively."

But others believed this state of restlessness in the clouds was the fate only of the worthless, who were there pinched with hunger and plied with torments. All agreed in looking for another state of existence, where, under diverse circumstances, happiness and misery should be awarded, in some degree at least, according to desert.[9]

The Peruvians taught that the reprobate were sentenced to a hell situated in the centre of the earth, where they must endure centuries of toil and anguish. Their paradise was away in the blue dome of heaven. There the spirits of the worthy would lead a life of tranquil luxury. At the death of a Peruvian noble his wives and servants frequently were slain, to go with him and wait on him in that happy region.[10] Many authors, including Prescott, yielding too easy credence to the very questionable assertions of the Spanish chroniclers, have attributed to the Peruvians a belief in the resurrection of the body. Various travellers and writers have also predicated this belief of savage nations in Central Africa, of

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[7] Prichard, Physical Hist. of Mankind, vol. i. ch. 2.
[8] Egede, Greenland, ch. 18.
[9] Dr. Karl Andree, Grönland.
[10] Prescott, Conquest of Peru, vol. i. ch. 3.

certain South Sea islanders, and of several native tribes in North America. In all these cases the supposition is probably erroneous, as we think for the following reasons. In the first place, the idea of a resurrection of the body is either a late conception of the associative imagination, or else a doctrine connected with a speculative theory of recurring epochs in the destiny of the world; and it is in both instances too subtle and elaborate for an uncultivated people. Secondly, in none of the cases referred to has any reliable evidence been given of the actual existence of the belief in question. It has merely been inferred, by persons to whose minds the doctrine was previously familiar, from phenomena by no means necessarily implying it. For example, a recent author ascribes to the Feejees the belief that there will be a resurrection of the body just as it was at the time of death. The only datum on which he founds this astounding assertion is that they often seem to prefer to die in the full vigor of manhood rather than in decrepit old age![11] Thirdly, we know that the observation and statements of the Spanish monks and historians, in regard to the religion of the pagans of South America, were of the most imperfect and reckless character. They perpetrated gross frauds, such as planting in the face of high precipices white stones in the shape of the cross, and then pointing to them in proof of their assertion that, before the Christians came, the Devil had here parodied the rites and doctrines of the gospel.[12] They said the Mexican goddess, wife of the sun, was Eve, or the Virgin Mary, and Quetzalcoatl was St. Thomas![13] Such affirmers are to be cautiously followed. Finally, it is a quite significant fact that while some point to the pains which the Peruvians took in embalming their dead as a proof that they looked for a resurrection of the body, Acosta expressly says that they did not believe in the resurrection, and that this unbelief was the cause of their embalming.[14] Garcilaso de la Vega, in his "Royal Commentaries of the Peruvian Incas," says that when he asked some Peruvians why they took so great care to preserve in the cemeteries of the dead the nails and hair which had been cut off, they replied that in the day of resurrection the dead would come forth with whatever of their bodies was left, and there would be too great a press of business in that day for them to afford time to go hunting round after their hair and nails![15] The fancy of a Christian is too plain here. If the answer were really made by the natives, they were playing a joke on their credulous questioner, or seeking to please him with distorted echoes of his own faith.

The conceits as to a future life entertained by the Mexicans varied considerably from those of their neighbors of Peru. Souls neither good nor bad, or whose virtues and vices balanced each other, were to enter a

[11] Erskine, Islands of the Western Pacific, p. 248.
[12] Schoolcraft, History, &c. of the Indian Tribes, part v. p. 93.
[13] Squier, Serpent-Symbol in America, p. 13.
[14] Acosta, Natural and Moral History of the Indies, book v. ch. 7. [15] Book ii. ch. 7.

medium state of idleness and empty content. The wicked, or those dying in any of certain enumerated modes of death, went to Mictlan, a dismal hell within the earth. The souls of those struck by lightning, or drowned, or dying by any of a given list of diseases,—also the souls of children,—were transferred to a remote elysium, Tlalocan. There was a place in the chief temple where, it was supposed, once a year the spirits of all the children who had been sacrificed to Tlaloc invisibly came and assisted in the ceremonies. The ultimate heaven was reserved for warriors who bravely fell in battle, for women who died in labor, for those offered up in the temples of the gods, and for a few others. These passed immediately to the house of the sun, their chief god, whom they accompanied for a term of years, with songs, dances, and revelry, in his circuit around the sky. Then, animating the forms of birds of gay plumage, they lived as beautiful songsters among the flowers, now on earth, now in heaven, at their pleasure.[16] It was the Mexican custom to dress the dead man in the garb appropriated to the guardian deity of his craft or condition in life. They gave him a jug of water. They placed with him slips of paper to serve as passports through guarded gates and perilous defiles in the other world. They made a fire of his clothes and utensils, to warm the shivering soul while traversing a region of cold winds beyond the grave.[17] The following sentence occurs in a poem composed by one of the old Aztec monarchs:—"Illustrious nobles, loyal subjects, let us aspire to that heaven where all is eternal and corruption cannot come. The horrors of the tomb are but the cradle of the sun, and the shadows of death are brilliant lights for the stars."[18]

Amidst the mass of whimsical conceptions entering into the faith of the widely-spread tribes of North America, we find a ruling agreement in the cardinal features of their thought concerning a future state of existence. In common with nearly all barbarous nations, they felt great fear of apparitions. The Sioux were in the habit of addressing the deceased at his burial, and imploring him to stay in his own place and not come to distress them. Their funeral customs, too, from one extremity of the continent to the other, were very much alike. Those who have reported their opinions to us, from the earliest Jesuit missionaries to the latest investigators of their mental characteristics, concur in ascribing to them a deep trust in a life to come, a cheerful view of its conditions, and a remarkable freedom from the dread of dying. Charlevoix says, "The best-established opinion among the natives is the immortality of the soul." On the basis of an account written by William Penn, Pope composed the famous passage in his "Essay on Man:"—

> "Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind
> Sees God in clouds and hears him in the wind.

[16] Clavigero, History of Mexico, book vi. sect. 1.
[17] Ibid. sect. 39.
[18] Prescott, Conquest of Mexico, vol. i. ch. 6.

His soul proud Science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way:
Yet simple nature to his faith hath given,
Behind the cloud-topp'd hill, an humbler heaven,
Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,
Or happier island in the watery waste.
To be, contents his natural desire:
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire,
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company."

Their rude instinctive belief in the soul's survival, and surmises as to its destiny, are implied in their funeral rites, which, as already stated, were, with some exceptions, strikingly similar even in the remotest tribes.[19]

In the bark coffin, with a dead Indian the Onondagas buried a kettle of provisions, a pair of moccasins, a piece of deer-skin and sinews of the deer to sew patches on the moccasins, which it was supposed the deceased would wear out on his journey. They also furnished him with a bow and arrows, a tomahawk and knife, to procure game with to live on while pursuing his way to the land of spirits, the blissful regions of Ha-wah-ne-u.[20] Several Indian nations, instead of burying the food, suspended it above the grave, and renewed it from time to time. Some writers have explained this custom by the hypothesis of an Indian belief in two souls, one of which departed to the realm of the dead, while the other tarried by the mound until the body was decayed, or until it had itself found a chance to be born in a new body.[21] The supposition seems forced and extremely doubtful. The truth probably lies in a simpler explanation, which will be offered further on.

The Winnebagoes located paradise above, and called the milky way the "Road of the Dead."[22] It was so white with the crowds of journeying ghosts! But almost all, like the Ojibways, imagined their elysium to lie far in the West. The soul, freed from the body, follows a wide beaten path westward, and enters a country abounding with all that an Indian covets. On the borders of this blessed land, in a long glade, he finds his relatives, for many generations back, gathered to welcome him.[23] The Chippewas, and several other important tribes, always kindled fires on the fresh graves of their dead, and kept them burning four successive nights, to light the wandering souls on their way.[24] An Indian myth represents the ghosts coming back from Ponemah, the land of the Hereafter, and singing this song to the miraculous Hiawatha:—

"Do not lay such heavy burdens
On the graves of those you bury,
Not such weight of furs and wampum,

[19] Baumgarten, Geschichte der Völker von America, xiii. haupts.: vom Tod, Vergräbniss, und Trauer.

[20] Clarke, Onondaga, vol. i. p. 51.

[21] Müller, Geschichte der Amerikanischen Urreligionen, sect. 66.

[22] Schoolcraft, History, &c. of the Indian Tribes, part iv. p. 240.

[23] Ibid. part ii. p. 135.

[24] Ibid. part v. p. 64; part iv. p. 55.

Not such weight of pots and kettles;
For the spirits faint beneath them.
Only give them food to carry,
Only give them fire to light them.
Four days is the spirit's journey
To the land of ghosts and shadows,
Four its lonely night-encampments.
Therefore, when the dead are buried,
Let a fire, as night approaches,
Four times on the grave be kindled,
That the soul upon its journey
May not grope about in darkness."[25]

The subject of a future state seems to have been by far the most prominent one in the Indian imagination. They relate many traditions of persons who have entered it, and returned, and given descriptions of it. A young brave, having lost his betrothed, determined to follow her to the land of souls. Far South, beyond the region of ice and snows, he came to a lodge standing before the entrance to wide blue plains. Leaving his body there, he embarked in a white stone canoe to cross a lake. He saw the souls of wicked Indians sinking in the lake; but the good gained an elysian shore, where all was warmth, beauty, ease, and eternal youth, and where the air was food. The Master of Breath sent him back, but promised that he might at death return and stay.[26] The Wyandots tell of a dwarf, Tcha-ka-bech, who climbed a tree which grew higher as often as he blew on it. At last he reached heaven, and discovered it to be an excellent place. He descended the tree, building wigwams at intervals in the branches. He then returned with his sister and nephew, resting each night in one of the wigwams. He set his traps up there to catch animals. Rising in the night to go and examine his traps, he saw one all on fire, and, upon approaching it, found that he had caught the sun!

Where the Indian is found believing in a Devil and a hell, it is the result of his intercourse with Europeans. These elements of horror were foreign to his original religion.[27] There are in some quarters faint traces of a single purgatorial or retributive conception. It is a representation of paradise as an island, the ordeal consisting in the passage of the dark river or lake which surrounds it. The worthy cross with entire facility, the unworthy only after tedious struggles. Some say the latter are drowned; others, that they sink up to their chins in the water, where they pass eternity in vain desires to attain the alluring land on which they gaze.[28] Even this notion may be a modification consequent upon European influence. At all events, it is subordinate in force and only occasional in occurrence. For the most part, in the Indian faith mercy swallows up the other attributes of the Great Spirit. The Indian dies

[25] Longfellow, Song of Hiawatha, xix.: The Ghosts.
[26] Schoolcraft, Indian in his Wigwam, p. 79.
[27] Loskiel, Hist. Mission of United Brethren to N. A. Indians, part i. ch. 3.
[28] Schoolcraft, Indian in his Wigwam, p. 202. History, &c. of Indian Tribes, part iv. p. 173.

without fear, looking for no punishments, only for rewards.[29] He regards the Master of Breath not as a holy judge, but as a kind father. He welcomes death as opening the door to a sweet land. Ever charmingly on his closing eyes dawns the prospect of the aboriginal elysium, a gorgeous region of soft shades, gliding streams, verdant groves waving in gentle airs, warbling birds, herds of stately deer and buffalo browsing on level plains. It is the earth in noiseless and solemn metamorphosis.[30]

We shall conclude this chapter by endeavoring to explain the purport and origin of the principal ceremonies and notions which have now been set forth pertaining to the disembodied state. The first source of these particulars is to be sought, not in any clear mental perceptions, or conscious dogmatic belief, but in the natural workings of affection, memory, and sentiment. Among almost every people, from the Chinese to the Araucanians, from the Ethiopians to the Dacotahs, rites of honor have been paid to the dead, various offerings have been placed at their graves. The Vedas enjoin the offering of a cake to the ghosts of ancestors back to the third generation. The Greeks were wont to pour wine, oil, milk, and blood into canals made in the graves of their dead. The early Christians adopted these "Feasts of the Dead"—as Augustine and Tertullian call them—from the heathen, and celebrated them over the graves of their martyrs and of their other deceased friends. Such customs as these among savages like the Shillooks or the Choctaws are usually supposed to imply the belief that the souls of the deceased remain about the places of sepulture and physically partake of the nourishment thus furnished. The interpretation is farther fetched than need be, and is unlikely; or, at all events, if it be true in some cases, it is not the whole truth. In the first place, these people see that the food and drink remain untouched, the weapons and utensils are left unused in the grave. Secondly, there are often certain features in the barbaric ritual obviously metaphorical, incapable of literal acceptance. For instance, the Winnebagoes light a small fire on the grave of a deceased warrior to light him on his journey to the land of souls, although they say that journey extends to a distance of four days and nights and is wholly invisible. They light and tend that watch-fire as a memorial of their departed companion and a rude expression of their own emotions; as an *unconscious emblem of their own struggling faith*, not as a beacon to the straying ghost. Again, the Indian mother, losing a nursing infant, spurts some of her milk into the fire, that the little spirit may not want for nutriment on its solitary path.[31] Plato approvingly quotes Hesiod's statement that the souls of noble men become guardian demons coursing the air, messengers and agents of the gods in the world. Therefore, he adds, "we should reverence their tombs and establish solemn rites and offerings there;" though by his very

[29] Schoolcraft, History of Indian Tribes, part ii. p. 68.
[30] Ibid. pp. 403, 404.
[31] Andree, North America, p. 246.

statement these places were not the dwellings or haunts of the freely-circuiting spirits.[32]

Not by an intellectual doctrine, but by an instinctive association, when not resisted and corrected, we connect the souls of the dead in our thoughts with the burial-places of their forms. The New Zealand priests pretend by their spells to bring wandering souls within the enclosed graveyards.[33] These sepulchral folds are full of ghosts. A sentiment native to the human breast draws pilgrims to the tombs of Shakspeare and Washington, and, if not restrained and guided by cultivated thought, would lead them to make offerings there. Until the death of Louis XV., the kings of France lay in state and were served as in life for forty days after they died.[34] It would be ridiculous to attempt to wring any doctrinal significance from these customs. The same sentiment which, in one form, among the Alfoer inhabitants of the Arru Islands, when a man dies, leads his relatives to assemble and destroy whatever he has left, —which, in another form, causes the Papist to offer burning candles, wreaths, and crosses, and to recite prayers, before the shrines of the dead saints,—which, in still another form, moved Albert Dürer to place all the pretty playthings of his child in the coffin and bury them with it,—this same sentiment, in its undefined spontaneous workings, impelled the Peruvian to embalm his dead, the Blackfoot to inter his brave's hunting-equipments with him, and the Cherokee squaw to hang fresh food above the totem on her husband's grave-post. What should we think if we could foresee that, a thousand years hence, when the present doctrines and customs of France and America are forgotten, some antiquary, seeking the reason why the mourners in Père-la-Chaise and Mount Auburn laid clusters of flowers on the graves of their lamented ones, should deliberately conclude that it was believed the souls remained in the bodies in the tomb and enjoyed the perfume of the flowers? An American traveller, writing from Vienna on All-Saints' Day, in 1855, describes the avenues of the great cemetery filled with people hanging festoons of flowers on the tombstones, and placing burning candles of wax on the graves, and kneeling in devotion; it being their childish belief, he says, that their prayers on this day have efficacy to release their deceased relatives from purgatory, and that the dim taper flickering on the sod lights the unbound soul to its heavenly home. Of course these rites are not literal expressions of literal beliefs, but are symbols of ideas, emblems of sentiments, figurative and inadequate shadows of a theological doctrine, although, as is well known, there is, among the most ignorant persons, scarcely any deliberately-apprehended distinction between image and entity, material representation and spiritual verity.

If a member of the Oneida tribe died when they were away from home, they buried him with great solemnity, setting a mark over the grave; and

[32] Republic, book v. ch. 15. [33] R. Taylor, New Zealand, ch. 7.
[34] Meiners, Kritische Geschichte der Religionen, buch iii. absch. 1.

whenever they passed that way afterwards they visited the spot, singing a mournful song and casting stones upon it, thus giving symbolic expression to their feelings. It would be absurd to suppose this song an incantation to secure the repose of the buried brave, and the stones thrown to prevent his rising; yet it would not be more incredible or more remote from the facts than many a commonly-current interpretation of barbarian usages. An amusing instance of error—well enforcing the need of extreme caution in drawing inferences—is afforded by the example of those explorers who, finding an extensive cemetery where the aborigines had buried all their children apart from the adults, concluded they had discovered the remains of an ancient race of pigmies![35]

The influence of unspeculative affection, memory, and sentiment goes far towards accounting for the funeral ritual of the barbarians. But it is not sufficient. We must call in further aid; and that aid we find in the arbitrary conceits, the poetic associations, and the creative force of unregulated fancy and imagination. The poetic faculty which, supplied with materials by observation and speculation, constructed the complex mythologies of Egypt and Greece, and which, turning on its own resources, composed the Arabian tales of the genii and the modern literature of pure fiction,—is particularly active, fertile, and tyrannical, though in a less continuous and systematic form, in the barbarian mind. Acting by wild fits and starts, there is no end to the extravagant conjectures and visions it bodies forth. Destitute of philosophical definitions, totally unacquainted with critical distinctions or analytic reflection, absurd notions, sober convictions, dim dreams, and sharp perceptions run confusedly together in the minds of savages. There is to them no clear and permanent demarcation between rational thoughts and crazy fancies. Now, no phenomenon can strike more deeply or work more powerfully in human nature, stirring up the exploring activities of intellect and imagination, than the event of death, with its bereaving stroke and prophetic appeal. Accordingly, we should expect to find among uncultivated nations, as we actually do, a vast medley of fragmentary thoughts and pictures—plausible, strange, lovely, or terrible—relating to the place and fate of the disembodied soul. These conceptions would naturally take their shaping and coloring, in some degree, from the scenery, circumstances, and experience amidst which they were conceived and born. Sometimes these figments were consciously entertained as wilful inventions, distinctly contemplated as poetry. Sometimes they were superstitiously credited in all their grossness with full assent of soul. Sometimes all coexisted in vague bewilderment. These lines of separation unquestionably existed: the difficulty is to know where, in given instances, to draw them. A few examples will serve at once to illustrate the operation of the principle now laid down, and to present still further specimens of the barbarian notions of a future life.

[35] Smithsonian Contributions, vol. ii. Squier's Aboriginal Monuments, appendix, pp. 127–131.

Some Indian tribes made offerings to the spirits of their departed heroes by casting the boughs of various trees around the ash, saying that the branches of this tree were eloquent with the ghosts of their warrior sires, who came at evening in the chariot of cloud to fire the young to deeds of war.[36] There is an Indian legend of a witch who wore a mantle composed of the scalps of murdered women. Taking this off, she shook it, and all the scalps uttered shrieks of laughter. Another describes a magician scudding across a lake in a boat whose ribs were live rattlesnakes.[37] An exercise of mind virtually identical with that which gave these strokes made the Philippine Islanders say that the souls of those who die struck by lightning go up the beams of the rainbow to a happy place, and animated Ali to declare that the pious, on coming out of their sepulchres, shall find awaiting them white-winged camels with saddles of gold. The Ajetas suspended the bow and arrows of a deceased Papuan above his grave, and conceived him as emerging from beneath every night to go a-hunting.[38] The fisherman on the coast of Lapland was interred in a boat, and a flint and combustibles were given him to light him along the dark cavernous passage he was to traverse. The Dyaks of Borneo believe that every one whose head they can get possession of here will in the future state be their servant: consequently, they make a business of "head-hunting," accumulating the ghastly visages of their victims in their huts.[39] The Caribs have a sort of sensual paradise for the "brave and virtuous," where, it is promised, they shall enjoy the sublimated experience of all their earthly satisfactions; but the "degenerate and cowardly" are threatened with eternal banishment beyond the mountains, where they shall be tasked and driven as slaves by their enemies.[40] The Hispaniolians locate their elysium in a pleasant valley abounding with guava, delicious fruits, cool shades, and murmuring rivulets, where they expect to live again with their departed ancestors and friends.[41] The Patagonians say the stars are their translated countrymen, and the milky way is a field where the departed Patagonians hunt ostriches. Clouds are the feathers of the ostriches they kill.[42] The play is here seen of the same mythological imagination which, in Italy, pictured a writhing giant beneath Mount Vesuvius, and, in Greenland, looked on the Pleiades as a group of dogs surrounding a white bear, and on the belt of Orion as a company of Greenlanders placed there because they could not find the way to their own country. Black Bird, the redoubtable chief of the O-Ma-Haws, when dying, said to his people, "Bury me on yonder lofty bluff on the banks of the Missouri, where I can see the men and boats passing by on the river."[43] Accordingly, as soon as he ceased to breathe, they set him there, on his favorite steed, and heaped the earth around him. This does not imply any believed doctrine, in

[36] Browne, Trees of America, p. 328.
[37] Schoolcraft, Hist. &c. part i. pp. 32-34.
[38] Earl, The Papuans, p. 132.
[39] Earl, The Eastern Seas, ch. 8.
[40] Edwards, Hist. of the West Indies, book i. ch. 2.
[41] Ibid. ch. 3.
[42] Falkner, Patagonia, ch. 5.
[43] Catlin, North American Indians, vol. ii. p. 6.

our sense of the term, but is plainly a spontaneous transference for the moment, by the poetic imagination, of the sentiments of the living man to the buried body.

The unhappy Africans who were snatched from their homes, enslaved and cruelly tasked in the far West India islands, pined under their fate with deadly homesickness. The intense longing moulded their plastic belief, just as the sensation from some hot bricks at the feet of a sleeping man shaped his dreams into a journey up the side of Ætna. They fancied that if they died they should immediately live again in their fatherland. They committed suicide in great numbers. At last, when other means had failed to check this epidemic of self-destruction, a cunning overseer brought them ropes and every facility for hanging, and told them to hang themselves as fast as they pleased, for their master had bought a great plantation in Africa, and as soon as they got there they would be set to work on it. Their helpless credulity took the impression; and no more suicides occurred.[44]

The mutual formative influences exerted upon a people's notions concerning the future state, by the imagination of their poets and the peculiarities of their clime, are perhaps nowhere more conspicuously exhibited than in the case of the Caledonians who at an early period dwelt in North Britain. They had picturesque traditions locating the habitation of ghosts in the air above their fog-draped mountains. They promised rewards for nothing but valor, and threatened punishments for nothing but cowardice; and even of these they speak obscurely. Nothing is said of an under-world. They supposed the ghosts at death floated upward naturally, true children of the mist, and dwelt forever in the air, where they spent an inane existence, indulging in sorrowful memories of the past, and, in unreal imitation of their mortal occupations, chasing boars of fog amid hills of cloud and valleys of shadow. The authority for these views is Ossian, "whose genuine strains," Dr. Good observes, "assume a higher importance as historical records than they can claim when considered as fragments of exquisite poetry."

"A dark red stream comes down from the hill. Crugal sat upon the beam; he that lately fell by the hand of Swaran striving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the setting moon; his robes are of the clouds of the hill; his eyes are like two decaying flames; dark is the wound on his breast. The stars dim-twinkled through his form, and his voice was like the sound of a distant stream. Dim and in tears he stood, and stretched his pale hand over the hero. Faintly he raised his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego. 'My ghost, O'Connal, is on my native hills, but my corse is on the sands of Ullin. Thou shalt never talk with Crugal nor find his lone steps on the heath. I am light as the blast of Cromla, and I move like the shadow of mist. Connal, son of Colgar, I see the dark cloud of death. It hovers over the plains of Lena.

[44] Meiners, Geschichte der Religionen, buch xiv. sect. 765.

The sons of green Erin shall fall. Remove from the field of ghosts.' Like the darkened moon, he retired in the midst of the whistling blast."

We recognise here several leading traits in all the early unspeculative faiths,—the vapory form, the echoless motion, the marks of former wounds, the feeble voice, the memory of the past, the mournful aspect, and the prophetic words. But the rhetorical imagery, the scenery, the location of the spirit-world in the lower clouds, are stamped by emphatic climatic peculiarities, whose origination, easily traceable, throws light on the growth of the whole mass of such notions everywhere.

Two general sources have now been described of the barbarian conceptions in relation to a future state. First, the natural operation of an earnest recollection of the dead; sympathy, regret, and reverence for them leading the thoughts and the heart to grope after them, to brood over the possibilities of their fate, and to express themselves in rites and emblems. Secondly, the mythological or arbitrary creations of the imagination when it is set strongly at work, as it must be by the solemn phenomena associated with death. But beyond these two comprehensive statements there is, directly related to the matter, and worthy of separate illustration, a curious action of the mind, which has been very extensively experienced and fertile of results. It is a peculiar example of the unconscious impartation of objective existence to mental ideas. With the death of the body the man does not cease to live in the remembrance, imagination, and heart of his surviving friends. By an unphilosophical confusion, this internal image is credited as an external existence. The dead pass from their customary haunts in our society to the imperishable domain of ideas. This visionary world of memory and fantasy is projected outward, located, furnished, and constitutes the future state apprehended by the barbarian mind. Feuerbach says in his subtle and able Thoughts on Death and Immortality, "The Realm of Memory is the Land of Souls." Ossian, amid the midnight mountains, thinking of departed warriors and listening to the tempest, fills the gale with *the impersonations of his thoughts*, and exclaims, "I hear the steps of the dead in the dark eddying blast."

The barbarian brain seems to have been generally impregnated with the feeling that every thing else has a ghost as well as man. The Gauls lent money in this world upon bills payable in the next. They threw letters upon the funeral-pile to be read by the soul of the deceased.[45] As the ghost was thought to retain the scars of injuries inflicted upon the body, so, it appears, these letters were thought, when destroyed, to leave impressions of what had been written on them. The custom of burning or burying things with the dead probably arose, in some cases at least, from the supposition that every object has its *manes*. The obolus for Charon, the cake of honey for Cerberus,—the shadows of these articles would be borne and used by the shadow of the dead man. Leonidas

[45] Pomponius Mela, De Orbis Situ, iii. 2.

saying, "Bury me on my shield: I will enter even Hades as a Lacedæmonian,"[46] must either have used the word Hades by metonymy for the grave, or have imagined that a shadowy *fac-simile* of what was interred in the grave went into the grim kingdom of Pluto. It was a custom with some Indian tribes, on the new-made grave of a chief, to slay his chosen horse; and when he fell they supposed

> "That then, upon the dead man's plain,
> The rider grasp'd his steed again."

The hunter chases the deer, each alike a shade. A Feejee once, in presence of a missionary, took a weapon from the grave of a buried companion, saying, "The ghost of the club has gone with him." The Iroquois tell of a woman who was chased by a ghost. She heard his faint war-whoop, his spectre-voice, and only escaped with her life because his war-club was but a shadow wielded by an arm of air. The Slavonians sacrificed a warrior's horse at his tomb.[47] Nothing seemed to the Northman so noble as to enter Valhalla on horseback, with a numerous retinue, in his richest apparel and finest armor. It was firmly believed, Mallet says, that Odin himself had declared that whatsoever was burned or buried with the dead accompanied them to his palace.[48] Before the Mohammedan era, on the death of an Arab, the finest camel he had owned was tied to a stake beside his grave, and left to expire of hunger over the body of his master, in order that, in the region into which death had introduced him, he should be supplied with his usual bearer.[49] The Chinese—who surpass all other people in the offerings and worship paid at the sepulchres of their ancestors—make little paper houses, fill them with images of furniture, utensils, domestics, and all the appurtenances of the family economy, and then burn them, thus passing them into the invisible state for the use of the deceased whom they mourn and honor.[50] It is a touching thought with the Greenlanders, when a child dies, to bury a dog with him as a guide to the land of souls; for, they say, the dog is able to find his way anywhere.[51] The shadow of the faithful servant guides the shadow of the helpless child to heaven. In fancy, not without a moved heart, one sees this spiritual Bernard dog bearing the ghost-child on his back, over the spectral Gothard of death, safe into the sheltering hospice of the Greenland paradise.

It is strange to notice the meeting of extremes in the rude antithetical correspondence between Plato's doctrine of archetypal ideas, the immaterial patterns of earthly things, and the belief of savages in the ghosts of clubs, arrows, sandals, and provisions. The disembodied soul of the philosopher, an eternal idea, turns from the empty illusions of matter to nourish itself with the substance of real truth. The spectre

[46] Translation of Greek Anthology, in Bohn's Library, p. 58.
[47] Wilkinson, Dalmatia and Montenegro, vol. i. ch. 1.
[48] Northern Antiquities, ch. 10.
[49] Lamartine, History of Turkey, book i. ch. 10.
[50] Kidd, China, sect. 3.
[51] Crantz, History of Greenland, book iii. ch. 6, sect. 47.

of the Mohawk devours the spectre of the haunch of roast venison hung over his grave. And why should not the two shades be conceived, if either?

> "Pig, bullock, goose, must have their goblins too,
> Else ours would have to go without their dinners:
> If that starvation-doctrine were but true,
> How hard the fate of gormandizing sinners!"

The conception of ghosts has been still further introduced also into the realm of mathematics in an amusing manner. Bishop Berkeley, bantered on his idealism by Halley, retorted that he too was an idealist; for his ultimate ratios—terms only appearing with the disappearance of the forms in whose relationship they consist—were but the ghosts of departed quantities! It may be added here that, according to the teachings of physiological psychology, all memories or recollected ideas are literally the ghosts of departed sensations.

We have thus seen that the conjuring force of fear, with its dread apparitions, the surmising, half-articulate struggles of affection, the dreams of memory, the lights and groups of poetry, the crude germs of metaphysical speculation, the deposits of the inter-action of human experience and phenomenal nature,—now in isolated fragments, again, huddled indiscriminately together—conspire to compose the barbarian notions of a future life.

CHAPTER II.

DRUIDIC DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

THAT strange body of men, commonly known as the Druids, who constituted what may, with some correctness, be called the Celtic priesthood, were the recognised religious teachers throughout Gaul, Armorica, a small part of Germany on the southern border, all Great Britain, and some neighboring islands. The notions in regard to a future life put forth by them are stated only in a very imperfect manner by the Greek and Roman authors in whose surviving works we find allusions to the Druids or accounts of the Celts. Several modern writers—especially Borlase, in his Antiquities of Cornwall[1]—have collected all these references from Diodorus, Strabo, Procopius, Tacitus, Cæsar, Mela, Valerius Maximus, and Marcellinus. It is therefore needless to cite the passages here, the more so as, even with the aid of all the analytic and constructive comments which can be fairly made upon them, they afford us only a few general views, leaving all the details in profound obscurity. The

[1] Book ii. ch. 14.

substance of what we learn from these sources is this. First, that the Druids possessed a body of science and speculation comprising the doctrine of immortality, which they taught with clearness and authority. Secondly, that they inculcated the belief in a future life in inseparable connection with the great dogma of metempsychosis. Thirdly, that the people held such cheerful and attractive views of the future state, and held them with such earnestness, that they wept around the newborn infant and smiled around the corpse; that they encountered death without fear or reluctance. This reversal of natural sentiments shows the tampering of a priesthood who had motives.

A somewhat more minute conception of the Druidic view of the future life is furnished us by an old mythologic tale of Celtic origin.[2] Omitting the story, as irrelevant to our purpose, we derive from it the following ideas. The soul, on being divested of its earthly envelop, is borne aloft. The clouds are composed of the souls of lately-deceased men. They fly over the heads of armies, inspiring courage or striking terror. Not yet freed from terrestrial affections, they mingle in the passions and affairs of men. Vainly they strive to soar above the atmosphere; an impassable wall of sapphire resists their wings. In the moon, millions of souls traverse tremendous plains of ice, losing all perception but that of simple existence, forgetting the adventures they have passed through and are about to recommence. During eclipses, on long tubes of darkness they return to the earth, and, revived by a beam of light from the all-quickening sun, enter newly-formed bodies, and begin again the career of life. The disk of the sun consists of an assemblage of pure souls swimming in an ocean of bliss. Souls sullied with earthly impurities are to be purged by repeated births and probations till the last stain is removed, and they are all finally fitted to ascend to a succession of spheres still higher than the sun, whence they can never sink again to reside in the circle of the lower globes and grosser atmosphere. These representations are neither Gothic nor Roman, but Celtic.

But a far more adequate exposition of the Druidic doctrine of the soul's destinies has been presented to us through the translation of some of the preserved treasures of the old Bardic lore of Wales. The Welsh bards for hundreds of years were the sole surviving representatives of the Druids. Their poems—numerous manuscripts of which, with apparent authentication of their genuineness, have been published and explained—contain quite full accounts of the tenets of Druidism, which was nowhere else so thoroughly systematized and established as in ancient Britain.[3] The curious reader will find this whole subject copiously treated, and all the materials furnished, in the "Myvyrian Archæology of Wales," a work in two huge volumes, published at London at the beginning

[2] Davies, Celtic Researches, appendix, pp. 558–561.

[3] Sketch of British Bardism, prefixed to Owen's translation of the Heroic Elegies of Llywarch Hen.

of the present century. After the introduction and triumph of Christianity in Britain, for several centuries the two systems of thought and ritual mutually influenced each other, corrupting and corrupted.[4] A striking example in point is this. The notion of a punitive and remedial transmigration belonged to Druidism. Now, Taliesin, a famous Welsh bard of the sixth century, locates this purifying metempsychosis in the *Hell of Christianity*, whence the soul gradually rises again to felicity, the way for it having been opened by Christ! Cautiously eliminating the Christian admixtures, the following outline, which we epitomize from the pioneer[5] of modern scholars to the Welsh Bardic literature, affords a pretty clear knowledge of that portion of the Druidic theology relating to the future life.

There are, says one of the Bardic triads, three circles of existence. First, the Circle of Infinity, where of living or dead there is nothing but God, and which none but God can traverse. Secondly, the Circle of Metempsychosis, where all things that live are derived from death. This circle has been traversed by man. Thirdly, the Circle of Felicity, where all things spring from life. This circle man shall hereafter traverse. All animated beings originate in the lowest point of existence, and, by regular gradations through an ascending series of transmigrations, rise to the highest state of perfection possible for finite creatures. Fate reigns in all the states below that of humanity, and they are all necessarily evil. In the states above humanity, on the contrary, unmixed good so prevails that all are necessarily good. But in the middle state of humanity, good and evil are so balanced that liberty results; and free will and consequent responsibility are born. Beings who in their ascent have arrived at the state of man, if, by purity, humility, love, and righteousness, they keep the laws of the Creator, will, after death, rise into more glorious spheres, and will continue to rise still higher, until they reach the final destination of complete and endless happiness. But if, while in the state of humanity, one perverts his reason and will, and attaches himself to evil, he will, on dying, fall into such a state of animal existence as corresponds with the baseness of his soul. This baseness may be so great as to precipitate him to the lowest point of being; but he shall climb thence through a series of births best fitted to free him from his evil propensities. Restored to the probationary state, he may fall again; but, though this should occur again and again for a million of ages, the path to happiness still remains open, and he shall at last infallibly arrive at his preordained felicity, and fall nevermore. In the states superior to humanity, the soul recovers and retains the entire recollection of its former lives.

We will quote a few illustrative triads. There are three necessary purposes of metempsychosis: to collect the materials and properties of

[4] Herbert, Essay on the Neo-Druidic Heresy in Britannia.

[5] Poems, Lyric and Pastoral, by Edward Williams, vol. ii. notes, pp. 194-256.

every nature; to collect the knowledge of every thing; to collect power towards removing whatever is pernicious. The knowledge of three things will subdue and destroy evil: knowledge of its cause, its nature, and its operation. Three things continually dwindle away: the Dark, the False, the Dead. Three things continually increase: Light, Truth, Life.

These will prevail, and finally absorb every thing else. The soul is an inconceivably minute particle of the most refined matter, endowed with indestructible life, at the dissolution of one body passing, according to its merits, into a higher or lower stage of existence, where it expands itself into that form which its acquired propensities necessarily give it, or into that animal in which such propensities naturally reside. The ultimate states of happiness are ceaselessly undergoing the most delightful renovations, without which, indeed, no finite being could endure the tedium of eternity. These are not, like the death of the lower states, accompanied by a suspension of memory and of conscious identity. All the innumerable modes of existence, after being cleansed from every evil, will forever remain as beautiful varieties in the creation, and will be equally esteemed, equally happy, equally fathered by the Creator. The successive occupation of these modes of existence by the celestial inhabitants of the Circle of Felicity will be one of the ways of varying what would otherwise be the intolerable monotony of eternity. The creation is yet in its infancy. The progressive operation of the providence of God will bring every being up from the great Deep to the point of liberty, and will at last secure three things for them: namely, what is most beneficial, what is most desired, and what is most beautiful. There are three stabilities of existence: what cannot be otherwise, what should not be otherwise, what cannot be imagined better; and in these all shall end, in the Circle of Felicity.

Such is a hasty synopsis of what here concerns us in the theology of the Druids. In its ground-germs it was, it seems to us, unquestionably imported into Celtic thought and Cymrian song from that prolific and immemorial Hindu mind which bore Brahmanism and Buddhism as its fruit. Its ethical tone, intellectual elevation, and glorious climax are not unworthy that free hierarchy of minstrel-priests whose teachings were proclaimed, as their assemblies were held, "in the face of the sun and in the eye of the light," and whose thrilling motto was, "THE TRUTH AGAINST THE WORLD."

The latest publication on the subject of old Welsh literature is "Taliesin; or, The Bards and Druids of Britain." The author, D. W. Nash, is obviously familiar with his theme, and he throws much light on many points of it. His ridicule of the arbitrary tenets and absurdities which Davies, Pughe, and others have taught in all good faith as Druidic lore and practice is richly deserved. But, despite the learning and acumen displayed in his able and valuable volume, we must think Mr. Nash goes wholly against the record in denying the doctrine of metem-

psychosis to the Druidic system, and goes clearly beyond the record in charging Edward Williams and others with forgery and fraud in their representations of ancient Bardic doctrines.[6] In support of such grave charges direct evidence is needed; only suspicious circumstances are adduced. The non-existence of public documents is perfectly reconcilable with the existence of reliable oral accounts preserved by the initiated few, one of whom Williams, with seeming sincerity, claimed to be.

CHAPTER III.

SCANDINAVIAN DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

MANY considerations combine to make it seem likely that at an early period a migration took place from Southern Asia to Northern Europe, which constituted the commencement of what afterwards grew to be the great Gothic family. The correspondence of many of the leading doctrines and symbols of the Scandinavian mythology with well-known Persian and Buddhist notions—notions of a purely fanciful and arbitrary character—is too peculiar, apparently, to admit of any other explanation.[1] But the germs of thought and imagination transplanted thus from the warm and gorgeous climes of the East to the snowy mountains of Norway and the howling ridges of Iceland, obtained a fresh development, with numerous modifications and strange additions, from the new life, climate, scenery, and customs to which they were there exposed. The temptation to predatory habits and strife, the necessity for an intense though fitful activity arising from their geographical situation, the fierce spirit nourished in them by their actual life, the tremendous phenomena of the Arctic world around them,—all these influences break out to our view in the poetry, and are reflected by their results in the religion, of the Northmen.

From the flame-world, Muspelheim, in the south, in which Surtur, the dread fire-king, sits enthroned, flowed down streams of heat. From the mist-world, Niflheim, in the north, in whose central caldron, Hvergelmir, dwells the gloomy dragon Nidhögg, rose floods of cold vapor. The fire and mist meeting in the yawning abyss, Ginungagap, after various stages of transition, formed the earth. There were then three principal races of beings: men, whose dwelling was Midgard; Jötuns, who occupied Utgard; and the Æsir, whose home was Asgard. The Jötuns, or demons, seem to have been originally personifications of darkness, cold, and storm,—the disturbing forces of nature,—whatever is hostile to

[6] Taliesin, ch. iv. [1] Vans Kennedy, Ancient and Hindu Mythology, pp. 452, 463–464.

fruitful life and peace. They were frost-giants ranged in the outer wastes around the habitable fields of men. The Æsir, or gods, on the other hand, appear to have been personifications of light, and law, and benignant power,—the orderly energies of the universe. Between the Jötuns and the Æsir there is an implacable contest.[2] The rainbow, Bifröst, is a bridge leading from earth up to the skyey dwelling-place of the Æsir; and their sentinel, Heimdall,—whose senses are so acute that he can hear the grass spring in the meadows and the wool grow on the backs of the sheep,—keeps incessant watch upon it. Their chief deity, the father Zeus of the Northern pantheon, was Odin, the god of war, who wakened the spirit of battle by flinging his spear over the heads of the people, its inaudible hiss from heaven being as the song of Ate let loose on earth. Next in rank was Thor, the personification of the exploding tempest. The crashing echoes of the thunder are his chariot-wheels rattling through the cloudy halls of Thrudheim. Whenever the lightning strikes a cliff or an iceberg, then Thor has flung his hammer, Mjölnir, at a Jötun's head. Balder was the god of innocence and gentleness, fairest, kindest, purest of beings. Light emanated from him, and all things loved him. After Christianity was established in the North, Jesus was called the White Christ, or the new Balder. The appearance of Balder amidst the frenzied and bloody divinities of the Norse creed is beautiful as the dew-cool moon hanging calmly over the lurid storm of Vesuvius. He was entitled the "Band in the Wreath of the Gods," because with his fate that of all the rest was bound up. His death, ominously foretold from eldest antiquity, would be the signal for the ruin of the universe. Asa-Loki was the Momus-Satan or Devil-Buffoon of the Scandinavian mythology, the half-amusing, half-horrible embodiment of wit, treachery, and evil; now residing with the gods in heaven, now accompanying Thor on his frequent adventures, now visiting and plotting with his own kith and kin in frosty Jötunheim, beyond the earth-environing sea, or in livid Helheim deep beneath the domain of breathing humanity.[3]

With a Jötun woman, Angerbode, or Messenger of Evil, Loki begets three fell children. The first is Fenris, a savage wolf, so large that nothing but space can hold him. The second is Jörmungandur, who, with his tail in his mouth, fills the circuit of the ocean. He is described by Sir Walter Scott as

> "That great sea-snake, tremendous curl'd,
> Whose monstrous circle girds the world."

The third is Hela, the grim goddess of death, whose ferocious aspect is half of a pale blue and half of a ghastly white, and whose empire, stretching below the earth through Niflheim, is full of freezing vapors

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[2] Thorpe, Northern Mythology, vol. ii.

[3] Oehlenschläger, Gods of the North. This celebrated and brilliant poem, with the copious notes in Frye's translation, affords the English reader a full conception of the Norse pantheon and its salient adventures.

and discomfortable sights. Her residence is the spacious under-world; her court-yard, faintness; her threshold, precipice; her door, abyss; her hall, pain; her table, hunger; her knife, starvation; her man-servant, delay; her handmaid, slowness; her bed, sickness; her pillow, anguish; and her canopy, curse. Still lower than her house is an abode yet more fearful and loathsome. In Nastrond, or strand of corpses, stands a hall, the conception of which is prodigiously awful and enormously disgusting. It is plaited of serpents' backs, wattled together like wicker-work, whose heads turn inwards, vomiting poison. In the lake of venom thus deposited within these immense wriggling walls of snakes the worst of the damned wade and swim.

High up in the sky is Odin's hall, the magnificent Valhalla, or temple of the slain. The columns supporting its ceiling are spears. It is roofed with shields, and the ornaments on its benches are coats of mail. The Valkyrs are Odin's battle-maids, choosers of heroes for his banquet-rooms. With helmets on their heads, in bloody harness, mounted on shadowy steeds, surrounded by meteoric lightnings, and wielding flaming swords, they hover over the conflict and point the way to Valhalla to the warriors who fall. The valiant souls thus received to Odin's presence are called Einheriar, or the elect. The Valkyrs, as white-clad virgins with flowing ringlets, wait on them in the capacity of cup-bearers. Each morning, at the crowing of a huge gold-combed cock, the well-armed Einheriar rush through Valhalla's five hundred and forty doors into a great court-yard, and pass the day in merciless fighting. However pierced and hewn in pieces in these fearful encounters, at evening every wound is healed, and they return into the hall whole, and are seated, according to their exploits, at a luxurious feast. The perennial boar Sehrimnir, deliciously cooked by Andrimnir, though devoured every night, is whole again every morning and ready to be served anew. The two highest joys these terrible berserkers and vikings knew on earth composed their experience in heaven: namely, a battle by day and a feast by night. It is a vulgar error, long prevalent, that the Valhalla heroes drink out of the skulls of their enemies. This notion, though often refuted, still lingers in the popular mind. It arose from the false translation of a phrase in the death-song of Ragnar Lodbrok, the famous sea-king,—"Soon shall we drink from the curved trees of the head,"—which, as a figure for the usual drinking-horns, was erroneously rendered by Olaus Wormius, "Soon shall we drink from the hollow cups of skulls." It is not the heads of men, but the horns of beasts, from which the Einheriar quaff Heidrun's mead.[4]

No women being ever mentioned as gaining admission to Valhalla or joining in the joys of the Einheriar, some writers have affirmed that, according to the Scandinavian faith, women had no immortal souls, or, at all events, were excluded from heaven. The charge is as baseless in this

[4] Pigott, Manual of Scandinavian Mythology, p. 66.

instance as when brought against Mohammedanism. Valhalla was the exclusive abode of the most daring champions; but Valhalla was not the whole of heaven. Vingolf, the Hall of Friends, stood beside the Hall of the Slain, and was the assembling-place of the goddesses.[5] There, in the palace of Freya, the souls of noble women were received after death. The elder Edda says that Thor guided Roska, a swift-footed peasant-girl who had attended him as a servant on various excursions, to Freya's bower, where she was welcomed, and where she remained forever. The virgin goddess Gefjone, the Northern Diana, also had a residence in heaven, and all who died maidens repaired thither.[6] The presence of virgin throngs with Gefjone, and the society of noble matrons in Vingolf, shed a tender gleam across the carnage and carousal of Valhalla. More is said of the latter—the former is scarcely visible to us now—because the only record we have of the Norse faith is that contained in the fragmentary strains of ferocious Skalds, who sang chiefly to warriors, and the staple matter of whose songs was feats of martial prowess or entertaining mythological stories. Furthermore, there is above the heaven of the Æsir a yet higher heaven, the abode of the far-removed and inscrutable being, the rarely-named Omnipotent One, the true All-Father, who is at last to come forth above the ruins of the universe to judge and sentence all creatures and to rebuild a better world. In this highest region towers the imperishable gold-roofed hall, Gimle, brighter than the sun. There is no hint anywhere in the Skaldic strains that good women are repulsed from this dwelling.

According to the rude morality of the people and the time, the contrasted conditions of admission to the upper paradise or condemnation to the infernal realm were the admired virtues of strength, open-handed frankness, reckless audacity, or the hated vices of feebleness, cowardice, deceit, humility. Those who have won fame by puissant feats and who die in battle are snatched by the Valkyrs from the sod to Valhalla. To die in arms is to be chosen of Odin,—

> "In whose hall of gold
> The steel-clad ghosts their wonted orgies hold.
> Some taunting jest begets the war of words:
> In clamorous fray they grasp their gleamy swords,
> And, as upon the earth, with fierce delight
> By turns renew the banquet and the fight."

All, on the contrary, who, after lives of ignoble labor or despicable ease, die of sickness, sink from their beds to the dismal house of Hela. In this gigantic vaulted cavern the air smells like a newly-stirred grave; damp fogs rise, hollow sighs are heard, the only light comes from funeral tapers held by skeletons; the hideous queen, whom Thor eulogizes as the Scourger of Cowards, sits on a throne of skulls, and sways a sceptre,

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[5] Keyser, Religion of the Northmen, trans. by Pennock, p. 149.
[6] Pigott, p. 245.

made of a dead man's bone bleached in the moonlight, over a countless multitude of shivering ghosts.[7] But the Norse moralists plunge to a yet darker doom those guilty of perjury, murder, or adultery. In Nastrond's grisly hall, which is shaped of serpents' spines, and through whose loop-holes drops of poison drip, where no sunlight ever reaches, they welter in a venom-sea and are gnawed by the dragon Nidhögg.[8] In a word, what to the crude moral sense of the martial Goth seemed piety, virtue, led to heaven; what seemed blasphemy, baseness, led to hell.

The long war between good and evil, light and darkness, order and discord, the Æsir and the Jötuns, was at last to reach a fatal crisis and end in one universal battle, called Ragnarökur, or the "Twilight of the Gods," whose result would be the total destruction of the present creation. Portentous inklings of this dread encounter were abroad among all beings. A shuddering anticipation of it sat in a lowering frown of shadow on the brows of the deities. In preparation for Ragnarökur, both parties anxiously secured all the allies they could. Odin therefore joyously welcomes every valiant warrior to Valhalla, as a recruit for his hosts on that day when Fenris shall break loose. When Hákon Jarl fell, the Valkyrs shouted, "Now does the force of the gods grow stronger when they have brought Hákon to their home." A Skald makes Odin say, on the death of King Eirik Blood-Axe, as an excuse for permitting such a hero to be slain, "Our lot is uncertain: the gray wolf gazes on the host of the gods;" that is, we shall need help at Ragnarökur. But as all the brave and magnanimous champions received to Valhalla were enlisted on the side of the Æsir, so all the miserable cowards, invalids, and wretches doomed to Hela's house would fight for the Jötuns. From day to day the opposed armies, above and below, increase in numbers. Some grow impatient, some tremble. When Balder dies, and the ship Nagelfra is completed, the hour of infinite suspense will strike. Nagelfra is a vessel for the conveyance of the hosts of frost-giants to the battle. It is to be built of dead men's nails: therefore no one should die with unpaired nails, for if he does he furnishes materials for the construction of that ship which men and gods wish to have finished as late as possible.[9]

At length Loki treacherously compasses the murder of Balder. The frightful foreboding which at once flies through all hearts finds voice in the dark "Raven Song" of Odin. Having chanted this obscure wail in heaven, he mounts his horse and rides down the bridge to Helheim. With resistless incantations he raises from the grave, where she has been interred for ages, wrapt in snows, wet with the rains and the dews, an aged vala or prophetess, and forces her to answer his questions. With appalling replies he returns home, galloping up the sky. And now the crack of doom is at hand. Heimdall hurries up and down the bridge Bifröst, blowing his horn till its rousing blasts echo through the universe.

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[7] Pigott, pp. 137, 138.

[8] The Völuspa, strophes 34, 35.

[9] Grimm, Deutsche Mythologie, s. 775, note.

The wolf Sköll, from whose pursuit the frightened sun has fled round the heavens since the first dawn, overtakes and devours his bright prey. Nagelfra, with the Jötun hosts on board, sails swiftly from Utgard. Loki advances at the head of the troops of Hela. Fenris snaps his chain and rushes forth with jaws so extended that the upper touches the firmament, while the under rests on the earth; and he would open them wider if there were room. Jörmungandur writhes his entire length around Midgard, and, lifting his head, blows venom over air and sea. Suddenly, in the south, heaven cleaves asunder, and through the breach the sons of Muspel, the flame-genii, ride out on horseback with Surtur at their head, his sword outflashing the sun. Now Odin leads forward the Æsir and the Einheriar, and on the predestined plain of Vigrid the strife commences. Heimdall and Loki mutually slay each other. Thor kills Jörmungandur; but as the monster expires he belches a flood of venom, under which the matchless thunder-god staggers and falls dead. Fenris swallows Odin, but is instantly rent in twain by Vidar, the strong silent one, Odin's dumb son, who well avenges his father on the wolf by splitting the jaws that devoured him. Then Surtur slings fire abroad, and the reek rises around all things. Iggdrasill, the great Ash-Tree of Existence, totters, but stands. All below perishes. Finally, the unnamable Mighty One appears, to judge the good and the bad. The former hie from fading Valhalla to eternal Gimle, where all joy is to be theirs forever; the latter are stormed down from Hela to Nastrond, there, "under curdling mists, in a snaky marsh whose waves freeze black and thaw in blood, to be scared forever, for punishment, with terrors ever new." All strife vanishes in endless peace. By the power of All-Father, a new earth, green and fair, shoots up from the sea, to be inhabited by a new race of men free from sorrow. The foul, spotted dragon Nidhögg flies over the plains, bearing corpses and Death itself away upon his wings, and sinks out of sight.[10]

It has generally been asserted, in consonance with the foregoing view, that the Scandinavians believed that the good and the bad, respectively in Gimle and Nastrond, would experience everlasting rewards and punishments. But Blackwell, the recent editor of Percy's translation of Mallet's Northern Antiquities as published in Bohn's Antiquarian Library, argues with great force against the correctness of the assertion.[11] The point is dubious; but it is of no great importance, since we know that the spirit and large outlines of their faith have been reliably set forth. That faith, rising from the impetuous blood and rude mind of the martial race of the North, gathering wonderful embellishments from the glowing imagination of the Skalds, reacting, doubly nourished the fierce valor and fervid fancy from which it sprang. It drove the dragon-prows of the Vikings marauding over the seas. It rolled the Goths' conquering squadrons across the nations, from the shores of Finland and

[10] Keyser, Religion of the Northmen, part i. ch. vi. [11] Pp. 497–503.

Skager-Rack to the foot of the Pyrenees and the gates of Rome. The very ferocity with which it blazed consumed itself, and the conquest of the flickering faith by Christianity was easy. During the dominion of this religion, the earnest sincerity with which its disciples received it appears alike from the fearful enterprises it prompted them to, the iron hardihood and immeasurable contempt of death it inspired in them, and the superstitious observances which, with pains and expenses, they scrupulously kept. They buried, with the dead, gold, useful implements, ornaments, that they might descend, furnished and shining, to the halls of Hela. With a chieftain they buried a pompous horse and splendid armor, that he might ride like a warrior into Valhalla. The true Scandinavian, by age or sickness deprived of dying in battle, ran himself through, or flung himself from a precipice, in this manner to make amends for not expiring in armed strife, if haply thus he might snatch a late seat among the Einheriar. With the same motive the dying sea-king had himself laid on his ship, alone, and launched away, with outstretched sails, with a slow fire in the hold, which, when he was fairly out at sea, should flame up and, as Carlyle says, "worthily bury the old hero at once in the sky and in the ocean." Surely then, if ever, "the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent took it by force."

CHAPTER IV.

ETRUSCAN DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

Although the living form and written annals of Etruria perished thousands of years ago, and although but slight references to her affairs have come down to us in the documents of contemporary nations, yet, through a comparatively recent acquisition of facts, we have quite a distinct and satisfactory knowledge of her condition and experience when her power was palmiest. We follow the ancient Etruscans from the cradle to the tomb, perceiving their various national costumes, peculiar physiognomies, names and relationships, houses, furniture, ranks, avocations, games, dying scenes, burial-processions, and funeral festivals. And, further than this, we follow their souls into the world to come, behold them in the hands of good or evil spirits, brought to judgment and then awarded their deserts of bliss or woe. This knowledge has been derived from their sepulchres, which still resist the corroding hand of Time when nearly every thing else Etruscan has mingled with the ground.[1] They hewed their tombs in the living rock of cliffs and hills, or reared them

[1] Mrs. Gray, Sepulchres of Etruria.

of massive masonry. They painted or carved the walls with descriptive and symbolic scenes, and crowded their interiors with sarcophagi, cinerary urns, vases, goblets, mirrors, and a thousand other articles covered with paintings and sculptures rich in information of their authors. From a study of these things, lately disinterred in immense quantities, has been constructed, for the most part, our present acquaintance with this ancient people. Strange that, when the whole scene of life has passed away, a sepulchral world should survive and open itself to reveal the past and instruct the future! We seem to see, rising from her tombs, and moving solemnly among the mounds where all she knew or cared for has for so many ages been inurned, the ghost of a mighty people. With dejected air she leans on a ruined temple and muses; and her shadowy tears fall silently over what was and is not.

The Etruscans were accustomed to bury their deceased outside their walls; and sometimes the city of the living was thus surrounded by a far-reaching city of the dead. At this day the decaying fronts of the houses of the departed, for miles upon miles along the road, admonish the living traveller. These stone-hewn sepulchres crowd nearly every hill and glen. Whole acres of them are also found upon the plains, covered by several feet of earth, where every spring the plough passes over them, and every autumn the harvest waves; but the dust beneath reposes well, and knows nothing of this.

> "Time buries graves. How strange! a buried grave!
> Death cannot from more death its own dead empire save."

The houses of the dead were built in imitation of the houses of the living, only on a smaller scale; and the interior arrangements were so closely copied that it is said the resemblance held in all but the light of day and the sound and motion of life. The images painted or etched on the urns and sarcophagi that fill the sepulchres were portraits of the deceased, accurate likenesses, varying with age, sex, features, and expression. These personal portraits were taken and laid up here, doubtless, to preserve their remembrance when the original had crumbled to ashes. What a touching voice is this from antiquity, telling us that our poor, fond human nature was ever the same! The heart longed to be kept still in remembrance when the mortal frame was gone. But how vain the wish beyond the vanishing circle of hearts that returned its love! For, as we wander through those sepulchres now, thousands of faces thus preserved look down upon us with a mute plea, when every vestige of their names and characters is forever lost, and their very dust scattered long ago.

Along the sides of the burial-chamber were ranged massive stone shelves, or sometimes benches, or tables, upon which the dead were laid in a reclining posture, to sleep their long sleep. It often happens that on these rocky biers lie the helmet, breastplate, greaves, signet-ring, and weapons,—or, if it be a female, the necklace, ear-rings, bracelet, and other

ornaments,—each in its relative place, when the body they once encased or adorned has not left a single fragment behind. An antiquary once, digging for discoveries, chanced to break through the ceiling of a tomb. He looked in; and there, to quote his own words, "I beheld a warrior stretched on a couch of rock, and in a few minutes I saw him vanish under my eyes; for, as the air entered the cemetery, the armor, thoroughly oxydized, crumbled away into most minute particles, and in a short time scarcely a trace of what I had seen was left on the couch. It is impossible to express the effect this sight produced upon me."

An important element in the religion of Etruria was the doctrine of Genii, a system of household deities who watched over the fortunes of individuals and families, and who are continually shown on the engravings in the sepulchres as guiding, or actively interested in, all the incidents that happen to those under their care. It was supposed that every person had two genii allotted to him, one inciting him to good deeds, the other to bad, and both accompanying him after death to the judgment to give in their testimony and turn the scales of his fate. This belief, sincerely held, would obviously wield a powerful influence over their feelings in the conduct of life..

The doctrine concerning the gods that prevailed in this ancient nation is learned partly from the classic authors, partly from sepulchral monumental remains. It was somewhat allied to that of Egypt, but much more to that of Rome, who indeed derived a considerable portion of her mythology from this source. As in other pagan countries, a multitude of deities were worshipped here, each having his peculiar office, form of representation, and cycle of traditions. It would be useless to specify all.[2] The goddess of Fate was pictured with wings, showing her swiftness, and with a hammer and nail, to typify that her decrees were unalterably fixed. The name of the supreme god was Tinia. He was the central power of the world of divinities, and was always represented, like Jupiter Tonans, with a thunderbolt in his hand. There were twelve great "consenting gods," composing the council of Tinia, and called "The Senators of Heaven." They were pitiless beings, dwelling in the inmost recesses of heaven, whose names it was not lawful to pronounce. Yet they were not deemed eternal, but were supposed to rise and fall together. There was another class, called "The Shrouded Gods," still more awful, potent, and mysterious, ruling all things, and much like the inscrutable Necessity that filled the dark background of the old Greek religion. Last, but most feared and most prominent in the Etruscan mind, were the rulers of the lower regions, Mantus and Mania, the king and queen of the under-world. Mantus was figured as an old man, wearing a crown, with wings at his shoulders, and a torch reversed in his hand. Mania was a fearful personage, frequently propitiated with human sacrifices. Macrobius says boys were offered up at her annual festival for

[2] Müller, Die Etrusker, buch iii. kap. iv. sects. 7–14.

a long time, till the heads of onions and poppies were substituted.[3] Intimately connected with these divinities was Charun, their chief minister, the conductor of souls into the realm of the future, whose dread image, hideous as the imagination could conceive, is constantly introduced in the sepulchral pictures, and who with his attendant demons well illustrates the terrible character of the superstition which first created, then deified, and then trembled before him. Who can become acquainted with such horrors as these without drawing a freer breath, and feeling a deeper gratitude to God, as he remembers how, for many centuries now, the religion of love has been redeeming man from subterranean darkness, hatred, and fright, to the happiness and peace of good-will and trust in the sweet, sunlit air of day!

That a belief in a future existence formed a prominent and controlling feature in the creed of the Etruscans[4] is abundantly shown by the contents of their tombs. They would never have produced and preserved paintings, tracings, types, of such a character and in such quantities, had not the doctrines they shadow forth possessed a ruling hold upon their hopes and fears. The symbolic representations connected with this subject may be arranged in several classes. First, there is an innumerable variety of death-bed scenes,—many of them of the most touching and pathetic character, such as witnesses say can scarcely be looked upon without tears, others of the most appalling nature, showing perfect abandonment to fright, screams, sobbing, and despair. The last hour is described under all circumstances, coming to all sorts of persons, prince, priest, peasant, man, mother, and child. Patriarchs are dying surrounded by groups in every posture of grief; friends are waving a mournful farewell to their weeping lovers; wives are torn from the embrace of their husbands; some seem resigned and willingly going, others reluctant and driven in terror.

The next series of engravings contain descriptions and emblems of the departure of the soul from this world, and of its passage into the next. There are various symbols of this mysterious transition: one is a snake with a boy riding upon its back, its amphibious nature plainly typifying the twofold existence allotted to man. The soul is also often shown muffled in a veil and travelling-garb, seated upon a horse, and followed by a slave carrying a large sack of provisions,—an emblem of the long and dreary journey about to be taken. Horses are depicted harnessed to cars in which disembodied spirits are seated,—a token of the swift ride of the dead to their doom. Sometimes the soul is gently invited, or led, by a good spirit, sometimes beaten, or dragged away, by the squalid and savage Charun, the horrible death-king, or one of his ministers; sometimes a good and an evil spirit are seen contending for the soul; sometimes the soul is seen, on its knees, beseeching the aid of its good genius and grasping at his departing wing,

[3] Saturnal. lib. i. cap. 7. [4] Dennis, Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria, ch. xii.

as, with averted face, he is retiring; and sometimes the good and the evil spirits are leading it away together, to abide the sentence of the tribunal of Mantus. Whole companies of souls are also set forth marching in procession, under the guidance of a winged genius, to their subterranean abode.

Finally, there is a class of representations depicting the ultimate fate of souls after judgment has been passed. Some are shown seated at banquet, in full enjoyment, according to their ideas of bliss. Some are shown undergoing punishment, beaten with hammers, stabbed and torn by black demons. There are no proofs that the Etruscans believed in the translation of any soul to the abode of the gods above the sky, no signs of any path rising to the supernal heaven; but they clearly expected just discriminations to be made in the under-world. Into that realm many gates are shown leading, some of them peaceful, inviting, surrounded by apparent emblems of deliverance, rest, and blessedness; others yawning, terrific, engirt by the heads of gnashing beasts and furies threatening their victim.

> "Shown is the progress of the guilty soul
> From earth's worn threshold to the throne of doom;
> Here the black genius to the dismal goal
> Drags the wan spectre from the unsheltering tomb,
> While from the side it never more may warn
> The better angel, sorrowing, flees forlorn.
> There (closed the eighth) seven yawning gates reveal
> The sevenfold anguish that awaits the lost.
> Closed the eighth gate,—for there the happy dwell.
> No glimpse of joy beyond makes horror less."

In these lines, from Bulwer's learned and ornate epic of King Arthur, the dire severity of the Etruscan doctrine of a future life is well indicated, with the local imagery of some parts of it, and the impenetrable obscurity which enwraps the great sequel.

CHAPTER V.

EGYPTIAN DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

In attempting to understand the conceptions of the ancient inhabitants of Egypt on the subject of a future life, we are first met by the inquiry why they took such great pains to preserve the bodies of their dead. It has been supposed that no common motive could have animated them to such lavish expenditure of money, time, and labor as the process of embalming required. It has been taken for granted that only some recondite theological consideration could explain this pheno-

menon. Accordingly, it is now the popular belief that the Egyptians were so scrupulous in embalming their dead and storing them in repositories of eternal stone, because they believed that the departed souls would at some future time come back and revivify their former bodies, if these were kept from decay. This hypothesis seems to us as false as it is gratuitous. In the first place, there is no evidence of it whatever,—neither written testimony nor circumstantial hint. Herodotus tells us, "The Egyptians say the soul, on the dissolution of the body, always enters into some other animal then born, and, having passed in rotation through the various terrestrial, aquatic, and aerial beings, again enters the body of a man then born."[1] There is no assertion that, at the end of the three thousand years occupied by this circuit, the soul will re-enter its former body. The plain inference, on the contrary, is that it will be born in a new body, as at each preceding step in the series of its transmigrations. Secondly, the mutilation of the body in embalming forbids the belief in its restoration to life. The brain was extracted, and the skull stuffed with cotton. The entrails were taken out, and sometimes, according to Porphyry[2] and Plutarch,[3] thrown into the Nile; sometimes, as modern examinations have revealed, bound up in four packages and either replaced in the cavity of the stomach or laid in four vases beside the mummy. It is absurd to attribute, without clear cause, to an enlightened people the belief that these stacks of brainless, eviscerated mummies, dried and shrunken in ovens, coated with pitch, bound up in a hundredfold bandages, would ever revive, and, inhabited by the same souls that fled them thirty centuries before, again walk the streets of Thebes! Besides, a third consideration demands notice. By the theory of metempsychosis — universally acknowledged to have been held by the Egyptians—it is taught that souls at death, either immediately, or after a temporary sojourn in hell or heaven has struck the balance of their merits, are born in fresh bodies; never that they return into their old ones. But the point is set beyond controversy by the discovery of inscriptions, accompanying pictures of scenes illustrating the felicity of blessed souls in heaven, to this effect:—"Their bodies shall repose in their tombs forever; they live in the celestial regions eternally, enjoying the presence of the Supreme God."[4] A writer on this subject says, "A people who believed in the transmigration of souls would naturally take extraordinary pains to preserve the body from putrefaction, in the hope of the soul again joining the body it had quitted." The remark is intrinsically untrue, because the doctrine of transmigration coexists in reconciled belief with the observed law of birth, infancy, and growth, not with the miracle of transition into reviving corpses. The notion is likewise historically refuted by the fact that the believers of that doctrine in the thronged East have never pre-

[1] Herod. lib. ii. cap. 123. [2] De Abstinentia, lib. iv. cap. 10. [3] Banquet of the Seven Wise Men.
[4] Champollion, Descr. de l'Égypte, Antiq. tom ii. p. 132. Stuart's Trans. of Greppo's Essay, p. 262.

served the body, but at once buried or burned it. The whole Egyptian theology is much more closely allied to the Hindu, which excluded, than to the Persian, which emphasized, the resurrection of the body.

Another theory which has been devised to explain the purpose of Egyptian embalming, is that "it was to unite the soul permanently to its body, and keep the vital principle from perishing or transmigrating: the body and soul ran together through the journey of the dead and its dread ordeal."[5] This arbitrary guess is incredible. The preservation of the body does not appear in any way—not even to the rawest fancy—to detain or unite the soul with it; for the thought is unavoidable that it is precisely the absence of the soul which constitutes death. Again: such an explanation of the motive for embalming cannot be correct, because in the hieroglyphic representations of the passage to the judgment the separate soul is often depicted as hovering over the body,[6] or as kneeling before the judges, or as pursuing its adventures through the various realms of the creation. "When the body is represented," Champollion says, "it is as an aid to the spectator, and not as teaching a bodily resurrection. Sharpe's opinion that the picture of a bird poised over the mouth of a mummy, with the emblems of breath and life in its claws, implies the doctrine of a general physical resurrection, is an inferential leap of the most startling character. What proof is there that the symbol denotes this? Hundreds of paintings in the tombs show souls undergoing their respective allotments in the other world while their bodily mummies are quiet in the sepulchres of the present. In his treatise on "Isis and Osiris," Plutarch writes, "The Egyptians believe that while the bodies of eminent men are buried in the earth their souls are stars shining in heaven." It is equally nonsensical in itself and unwarranted by evidence to imagine that, in the Egyptian faith, embalming either retained the soul in the body or preserved the body for a future return of the soul. Who can believe that it was for either of those purposes that they embalmed the multitudes of animals whose mummies the explorer is still turning up? They preserved cats, hawks, bugs, crocodiles, monkeys, bulls, with as great pains as they did men.[7] When the Canary Islands were first visited, it was found that their inhabitants had a custom of carefully embalming the dead. The same was the case among the Peruvians, whose vast cemeteries remain to this day crowded with mummies. But the expectation of a return of the souls into these preserved bodies is not to be ascribed to those peoples. Herodotus informs us that "the Ethiopians, having dried the bodies of their dead, coat them with white plaster, which they paint with colors to the likeness of the deceased and encase in a transparent substance. The dead, thus kept from being offensive, and yet plainly visible, are retained a whole year in the houses of their nearest relatives. Afterwards they are carried out and placed upright in the tombs around the city."[8] It has been argued, because the Egyptians expended so much in preparing lasting tombs

[5] Bonomi and Arundel on Egyptian Antiq., p. 46. [6] Pl. xxxiii. in Lepsius' Todtenb. der Ægypter.
[7] Pettigrew, Hist. of Egyptian Mummies, ch. xii. [8] Lib. iii. cap. 24.

and in adorning their walls with varied embellishments, that they must have thought the soul remained in the body, a conscious occupant of the dwelling-place provided for it.[9] As well might it be argued that, because the ancient savage tribes on the coast of South America, who obtained their support by fishing, buried fish-hooks and bait with their dead, they supposed the dead bodies occupied themselves in their graves by fishing! The adornment of the tomb, so lavish and varied with the Egyptians, was a gratification of the spontaneous workings of fancy and affection, and needs no far-fetched explanation. Every nation has its funeral customs and its rites of sepulture, many of which would be as difficult of explanation as those of Egypt. The Scandinavian sea-king was sometimes buried, in his ship, in a grave dug on some headland overlooking the ocean. The Scythians buried their dead in rolls of gold, sometimes weighing forty or fifty solid pounds. Diodorus the Sicilian says, "The Egyptians, laying the embalmed bodies of their ancestors in noble monuments, see the true visages and expressions of those who died ages before them. So they take almost as great pleasure in viewing their bodily proportions and the lineaments of their faces as if they were still living among them."[10] That instinct which leads us to obtain portraits of those we love, and makes us unwilling to part even with their lifeless bodies, was the cause of embalming. The bodies thus prepared, we know from the testimony of ancient authors, were kept in the houses of their children or kindred, until a new generation, "who knew not Joseph," removed them. Then nothing could be more natural than that the priesthood should take advantage of the custom, so associated with sacred sentiments, and throw theological sanctions over it, shroud it in mystery, and secure a monopoly of the power and profit arising from it. It is not improbable, too, as has been suggested, that hygienic considerations, expressing themselves in political laws and priestly precepts, may at first have had an influence in establishing the habit of embalming, to prevent the pestilences apt to arise in such a climate from the decay of animal substances.

There is great diversity of opinion among Egyptologists on this point. One thinks that embalming was supposed to keep the soul in the body until after the funeral judgment and interment, but that, when the corpse was laid in its final receptacle, the soul proceeded to accompany the sun in its daily and nocturnal circuit, or to transmigrate through various animals and deities. Another imagines that the process of embalming was believed to secure the repose of the soul in the other world, exempt from transmigrations, so long as the body was kept from decay.[11] Perhaps the different notions on this subject attributed by modern authors to the Egyptians may all have prevailed among them at different times or among distinct sects. But it seems most likely, as we have said, that

[9] Kenrick, Ancient Egypt, vol. i. ch. xxi. sect. iii.

[10] Lib. i. cap. 7.

[11] Library of Entertaining Knowledge, vol. ii. ch. iii.

embalming first arose from physical and sentimental considerations naturally operating, rather than from any theological doctrine carefully devised; although, after the priesthood appropriated the business, it is altogether probable that they interwove it with an artificial and elaborate system of sacerdotal dogmas, in which was the hiding of the national power.

The second question that arises is, What was the significance of the funeral ceremonies celebrated by the Egyptians over their dead? When the body had been embalmed, it was presented before a tribunal of forty-two judges sitting in state on the eastern borders of the lake Acherusia. They made strict inquiry into the conduct and character of the deceased. Any one might make complaint against him, or testify in his behalf. If it was found that he had been wicked, had died in debt, or was otherwise unworthy, he was deprived of honorable burial and ignominiously thrown into a ditch. This was called Tartar, from the wailings the sentence produced among his relatives. But if he was found to have led an upright life, and to have been a good man, the honors of a regular interment were decreed him. The cemetery—a large plain environed with trees and lined with canals—lay on the western side of the lake, and was named Elisout, or rest. It was reached by a boat, the funeral barge,—in which no one could cross without an order from the judges and the payment of a small fee. In these and other particulars some of the scenes supposed to be awaiting the soul in the other world were dramatically shadowed forth. Each rite was a symbol of a reality existing, in solemn correspondence, in the invisible state. What the priests did over the body on earth the judicial deities did over the soul in Amenthe. It seems plain that the Greeks derived many of their notions concerning the fate and state of the dead from Egypt. Hades corresponds with Amenthe; Pluto, with the subterranean Osiris; Mercury psychopompos, with Anubis, "the usher of souls;" Æacus, Minos, and Rhadamanthos, with the three assistant gods who help in weighing the soul and present the result to Osiris; Tartarus, to the ditch Tartar; Charon's ghost-boat over the Styx, to the barge conveying the mummy to the tomb; Cerberus, to Oms; Acheron, to Acherusia; the Elysian Fields, to Elisout.[12] Kenrick thinks the Greeks may have developed these views for themselves, without indebtedness to Egypt. But the notions were in existence among the Egyptians at least twelve hundred years before they can be traced among the Greeks.[13] And they are too arbitrary and systematic to have been independently constructed by two nations. Besides, Herodotus positively affirms that they were derived from Egypt. Several other ancient authors also state this; and nearly every modern writer on the subject agrees in it.

The triumphs of modern investigation into the antiquities of Egypt,

[12] Spineto on Egyptian Antiq, Lectures IV., V.

[13] Wilkinson, Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, 2d Series, vol. i. ch. 12.

unlocking the hieroglyphics and lifting the curtain from the secrets of ages, have unveiled to us a far more full and satisfactory view of the Egyptian doctrine of the future life than can be constructed from the narrow glimpses afforded by the accounts of the old Greek authorities. Three sources of knowledge have been laid open to us. First, the papyrus rolls, one of which was placed in the bosom of every mummy. This roll, covered with hieroglyphics, is called the funeral ritual, or book of the dead. It served as a passport through the burial-rites. It contained the names of the deceased and his parents, a series of prayers he was to recite before the various divinities he would meet on his journey, and representations of some of the adventures awaiting him in the unseen state.[14] Secondly, the ornamental cases in which the mummies are enclosed are painted all over with scenes setting forth the realities and events to which the soul of the dead occupant has passed in the other life.[15] Thirdly, the various fates of souls are sculptured and painted on the walls in the tombs, in characters which have been deciphered during the present century:[16]—

> "Those mystic, stony volumes on the walls long writ,
> Whose sense is late reveal'd to searching modern wit."

Combining the information thus obtained, we learn that, according to the Egyptian representation, the soul is led by the god Thoth into Amenthe, the infernal world, the entrance to which lies in the extreme west, on the farther side of the sea, where the sun goes down under the earth. It was in accordance with this supposition that Herod caused to be engraved, on a magnificent monument erected to his deceased wife, the line, "Zeus, this blooming woman sent beyond the ocean."[17] At the entrance sits a wide-throated monster, over whose head is the inscription, "This is the devourer of many who go into Amenthe, the lacerator of the heart of him who comes with sins to the house of justice." The soul next kneels before the forty-two assessors of Osiris, with deprecating asseverations and intercessions. It then comes to the final trial in the terrible Hall of the two Truths, the approving and the condemning; or, as it is differently named, the Hall of the double Justice, the rewarding and the punishing. Here the three divinities Horus, Anubis, and Thoth proceed to weigh the soul in the balance. In one scale an image of Thmei, the goddess of Truth, is placed; in the other, a heart-shaped vase, symbolizing the heart of the deceased with all the actions of his earthly life. Then happy is he

> "Who, weighed 'gainst Truth, down dips the awful scale."

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[14] Das Todtenbuch der Ægypter, edited with an introduction by Dr. Lepsius.

[15] Ch. ix. of Pettigrew's History of Egyptian Mummies.

[16] Champollion's Letter, dated Thebes, May 16, 1829. An abstract of this letter may be found in Stuart's trans. of Greppo's Essay on Champollion's Hieroglyphic System, appendix, note N.

[17] Basnage, Hist. of the Jews, lib. ii. ch. 12, sect. 19.

Thoth notes the result on a tablet, and the deceased advances with it to the foot of the throne on which sits Osiris, lord of the dead, king of Amenthe. He pronounces the decisive sentence, and his assistants see that it is at once executed. The condemned soul is either scourged back to the earth straightway, to live again in the form of a vile animal,—as some of the emblems appear to denote;—or plunged into the tortures of a horrid hell of fire and devils below,—as numerous engravings set forth;—or driven into the atmosphere, to be vexed and tossed by tempests, violently whirled in blasts and clouds, till its sins are expiated, and another probation granted through a renewed existence in human form.

We have two accounts of the Egyptian divisions of the universe. According to the first view, they conceived the creation to consist of three grand departments. First came the earth, or zone of trial, where men live on probation. Next was the atmosphere, or zone of temporal punishment, where souls are afflicted for their sins. The ruler of this girdle of storms was Pooh, the overseer of souls in penance. Such a notion is found in some of the later Greek philosophers, and in the writings of the Alexandrian Jews, who undoubtedly drew it from the priestly science of Egypt. Every one will recollect how Paul speaks of "the prince of the power of the air." And Shakspeare makes the timid Claudio shrink from the verge of death with horror, lest his soul should, through ages,

> "Be imprison'd in the viewless winds,
> And blown with restless violence round about
> The pendent world."

After their purgation in this region, all the souls live again on earth by transmigration.[13] The third realm was in the serene blue sky among the stars, the zone of blessedness, where the accepted dwell in immortal peace and joy. Eusebius says, "The Egyptians represented the universe by two circles, one within the other, and a serpent with the head of a hawk twining his folds around them," thus forming three spheres, earth, firmament, divinity.

But the representation most frequent and imposing is that which pictures the creation simply as having the earth in the centre, and the sun with his attendants as circulating around it in the brightness of the superior, and the darkness of the infernal, firmament. Souls at death pass down through the west into Amenthe, and are tried. If condemned, they are either sent back to the earth, or confined in the nether space for punishment. If justified, they join the blissful company of the Sun-God, and rise with him through the east to journey along his celestial course. The upper hemisphere is divided into twelve equal parts, corresponding with the twelve hours of the day. At the gate of each of these golden segments a sentinel god is stationed, to whom the newly-arriving soul must give its credentials to secure a passage. In like

[13] Liber Metempsychosis Veterum Ægyptiorum, edited and translated into Latin from the funeral papyri by H. Brugsch.

manner, the lower hemisphere is cut into the same number of gloomy sections, corresponding with the twelve hours of the night. Daily the chief divinity, in robes of light, traverses the beaming zones of the blessed, where they hunt and fish, or plough and sow, reap and gather, in the Fields of the Sun on the banks of the heavenly Nile. Nightly, arrayed in deep black from head to foot, he traverses the dismal zones of the damned, where they undergo appropriate retributions. Thus the future destiny of man was sublimely associated with the march of the sun through the upper and lower hemispheres.[19] Astronomy was a part of the Egyptian's theology. He regarded the stars not figuratively, but literally, as spirits and pure genii; the great planets as deities. The calendar was a religious chart, each month, week, day, hour, being the special charge and stand-point of a god.[20]

There was much poetic beauty and ethical power in these doctrines and symbols. The necessity of virtue, the dread ordeals of the grave, the certainty of retribution, the mystic circuits of transmigration, a glorious immortality, the paths of planets and gods and souls through creation,—all were impressively enounced, dramatically shown.

> "The Egyptain soul sail'd o'er the skyey sea
> In ark of crystal, mann'd by beamy gods,
> To drag the deeps of space and net the stars,
> Where, in their nebulous shoals, they shore the void
> And through old Night's Typhonian blindness shine.
> Then, solarized, he press'd towards the sun,
> And, in the heavenly Hades, hall of God,
> Had final welcome of the firmament."

This solemn linking of the fate of man with the astronomic universe, this grand blending of the deepest of moral doctrines with the most august of physical sciences, plainly betrays the brain and hand of that hereditary hierarchy whose wisdom was the wonder of the ancient world. Osburn thinks the localization of Amenthe in the west may have arisen in the following way. Some superstitious Egyptians, travelling westwards, at twilight, on the great marshes haunted by the strange gray-white ibis, saw troops of these silent, solemn, ghostlike birds, motionless or slow stalking, and conceived them to be souls waiting for the funeral rites to be paid, that they might sink with the setting sun to their destined abode.[21]

That such a system of belief was too complex and elaborate to have been a popular development is evident. But that it was really held by the people there is no room to doubt. Parts of it were publicly enacted on festival-days by multitudes numbering more than a hundred thousand. Parts of it were dimly shadowed out in the secret recesses of temples, surrounded by the most astonishing accompaniments that un-

[19] L'Univers, Égypte Ancienne, par Champollion-Figeac, pp. 123–145.
[20] Ægyptische Glaubenslehre von Dr. Ed. Röth, ss. 171, 174.
[21] Monumental History of Egypt, vol. i. ch. 8.

rivalled learning, skill, wealth, and power could contrive. Its authority commanded the allegiance, its charm fascinated the imagination, of the people. Its force built the pyramids, and enshrined whole generations of Egypt's embalmed population in richly-adorned sepulchres of everlasting rock. Its substance of esoteric knowledge and faith, in its form of exoteric imposture and exhibition, gave it vitality and endurance long. In the vortex of change and decay it sank at last. And now it is only after its secrets have been buried for thirty centuries that the exploring genius of modern times has brought its hidden hieroglyphics to light, and taught us what were the doctrines originally contained in the altar-lore of those priestly schools which once dotted the plains of the Delta and studded the banks of eldest Nile, where now, disfigured and gigantic, the solemn

> "Old Syhinxes lift their countenances bland
> Athwart the river-sea and sea of sand."

CHAPTER VI.

BRAHMANIC AND BUDDHIST DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

In the Hindu views of the fate of the human soul, metaphysical subtlety and imaginative vastness, intellect and fancy, slavish tradition and audacious speculation, besotted ritualism and heaven-storming spirituality, are mingled together on a scale of grandeur and intensity wholly without a parallel elsewhere in the literature or faith of the world. Brahmanism, with its hundred million adherents holding sway over India,—and Buddhism, with its four hundred million disciples scattered over a dozen nations, from Java to Japan, and from the Ceylonese to the Samoyedes,—practically considered, in reference to their actually-received dogmas and aims pertaining to a future life, agree sufficiently to warrant us in giving them a general examination together. The chief difference between them will be explained in the sequel.

The most ancient Hindu doctrine of the future fate of man, as given in the Vedas, was simple, rude, and very unlike the forms in which it has since prevailed. Professor Wilson says, in the introduction to his translation of the Rig Veda, that the references to this subject in the primeval Sanscrit scriptures are sparse and incomplete. But no one has so thoroughly elucidated this obscure question as Roth of Tübingen, in his masterly paper on the Morality of the Vedas, of which there is a translation, by Professor Whitney, in the Journal of the American

Oriental Society.[1] The results of his researches may be stated in few words.

When a man dies, the earth is invoked to wrap his body up, as a mother wraps her child in her garment, and to lie lightly on him. He himself is addressed thus:—"Go forth, go forth on the ancient paths which our fathers in old times have trodden: the two rulers in bliss, Yama and Varuna, shalt thou behold." Varuna judges all. He thrusts the wicked down into darkness; and not a hint or clew further of their doom is furnished. They were supposed either to be annihilated, as Professor Roth thinks the Vedas imply, or else to live as demons, in sin, blackness, and woe. The good go up to heaven and are glorified with a shining spiritual body like that of the gods. Yama, the first man, originator of the human race on earth, is the beginner and head of renewed humanity in another world, and is termed the Assembler of Men. It is a poetic and grand conception that the first one who died, leading the way, should be the patriarch and monarch of all who follow. The old Vedic hymns imply that the departed good are in a state of exalted felicity, but scarcely picture forth any particulars. The following passage, versified with strict fidelity to the original, is as full and explicit as any:—

Where glory never-fading is, where is the world of heavenly light,
The world of immortality,—the everlasting,—set me there!
Where Yama reigns, Vivasvat's son, in the inmost sphere of heaven bright,
Where those abounding waters flow,—oh, make me but immortal there!
Where there is freedom unrestrain'd, where the triple vault of heaven's in sight,
Where worlds of brightest glory are,—oh, make me but immortal there!
Where pleasures and enjoyments are, where bliss and raptures ne'er take flight,
Where all desires are satisfied,—oh, make me but immortal there!

But this form of doctrine long ago passed from the Hindu remembrance, lost in the multiplying developments and specifications of a mystical philosophy, and a teeming superstition nourished by an unbounded imagination.

Both Brahmans and Buddhists conceive of the creation on the most enormous scale. Mount Meru rises from the centre of the earth to the height of about two millions of miles. On its summit is the city of Brahma, covering a space of fourteen thousand leagues, and surrounded by the stately cities of the regents of the spheres. Between Meru and the wall of stone forming the extreme circumference of the earth are seven concentric circles of rocks. Between these rocky bracelets are continents and seas. In some of the seas wallow single fishes thousands of miles in every dimension. The celestial spaces are occupied by a large number of heavens, called "dewa-lokas," increasing in the glory and bliss of their prerogatives. The worlds below the earth are hells, called "naraka." The description of twenty-eight of these, given in the Vishnu Purana,[2] makes the reader "sup full of horrors." The Buddhist

[1] Vol. iii. pp. 342–346.

[2] Wilson's trans. pp. 207–209.

"Books of Ceylon"[3] tell of twenty-six heavens placed in regular order above one another in the sky, crowded with all imaginable delights. They also depict, in the abyss underneath the earth, eight great hells, each containing sixteen smaller ones, the whole one hundred and thirty-six composing one gigantic hell. The eight chief hells are situated over one another, each partially enclosing and overlapping that next beneath; and the sufferings inflicted on their unfortunate occupants are of the most terrific character. But these poor hints at the local apparatus of reward and punishment afford no conception whatever of the extent of their mythological scheme of the universe.

They call each complete solar system a *sakwala*, and say that, if a wall were erected around the space occupied by a million millions of sakwalas, reaching to the highest heaven, and the entire space were filled with mustard-seeds, a god might take these seeds, and, looking towards any one of the cardinal points, throw a single seed towards each sakwala until all the seeds were gone, and still there would be more sakwalas, in the same direction, to which no seed had been thrown, without considering those in the other three quarters of the heavens. In comparison with this Eastern vision of the infinitude of worlds, the wildest Western dreamer over the vistas opened by the telescope may hide his diminished head! Their other conceptions are of the same crushing magnitude, Thus, when the demons, on a certain occasion, assailed the gods, Siva—using the Himâlaya range for his bow, Vasuke for the string, Vishnu for his arrow, the earth for his chariot with the sun and moon for its wheels and the Vedas for its horses, the starry canopy for his banner with the tree of Paradise for its staff, Brahma for his charioteer, and the mysterious monosyllable Om for his whip—reduced them all to ashes.[4]

The five hundred million Brahmanic and Buddhist believers hold that all the gods, men, demons, and various grades of animal life occupying this immeasurable array of worlds compose one cosmic family. The totality of animated beings, from a detestable gnat to thundering Indra, from the meanest worm to the supreme Buddha, constitute one fraternal race, by the unavoidable effects of the law of retribution constantly interchanging their residences in a succession of rising and sinking existences, ranging through all the earths, heavens, and hells of the universe, bound by the terrible links of merit and demerit in the phantasmagoric dungeon of births and deaths. The Vishnu Purana declares, "The universe, this whole egg of Brahma, is everywhere swarming with living creatures, all of whom are captives in the chains of acts."[5]

The one prime postulate of these Oriental faiths—the ground-principle, never to be questioned any more than the central and stationary position of the earth in the Ptolemaic system—is that all beings below the Infinite One are confined in the circle of existence, the whirl of

[3] Upham's trans. vol. iii. pp. 8, 66, 159.

[4] Vans Kennedy, Ancient and Hindu Mythology, p. 429.

[5] P. 286.

births and deaths, by the consequences of their virtues and vices. When a man dies, if he has an excess of good desert, he is born, as a superior being, in one of the heavens. According to the nature and degree of his merit, his heavenly existence is prolonged, or perhaps repeated many times in succession; or, if his next birth occurs on earth, it is under happy circumstances, as a sage or a king. But when he expires, should there, on the other hand, be an overbalance of ill desert, he is born as a demon in one of the hells, or may in repeated lives run the circuit of the hells; or, if he at once returns to the earth, it is as a beggar, a leprous outcast, a wretched cripple, or in the guise of a rat, a snake, or a louse.

> "The illustrious souls of great and virtuous men
> In godlike beings shall revive again;
> But base and vicious spirits wind their way
> In scorpions, vultures, sharks, and beasts of prey.
> The fair, the gay, the witty, and the brave,
> The fool, the coward, courtier, tyrant, slave;
> Each one in a congenial form, shall find
> A proper dwelling for his wandering mind."

A specific evil is never cancelled by being counterbalanced by a greater good. The fruit of that evil must be experienced, and also of that greater good, by appropriate births in the hells and heavens, or in the higher and lower grades of earthly existence. The two courses of action must be run through independently. This is what is meant by the phrases, so often met with in Oriental works, "eating the fruits of former acts," "bound in the chains of deeds." Merit or demerit can be balanced or neutralized only by the full fruition of its own natural and necessary consequences.[6] The law of merit and of demerit is fate. It works irresistibly, through all changes and recurrences, from the beginning to the end. The cessation of virtue or of vice does not put an end to its effects until its full force is exhausted; as an arrow continues in flight until all its imparted power is spent. A man faultlessly and scrupulously good through his present life may be guilty of some foul crime committed a hundred lives before and not yet expiated. Accordingly, he may now suffer for it, or his next birth may take place in a hell. On the contrary, he may be credited with some great merit acquired thousands of generations ago, whose fruit he has not eaten, and which may bring him good fortune in spite of present sins, or on the rolling and many-colored wheel of metempsychosis may secure for him next a celestial birthplace. In short periods, it will be seen, there is moral confusion, but, in the long run, exact compensation.

The exuberant prodigiousness of the Hindu imagination is strikingly manifest in its descriptions of the rewards of virtue in the heavens and of the punishments of sin in the hells. Visions pass before us of beautiful groves full of fragrance and music, abounding in delicious fruits, and birds of gorgeous plumage, crystal streams embedded with pearls, un-

[6] Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. iv. p. 87.

ruffled lakes where the lotus blooms, palaces of gems, crowds of friends and lovers, endless revelations of truth, boundless graspings of power,—all that can stir and enchant intellect, will, fancy, and heart. In some of the heavens the residents have no bodily form, but enjoy purely spiritual pleasures. In others they are self-resplendent, and traverse the ether. They are many miles in height, one being described whose crown was four miles high and who wore on his person sixty wagon-loads of jewels. The ordinary lifetime of the inhabitants of the dewa-loka named Wasawartti equals nine billions two hundred and sixteen millions of our years. They breathe only once in sixteen hours.

The reverse of this picture is still more vigorously drawn, highly colored, and diversified in contents. The walls of the Hindu hell are over a hundred miles thick; and so dazzling is their brightness that it bursts the eyes which look at them anywhere within a distance of four hundred leagues.[7] The poor creatures here, wrapped in shrouds of fire, writhe and yell in frenzy of pain. The very revelry and ecstasy of terror and anguish fill the whole region. The skins of some wretches are taken off from head to foot, and then scalding vinegar is poured over them. A glutton is punished thus: experiencing an insatiable hunger in a body as large as three mountains, he is tantalized with a mouth no larger than the eye of a needle.[8] The infernal tormentors, throwing their victims down, take a flexible flame in each hand, and with these lash them alternately right and left. One demon, Ráhu, is seventy-six thousand eight hundred miles tall: the palm of his hand measures fifty thousand acres; and when he is enraged he rushes up the sky and swallows the sun or the moon, thus causing an eclipse! In the Asiatic Journal for 1840 is an article on "The Chinese Judges of the Dead," which describes a series of twenty-four paintings of hell found in a Buddhist temple. Devils in human shapes are depicted pulling out the tongues of slanderers with redhot wires, pouring molten lead down the throats of liars, with burning prongs tossing souls upon mountains planted with hooks of iron reeking with the blood of those who have gone before, screwing the damned between planks, pounding them in husking-mortars, grinding them in rice-mills, while other fiends, in the shape of dogs, lap up their oozing gore. But the hardest sensibility must by this time cry, Hold!

With the turmoil and pain of entanglement in the vortex of births, and all the repulsive exposures of finite life, the Hindus contrast the idea of an infinite rest and bliss, an endless exemption from evil and struggle, an immense receptivity of reposing power and quietistic contemplation. In consequence of their endlessly varied, constantly recurring, intensely earnest speculations and musings over this contrast of finite restlessness and pain with infinite peace and blessedness,—a contrast which constitutes the preaching of their priests, saturates their sacred books, fills

[7] Hardy, Manual of Buddhism, p. 26. [8] Coleman, Mythology of the Hindus, p. 198.

their thoughts, and broods over all their life,—the Orientals are pervaded with a profound horror of individual existence, and with a profound desire for absorption into the Infinite Being. A few quotations from their own authors will illustrate this:—

"A sentient being in the repetition of birth and death is like a worm in the midst of a nest of ants,—like a lizard in the hollow of a bamboo that is burning at both ends."[9] "Emancipation from all existence is the fulness of felicity."[10] "The being who is still subject to birth may now sport in the beautiful gardens of heaven, now be cut to pieces in hell; now be Maha Brahma, now a degraded outcast; now sip nectar, now drink blood; now repose on a couch with gods, now be dragged through a thicket of thorns; now reside in a mansion of gold, now be exposed on a mountain of lava; now sit on the throne of the gods, now be impaled amidst hungry dogs; now be a king glittering with countless gems, now a mendicant taking a skull from door to door to beg alms; now eat ambrosia as the monarch of a dewa-loka, now writhe and die as a bat in the shrivelling flame."[11] "The Supreme Soul and the human soul do not differ, and pleasure or pain ascribable to the latter arises from its imprisonment in the body. The water of the Ganges is the same whether it run in the river's bed or be shut up in a decanter; but a drop of wine added to the water in the decanter imparts its flavor to the whole, whereas it would be lost in the river. The Supreme Soul, therefore, is beyond accident; but the human soul is afflicted by sense and passion. Happiness is only obtained in reunion with the Supreme Soul, when the dispersed individualities combine again with it, as the drops of water with the parent stream. Hence the slave should remember that he is separated from God by the body alone, and exclaim, perpetually, 'Blessed be the moment when I shall lift the veil from off that face! the veil of the face of my Beloved is the dust of my body.'"[12] "A pious man was once born on earth, who, in his various transmigrations, had met eight hundred and twenty-five thousand Buddhas. He remembered his former states, but could not enumerate how many times he had been a king, a beggar, a beast, an occupant of hell. He uttered these words:—'A hundred thousand years of the highest happiness on earth are not equal to the happiness of one day in the dewa-lokas; and a hundred thousand years of the deepest misery on earth are not equal to the misery of one day in hell; but the misery of hell is reckoned by millions of centuries. Oh, how shall I escape, and obtain eternal bliss?'"[13]

The literary products of the Eastern mind wonderfully abound with painful descriptions of the compromises, uncleannesses, and afflictions inseparably connected with existence. Volumes would be required to furnish an adequate representation of the vivid and inexhaustible ampli-

[9] Eastern Monachism, p. 247.
[10] Vishnu Purana, p. 568.
[11] Hardy, Manual of Buddhism, p. 454.
[12] Asiatic Researches, vol. xvii. p. 296.
[13] Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. iv. p. 114.

fication with which they set forth the direful disgusts and loathsome terrors associated with the series of ideas expressed by the words conception, birth, life, death, hell, and regeneration. The fifth chapter in the sixth book of the Vishnu Purana affords a good specimen of these details; but, to appreciate them fully, one must peruse dispersed passages in a hundred miscellaneous works:—

"As long as man lives, he is immersed in afflictions, like the seed of the cotton amidst the down. . . . Where could man, scorched by the fires of the sun of this world, look for felicity, were it not for the shade afforded by the tree of emancipation? . . . Travelling the path of the world for many thousands of births, man attains only the weariness of bewilderment, and is smothered by the dust of imagination. When that dust is washed away by the bland water of real knowledge, then the weariness is removed. Then the internal man is at peace, and obtains supreme felicity."[14]

The result of these views is the awakening of an unquenchable desire to "break from the fetters of existence," to be "delivered from the whirlpool of transmigration." Both Brahmanism and Buddhism are in essence nothing else than methods of securing release from the chain of incarnated lives, and attaining to identification with the Infinite. There is a text in the Apocalypse which may be strikingly applied to this exemption from further metempsychosis:—"Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out forever." The testimony of all who have investigated the subject agrees with the following assertion by Professor Wilson:—"The common end of every system studied by the Hindus is the ascertainment of the means by which perpetual exemption from the necessity of repeated births may be won."[15] In comparison with this aim, every thing else is utterly insignificant. Prahláda, on being offered by Vishnu any boon he might ask, exclaimed, "Wealth, virtue, love, are as nothing; for even liberation is in his reach whose faith is firm in thee." And Vishnu replied, "Thou shalt, therefore, obtain freedom from existence."[16] All true Orientals, however favored or persecuted by earthly fortune, still cry night and day upwards into the infinite, with outstretched arms and yearning voice,—

> "O Lord, our separate lives destroy!
> Merge in thy gold our souls' alloy:
> Pain is our own, and Thou art Joy!"

According to the system of Brahmanism, the creation is regularly called into being and again destroyed at the beginning and end of certain stupendous epochs called kalpas. Four thousand three hundred and twenty million years make a day of Brahma. At the end of this day the lower worlds are consumed by fire; and Brahma sleeps on the abyss for a night as long as his day. During this night the saints, who in high Jana-loka have survived the dissolution of the lower portions of the

[14] Vishnu Purana, p. 650. [15] Sankhya Karika, preface, p. 3. [16] Vishnu Purana, p. 144.

universe, contemplate the slumbering deity until he wakes and restores the mutilated creation. Three hundred and sixty of these days and nights compose a year of Brahma; a hundred such years measure his whole life. Then a complete destruction of all things takes place, every thing merging into the Absolute One, until he shall rouse himself renewedly to manifest his energies.[17] Although created beings who have not obtained emancipation are destroyed in their individual forms at the periods of the general dissolution, yet, being affected by the good or evil acts of former existence, they are never exempted from their consequences, and when Brahma creates the world anew they are the progeny of his will, in the fourfold condition of gods, men, animals, and inanimate things.[18] And Buddhism embodies virtually the same doctrine, declaring "the whole universe of sakwalas to be subject alternately to destruction and renovation, in a series of revolutions to which neither beginning nor end can be discovered."

What is the Brahmanic method of salvation, or secret of emancipation? Rightly apprehended in the depth and purity of the real doctrine, it is this. There is in reality but ONE SOUL: every thing else is error, illusion, misery. Whoever acquires the knowledge of this truth by personal perception is thereby liberated. He has won the absolute perfection of the unlimited Godhead, and shall never be born again. "Whosoever views the Supreme Soul as manifold, dies death after death." God is formless, but seems to assume form; as moonlight, impinging upon various objects, appears crooked or straight.[19] Bharata says to the king of Sauriva, "The great end of all is not union of self with the Supreme Soul, because one substance cannot become another. The true wisdom, the genuine aim of all, is to know that Soul is one, uniform, perfect, exempt from birth, omnipresent, undecaying, *made of true knowledge*, dissociated with unrealities."[20] "It is ignorance alone which enables Maya to impress the mind with a sense of individuality; for as soon as that is dispelled it is known that severalty exists not, and that there is nothing but one undivided Whole."[21] The Brahmanic scriptures say, "The Eternal Deity consists of true knowledge." "Brahma that is Supreme is produced of reflection."[22] The logic runs thus. There is only One Soul, the absolute God. All beside is empty deception. That One Soul consists of true knowledge. Whoever attains to true knowledge, therefore, is absolute God, forever freed from the sphere of semblances.

The foregoing exposition is philosophical and scriptural Brahmanism. But there are numerous schismatic sects which hold opinions diverging from it in regard to the nature and destiny of the human soul. They may be considered in two classes. First, there are some who defend the

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[17] Vishnu Purana, p. 25. Hardy, Manual of Buddhism, p. 33, note.
[18] Vishnu Purana, pp. 30, 116. [19] Colebrooke, Essays, vol. i. p. 359. [20] Vishnu Purana, p. 252.
[21] Vans Kennedy, Ancient and Hindu Mythology, p. 201. [22] Vishnu Purana, pp. 546, 642.

idea of the personal immortality of the soul. The Siva Gnána-Pótham "establishes the doctrine of the soul's eternal existence as an individual being."[23] The Saiva school teach that when, at the close of every great period, all other developed existences are rendered back to their primordial state, souls are excepted. These, once developed and delivered from the thraldom of their merit and demerit, will ever remain intimately united with Deity and clothed in the resplendent wisdom.[24] Secondly, there are others—and probably at the present time they include a large majority of the Brahmans—who believe in the real being both of the Supreme Soul and of separate finite souls, conceiving the latter to be individualized parts of the former and their true destiny to consist in securing absorption into it. The relation of the soul to God, they maintain, is not that of ruled and ruler, but that of part and whole. "As gold is one substance still, however diversified as bracelets, tiaras, ear-rings, or other things, so Vishnu is one and the same, although modified in the forms of gods, animals, and men. As the drops of water raised from the earth by the wind sink into the earth again when the wind subsides, so the variety of gods, men, and animals, which have been detached by the agitation of the qualities, are reunited, when the disturbance ceases, with the Eternal."[25] "The whole obtains its destruction in God, like bubbles in water." The Mâdhava sect believe that there is a personal All-Soul distinct from the human soul. Their proofs are detailed in one of the Mâha-Upanishads.[26] These two groups of sects, however, agree perfectly with the ancient orthodox Brahmans in accepting the fundamental dogma of a judicial metempsychosis, wherein each one is fastened by his acts and compelled to experience the uttermost consequences of his merit or demerit. They all coincide in one common aspiration as regards the highest end, namely, emancipation from the necessity of repeated births. The difference between the three is, that the one class of dissenters expect the fruition of that deliverance to be a finite personal immortality in heaven; the other interpret it as an unwalled absorption in the Over-Soul, like a breath in the air; while the more orthodox believers regard it as the entire identity of the soul with the Infinite One.

Against the opinion that there is only one Soul for all bodies, as one string supports all the gems of a necklace, some Hindu philosophers argue that the plurality of souls is proved by the consideration that, if there were but one soul, then when any one was born, or died, or was lame, or deaf, or occupied, or idle, all would at once be born, die, be lame, deaf, occupied, or idle. But Professor Wilson says, "This doctrine of the multitudinous existence or individual incorporation of Soul clearly contradicts the Vedas. They affirm one only existent soul to be dis-

[23] Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. ii. p. 141.
[24] Ibid. vol. iv. p. 15.
[25] Vishnu Purana, p. 287.
[26] Weber, Akademische Vorlesungen über Indische Literaturgeschichte, s. 160.

tributed in all beings. It is beheld collectively or dispersedly, like the reflection of the moon in still or troubled water. Soul, eternal, omnipresent, undisturbed, pure, one, is multiplied by the power of delusion, not of its own nature."[27]

All the Brahmanic sects unite in thinking that liberation from the net of births is to be obtained and the goal of their wishes to be reached by one means only; and that is knowledge, real wisdom, an adequate sight of the truth. Without this knowledge there is no possible emancipation; but there are three ways of seeking the needed knowledge. Some strive, by direct intellectual abstraction and effort, by metaphysical speculation, to grasp the true principles of being. Others try, by voluntary penance, self-abnegation, and pain, to accumulate such a degree of merit, or to bring the soul into such a state of preparedness, as will compel the truth to reveal itself. And still others devote themselves to the worship of some chosen deity, by ritual acts and fervid contemplation, to obtain by his favor the needed wisdom. A few quotations may serve to illustrate the Brahmanic attempts at winning this one thing needful, the knowledge which yields exemption from all incarnate lives.

The Sankhya philosophy is a regular system of metaphysics, to be studied as one would study algebra. It presents to its disciples an exhaustive statement of the forms of being in twenty-five categories, and declares, "He who knows the twenty-five principles, whatever order of life he may have entered, and whether he wear braided hair, a top-knot only, or be shaven, he is liberated." "This discriminative wisdom releases forever from worldly bondage."[28] "The virtuous is born again in heaven, the wicked is born again in hell; the fool wanders in error, the wise man is set free." "By ignorance is bondage, by knowledge is deliverance." "When Nature finds that soul has discovered that it is to her the distress of migration is owing, she is put to shame by the detection, and will suffer herself to be seen no more."[29] "Through knowledge the sage is absorbed into Supreme Spirit."[30] "The Supreme Spirit attracts to itself him who meditates upon it, as the loadstone attracts the iron."[31] "He who seeks to obtain a knowledge of the Soul is gifted with it, the Soul rendering itself conspicuous to him." "Man, having known that Nature which is without a beginning or an end, is delivered from the grasp of death." "Souls are absorbed in the Supreme Soul as the reflection of the sun in water returns to him on the removal of the water."[32]

The thought underlying the last statement is that there is only one Soul, every individual consciousness being but an illusory semblance, and that the knowledge of this fact constitutes the all-coveted emancipation. As one diffusive breath passing through the perforations of a flute is distin-

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[27] Sankhya Karika, p. 70. [28] Ibid. pp. 1, 16. [29] Ibid. pp. 48, 142, 174.
[30] Vishnu Purana, p. 57. [31] Ibid. p. 651.
[32] Rammohun Roy, Translations from the Veds, 2d ed., London, 1832, pp. 69, 89, 10.

guished as the several notes of the scale, so the Supreme Spirit is single, though, in consequence of acts, it seems manifold. As every placid lakelet holds an unreal image of the one real moon sailing above, so each human soul is but a deceptive reflection of the one veritable Soul, or God. It may be worth while to observe that Plotinus, as is well known, taught the doctrine of the absolute identity of each soul with the entire and indistinguishable entity of God:—

> "Though God extends beyond creation's rim,
> Yet every being holds the whole of him."

It belongs to an unextended substance, an immateriality, to be everywhere by totality, not by portions. If God be omnipresent, he cannot be so dividedly, a part of him here and a part of him there; but the whole of him must be in every particle of matter, in every point of space, in all infinitude.

The Brahmanic religion is a philosophy; and it keeps an incomparably strong hold on the minds of its devotees. Its most vital and comprehensive principle is expressed in the following sentence:—"The soul itself is not susceptible of pain, or decay, or death; the site of these things is nature; but nature is unconscious; the consciousness that pain exists is restricted to the soul, although the soul is not the actual seat of pain." This is the reason why every Hindu yearns so deeply to be freed from the meshes of nature, why he so anxiously follows the light of faith and penance, or the clew of speculation, through all mazes of mystery. It is that he may at last gaze on the central TRUTH, and through that sight seize the fruition of the supreme and eternal good of man in the unity of his selfhood with the Infinite, and so be born no more and experience no more trouble. It is very striking to contrast with this profound and gorgeous dream of the East, whatever form it assumes, the more practical and definite thought of the West, as expressed in these lines of Tennyson's "In Memoriam:"—

> "That each, who seems a separate whole,
> Should move his rounds, and, fusing all
> The skirts of self again, should fall
> Remerging in the general Soul,
>
> "Is faith as vague as all unsweet:
> Eternal form shall still divide
> The eternal soul from all beside,
> And I shall know him when we meet."

But is it not still more significant to notice that, in the lines which immediately succeed, the love-inspired and deep-musing genius of the English thinker can find ultimate repose only by recurring to the very faith of the Hindu theosophist?—

> "And we shall sit at endless feast,
> Enjoying each the other's good:
> What vaster dream can hit the mood
> Of Love on earth? He seeks at least

"Upon the last and sharpest height,
Before the spirits fade away,
Some landing-place, to clasp and say,
Farewell! We lose ourselves in light!"

We turn now to the Buddhist doctrine of a future life as distinguished from the Brahmanic. The "Four Sublime Truths" of Buddhism, as they are called, are these:—first, that there is sorrow; secondly, that every living person necessarily feels it; thirdly, that it is desirable to be freed from it; fourthly, that the only deliverance from it is by that pure knowledge which destroys all cleaving to existence. A Buddha is a being who, in consequence of having reached the Buddhaship,—which implies the possession of infinite goodness, infinite power, and infinite wisdom,—is able to teach men that true knowledge which secures emancipation.

The Buddhaship—that is, the possession of Supreme Godhead—is open to every one, though few ever acquire it. Most wonderful and tremendous is the process of its attainment. Upon a time, some being, perhaps then incarnate as a mosquito alighting on a muddy leaf in some swamp, pauses for a while to muse. Looking up through infinite stellar systems, with hungry love and boundless ambition, to the throne and sceptre of absolute immensity, he vows within himself, "I will become a Buddha." The total influences of his past, the forces of destiny, conspiring with his purpose, omnipotence is in that resolution. Nothing shall ever turn him aside from it. He might soon acquire for himself deliverance from the dreadful vortex of births; but, determined to achieve the power of delivering others from their miseries as sentient beings, he voluntarily throws himself into the stream of successive existences, and with divine patience and fortitude undergoes every thing.

From that moment, no matter in what form he is successively born, whether as a disgusting bug, a white elephant, a monarch, or a god, he is a Bodhisat,—that is, a candidate pressing towards the Buddhaship. He at once begins practising the ten primary virtues, called paramitas, necessary for the securing of his aim. The period required for the full exercise of one of these virtues is a bhumi. Its duration is thus illustrated. Were a Bodhisat once in a thousand births to shed a single drop of blood, he would in the space of a bhumi shed more blood than there is water in a thousand oceans. On account of his merit he might always be born amidst the pleasures of the heavens; but since he could there make no progress towards his goal, he prefers being born in the world of men. During his gradual advance, there is no good he does not perform, no hardship he does not undertake, no evil he does not willingly suffer; and all for the benefit of others, to obtain the means of emancipating those whom he sees fastened by ignorance in the afflictive circle of acts. Wherever born, acting, or suffering, his eye is still turned towards that EMPTY THRONE, at the apex of the universe, from which the last Buddha has vaulted into Nirwâna. The Buddhists have many scriptures, especially

one, called the "Book of the Five Hundred and Fifty Births," detailing the marvellous adventures of the Bodhisat during his numerous transmigrations, wherein he exhibits for each species of being to which he belongs a model character and life.

At length the momentous day dawns when the unweariable Bodhisat enters on his well-earned Buddhaship. From that time, during the rest of his life, he goes about preaching discourses, teaching every prepared creature he meets the method of securing eternal deliverance. Leaving behind in these discourses a body of wisdom sufficient to guide to salvation all who will give attentive ear and heart, the Buddha then—his sublime work of disinterested love being completed—receives the fruition of his toil, the super-essential prize of the universe, the Infinite Good. In a word, he dies, and enters Nirwána. There is no more evil of any sort for him at all forever. The final fading echo of sorrow has ceased in the silence of perfect blessedness; the last undulation of the wave of change has rolled upon the shore of immutability.

The only historic Buddha is Sakya Muni, or Gótama, who was born at Kapila about six centuries before Christ. His teachings contain many principles in common with those of the Brahmans. But he revolted against their insufferable conceit and cruelty. He protested against their claim that no one could obtain emancipation until after being born as a Brahman and passing through the various rites and degrees of their order. In the face of the most powerful and arrogant priesthood in the world, he preached the perfect equality of all mankind, and the consequent abolition of castes. Whoever acquires a total detachment of affection from all existence is thereby released from birth and misery; and the means of acquiring that detachment are freely offered to all in his doctrine. Thus did Gótama preach. He took the monopoly of religion out of the hands of a caste, and proclaimed emancipation to every creature that breathes. He established his system in the valley of the Ganges near the middle of the sixth century before Christ. It soon overran the whole country, and held sway until about eight hundred years after Christ, when an awful persecution and slaughter on the part of the uprising Brahmans drove it out of the land with sword and fire. "The colossal figure which for fourteen centuries had bestridden the Indian continent vanished suddenly, like a rainbow at sunset."[23]

Gótama's philosophy, in its ontological profundity, is of a subtlety and vastness that would rack the brain of a Fichte or a Schelling; but, popularly stated, so far as our present purpose demands, it is this. Existence is the one all-inclusive evil; cessation of existence, or Nirwána, is the infinite good. The cause of existence is ignorance, which leads one to cleave to existing objects; and this cleaving leads to reproduction. If one would escape from the chain of existence, he must destroy the cause of his confinement in it,—that is, evil desire, or the cleaving to existing

[23] Major Cunningham, Bhilsa Topes, or Buddhist Monuments of Central India, p. 168.

objects. The method of salvation in Gótama's system is to vanquish and annihilate all desire for existing things. How is this to be done? By acquiring an intense perception of the miseries of existence, on the one hand, and an intense perception, on the other hand, of the contrasted desirableness of the state of emancipation, or Nirwána. Accordingly, the discourses of Gótama, and the sacred books of the Buddhists, are filled with vivid accounts of every thing disgusting and horrible connected with existence, and with vivid descriptions, consciously faltering with inadequacy, of every thing supremely fascinating in connection with Nirwána. "The three reflections on the impermanency, suffering, and unreality of the body are three gates leading to the city of Nirwána." The constant claim is, that whosoever by adequate moral discipline and philosophical contemplation attains to a certain degree of wisdom, a certain degree of intellectual insight, instead of any longer cleaving to existence, will shudder at the thought of it, and, instead of shrinking from death, will be ravished with unfathomable ecstasy by the prospect of Nirwána. Then, when he dies, he is free from all liability to a return.

When Gótama, early in life, had accidentally seen in succession a wretchedly decrepit old man, a loathsomely diseased man, and a decomposing dead man, then the three worlds of passion, matter, and spirit seemed to him like a house on fire, and he longed to be extricated from the dizzy whirl of existence, and to reach the still haven of Nirwána. Finding ere long that he had now, as the reward of his incalculable endurances through untold æons past, become Buddha, he said to himself, "You have borne the misery of the whole round of transmigrations, and have arrived at infinite wisdom, which is the highway to Nirwána, the city of peace. On that road you are the guide of all beings. Begin your work and pursue it with fidelity." From that time until the day of his death he preached "the three laws of mortality, misery, and mutability." Every morning he looked through the world to see who should be caught that day in the net of truth, and took his measures accordingly to preach in the hearing of men the truths by which alone they could climb into Nirwána. When he was expiring, invisible gods, with huge and splendid bodies, came and stood, as thick as they could be packed, for a hundred and twenty miles around the banyan-tree under which he awaited Nirwána, to gaze on him who had broken the circle of transmigration.[34]

The system of Gótama distinguishes seven grades of being: six subject to repeated death and birth; one—the condition of the rahats and the Buddhaship—exempt therefrom. "Who wins this has reached the shore of the stormy ocean of vicissitudes, and is in safety forever." Baur says, "The aim of Buddhism is that all may obtain unity with the original empty Space, so as to unpeople the worlds."[35] This end it seeks

[34] Life of Gótama in Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. iii.

[35] Symbolik und Mythologie, th. ii. abth. 2, s. 407.

by purification from all modes of cleaving to existing objects, and by contemplative discrimination, but never by the fanatical and austere methods of Brahmanism. Edward Upham, in his History of Buddhism, declares this earth to be the only ford to Nirwána. Others also make the same representation:—

> "For all that live and breathe have once been men,
> And in succession will be such again."

But the Buddhist authors do not always adhere to this statement. We sometimes read of men's entering the paths to Nirwána in some of the heavens, likewise of their entering the final fruition through a decease in a dewa-loka. Still, it is the common view that emancipation from all existence can be secured only by a human being on earth. The last birth must be in that form. The emblem of Buddha, engraved on most of his monuments, is a wheel, denoting that he has finished and escaped from the circle of existences. Henceforth he is named Tathágata,—he who has gone.

Let us notice a little more minutely what the Buddhists say of Nirwána; for herein to them hides all the power of their philosophy and lies the absorbing charm of their religion.

"The state that is peaceful, free from body, from passion, and from fear, where birth or death is not,—that is Nirwána." "Nirwána puts an end to coming and going, and there is no other happiness." "It is a calm wherein no wind blows." "There is no difference in Nirwána." "It is the annihilation of all the principles of existence." "Nirwána is the completion and opposite shore of existence, free from decay, tranquil, knowing no restraint, and of great blessedness." "Nirwána is unmixed satisfaction, entirely free from sorrow." "The wind cannot be squeezed in the hand, nor can its color be told. Yet the wind *is*. Even so Nirwána *is*, but its properties cannot be told." "Nirwána, like space, is causeless, does not live nor die, and has no locality. It is the abode of those liberated from existence." "Nirwána is not, except to the being who attains it."[36]

Some scholars maintain that the Buddhist Nirwána is nothing but the atheistic Annihilation. The subject is confessedly a most difficult one. But it seems to us that the opinion just stated is the very antithesis of the true interpretation of Nirwána. In the first place, it should be remembered that there are various sects of Buddhists. Now, the word Nirwána may be used in different senses by different schools.[37] A few persons—a small party, represented perhaps by able writers—may believe in annihilation in our sense of the term, just as has happened in Christendom, while the common doctrine of the people is the opposite of that. In the second place, with the Oriental horror of individuated

[36] For these quotations, and others similar, see Hardy's valuable work, "Eastern Monachism," chap. xxii., on "Nirwána, its Paths and Fruition."

[37] Burnouf, Introduction à l'Histoire du Buddhisme Indien, Appendice No. I., Du mot Nirvâna.

existence, and a highly-poetical style of writing, nothing could be more natural, in depicting their ideas of the most desirable state of being, than that they should carry their metaphors expressive of repose, freedom from action and emotion, to a pitch conveying to our cold and literal thought the conceptions of blank unconsciousness and absolute nothingness.

Colebrooke says, "Nirwána is not annihilation, but unceasing apathy. The notion of it as a happy state seems derived from the experience of ecstasies; or else the pleasant, refreshed feeling with which one wakes from profound repose is referred to the period of actual sleep."[38] A Buddhist author speculates thus:—"That the soul feels not during profound trance, is not for want of sensibility, but for want of sensible objects." Wilson, Hodgson, and Vans Kennedy—three able thinkers, as well as scholars, in this field—agree that Nirwána is not annihilation as we understand that word. Mr. Hodgson believes that the Buddhists expect to be "conscious in Nirwána of the eternal bliss of rest, as they are in this world of the ceaseless pain of activity." Forbes also argues against the nihilistic explanation of the Buddhist doctrine of futurity, and says he is compelled to conclude that Nirwána denotes imperishable being in a blissful quietude.[39] Many additional authorities in favor of this view might be adduced,—enough to balance, at least, the names on the other side. Koeppen, in his very fresh, vigorous, and lucid work, just published, entitled "The Religion of Buddha, and its Origin," says, "Nirwána is the blessed Nothing. Buddhism is the Gospel of Annihilation." But he forgets that the motto on the title-page of his volume is the following sentence quoted from Sakya Muni himself:—"To those who know the concatenation of causes and effects, *there is neither being nor nothing.*" To them Nirwána is. Considering it, then, as an open question, unsettled by any authoritative assertion, we will weigh the probabilities of the case.

No definition of Nirwána is more frequent than the one given by the Kalpa Sútra,[40] namely, "cessation from action and freedom from desire." But this, like many of the other representations,—such, for instance, as the exclusion of succession,—very plainly is not a denial of all being, but only of our present modes of experience. The dying Gótama is said to have "passed through the several states, one after another, until he arrived at the state where there is no pain. He then continued to enter the other higher states, and from the highest entered Nirwána." Can literal annihilation, the naked emptiness of nonentity, be better than the highest state of being? It can be so only when we view Nothing on the positive side as identical with All, make annihilating deprivation equivalent to universal bestowment, regard negation as affirmation, and, in the last synthesis of contradictions, see the abysmal Vacuum as a

[38] Colebrooke, Essays, vol. i. p. 353.
[39] Eleven Years in Ceylon, vol. ii. chap. ix.
[40] Translation by Dr. Stevenson, p. 23.

Plenum of fruition. As Oken says, "The ideal zero is absolute unity; not a singularity, as the number one, but an indivisibility, a numberlessness, a homogeneity, a translucency, a pure identity. It is neither great nor small, quiescent nor moved; but it is, and it is not, all this."[41]

Furthermore, if some of the Buddhist representations would lead us to believe that Nirwána is utter nothingness, others apparently imply the opposite. "The discourses of Buddha are a charm to cure the poison of evil desire; a succession of fruit-bearing trees placed here and there to enable the traveller to cross the desert of existence; a power by which every sorrow may be appeased; a door of entrance to the eternal city of Nirwána." "The mind of the rahat" (one who has obtained assurance of emancipation and is only waiting for it to arrive) "knows no disturbance, because it is filled with the pleasure of Nirwána." "The sight of Nirwána bestows perfect happiness." "The rahat is emancipated from existence in Nirwána, as the lotus is separated from the mud out of which it springs." "Fire may be produced by rubbing together two sticks, though previously it had no locality: it is the same with Nirwána." "Nirwána is free from danger, peaceful, refreshing, happy. When a man who has been broiled before a huge fire is released, and goes quickly into some open space, he feels the most agreeable sensation. All the evils of existence are that fire, and Nirwána is that open space." These passages indicate the cessation in Nirwána of all sufferings, perhaps of all present modes of existence, but not the total end of being. It may be said that these are but figurative expressions. The reply is, so are the contrasted statements metaphors, and it is probable that the expressions which denote the survival of pure being in Nirwána are closer approximations to the intent of their authors than those which hint at an unconscious vacancy. If Nirwána in its original meaning was an utter and infinite blank, then, "out of that very Nothing," as Max Müller says, "human nature made a new paradise."

There is a scheme of doctrine held by some Buddhist philosophers which may be thus stated. There are five constituent elements of sentient existence. They are called *khandas*, and are as follows:—the organized body, sensation, perception, discrimination, and consciousness. Death is the dissolution and entire destruction of these khandas, and apart from them there is no synthetical unit, soul, or personality. Yet in a certain sense death is not the absolute annihilation of a human existence, because it leaves a potentiality inherent in that existence. There is no identical *ego* to survive and be born again; but *karma*—that is, the sum of a man's action, his entire merit and demerit—produces at his death a new being, and so on in continued series until Nirwána is attained. Thus the succession of being is kept up with transmitted responsibility, as a flame is transferred from one wick to another. It is

[41] Elements of Physiophilosophy, Tulk's trans. p. 9.

evident enough, as is justly claimed by Hardy and others, that the limitation of existence to the five khandas, excluding the idea of any independent individuality, makes death annihilation, and renders the very conception of a future life for those now living an absurdity. But we are convinced that this view is the speculative peculiarity of a sect, and by no means the common belief of the Buddhist populace or the teaching of Gôtama himself. This appears at the outset from the fact that Gôtama is represented as having lived through millions of existences, in different states and worlds, with preserved identity and memory. The history of his concatenated advance towards the Buddhaship is the supporting basis and the saturating spirit of documentary Buddhism. And the same idea pervades the whole range of narratives relating to the repeated births and deaths of the innumerable Buddhist heroes and saints who, after so many residences on earth, in the hells, in the dewalokas, have at last reached emancipation. They recollect their adventures; they recount copious portions of their experience stretching through many lives.

Again: the arguments cited from Buddha seem aimed to prove, not that there is absolutely no self in man, but that the five khandas are not the self,—that the real self is something distinct from all that is exposed to misery and change, something deep, wondrous, divine, infinite. For instance, the report of a debate on this subject between Buddha and Sachaka closes with these words:—"Thus was Sachaka forced to confess that the five khandas are impermanent, connected with sorrow, unreal, not the self."[42] These terms appear to imply the reality of a self, only that it is not to be confounded with the apprehensible elements of existence. Besides, the attainment of Nirwána is held up as a prize to be laboriously sought by personal effort. To secure it is a positive triumph quite distinct from the fated dissolution of the khandas in death. Now, if there be in man no personal entity, *what is it* that with so much joy attains Nirwána? The genuine Buddhist notion, as seems most probable, is that the conscious essence of the rahat, when the exterior elements of existence fall from around him, passes by a transcendent climax and discrete leap beyond the outermost limits of appreciable being, and becomes that INFINITE which knows no changes and is susceptible of no definitions. In the Kâ-gyur collection of Tibetan sacred books, comprising a hundred volumes, and now belonging to the Cabinet of Manuscripts in the Royal Library of Paris, there are two volumes exclusively occupied by a treatise on Nirwána. It is a significant fact that the title of these volumes is "Nirwána, or Deliverance from Pain." If Nirwána be simply annihilation, why is it not so stated? Why should recourse be had to a phrase partially descriptive of one feature, instead of comprehensively announcing or implying the whole case?

Still further: it deserves notice that, according to the unanimous affirma-

[42] Hardy, Manual, p. 427.

tion of Buddhist authors, if any Buddhist were offered the alternative of an existence as king of a dewa-loka, keeping his personality for a hundred million years in the uninterrupted enjoyment of perfect happiness, or of translation into Nirwána, he would spurn the former as defilement, and would with unutterable avidity choose the latter. We must therefore suppose that by Nirwána he understands, not naked destruction, but some mysterious good, too vast for logical comprehension, too obscure to Occidental thought to find expression in Occidental language. At the moment when Gótama entered upon the Buddhaship, like a vessel overflowing with honey, his mind overflowed with the nectar of oral instruction, and he uttered these stanzas:—

"Through many different births
I have run, vainly seeking
The architect of the desire-resembling house.
Painful are repeated births.
O house-builder! I have seen thee.
Again a house thou canst not build for me.
I have broken thy rafters and ridge-pole;
I have arrived at the extinction of evil desire;
My mind is gone to Nirwána."

Hardy, who stoutly maintains that the genuine doctrine of Buddha's philosophy is that there is no transmigrating individuality in man, but that the karma creates a new person on the dissolution of the former one, confesses the difficulties of this dogma to be so great that "it is almost universally repudiated." M. Obry published at Paris, in 1856, a small volume entirely devoted to this subject, under the title of "The Indian Nirwána, or the Enfranchisement of the Soul after Death." His conclusion, after a careful and candid discussion, is, that Nirwána had different meanings to the minds of the ancient Aryan priests, the orthodox Brahmans, the Sankhya Brahmans, and the Buddhists, but had not to any of them, excepting possibly a few atheists, the sense of strict annihilation. He thinks that Burnouf and Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire themselves would have accepted this view if they had paid particular attention to the definite inquiry, instead of merely touching upon it in the course of their more comprehensive studies.

What Spinoza declares in the following sentence—"God is one, simple, infinite; his modes of being are diverse, complex, finite"—strongly resembles what the Buddhists say of Nirwána and the contrasted vicissitudes of existence, and may perhaps throw light on their meaning. The supposition of immaterial, unlimited, absolutely unalterable being —the scholastic *ens sine qualitate*—answers to the descriptions of it much more satisfactorily than the idea of unqualified nothingness does. "Nirwána is real; all else is phenomenal." The Sankhyas, who do not hold to the nonentity nor to the annihilation of the soul, but to its eternal identification with the Infinite One, use nevertheless nearly the same phrases in describing it that the Buddhists do. For example, they say, "The soul

is neither a production nor productive, neither matter nor form."[43] The Vishnu Purana says, "The mundane egg, containing the whole creation, was surrounded by seven envelops,—water, air, fire, ether, egotism, intelligence, and finally the indiscrete principle."[44] Is not this Indiscrete Principle of the Brahmans the same as the Nirwána of the Buddhists? The latter explicitly claim that "man is capable of enlarging his faculties to infinity."

Nágaséna says to the king of Ságal, "Neither does Nirwána exist previously to its reception, nor is that which was not, brought into existence: still, to the being who attains it, there is Nirwána." According to this statement, taken in connection with the hundreds similar to it, Nirwána seems to be *a simple mental perception*, most difficult of acquirement, and, when acquired, assimilating the whole conscious being perfectly to itself. The Asangkrata-Sútra, as translated by Mr. Hardy, says, "From the joyful exclamations of those who have seen Nirwána, its character may be known by those who have not made the same attainment." The superficial thinker, carelessly scanning the recorded sayings of Gótama and his expositors in relation to Nirwána, is aware only of a confused mass of metaphysical hieroglyphs and poetical metaphors; but the Buddhist sages avow that whoso, by concentrated study and training of his faculties, pursues the inquiry with adequate perseverance, will at last elicit and behold the real meaning of Nirwána, the achieved insight and revelation forming the widest horizon of rapturous truth ever contemplated by the human mind. The memorable remark of Sir William Hamilton, that "capacity of thought is not to be constituted into the measure of existence," should show the error of those who so unjustifiably affirm that, since Nirwána is said to be neither corporeal nor incorporeal, nor at all describable, it is therefore absolutely nothing. A like remark is also to be addressed to those who draw the same unwarrantable conclusion of the nothingness of Nirwána from the fact that it has no locality, or from the fact that it is sometimes said to exclude consciousness. Plato, in the Timæus, stigmatizes as a vulgar error the notion that what is not in any place is a nonentity. Many a weighty philosopher has followed him in this opinion. The denial of place is by no means necessarily the denial of being. So, too, with consciousness. It is conceivable that there is a being superior to all the modes of consciousness now known to us. We are, indeed, unable to define this, yet it may be. The profoundest analysis shows that consciousness consists of co-ordinated changes.[45] "Consciousness is a succession of changes combined and arranged in special ways." Now, in contrast to the Occidental thinker, who covets alternation because in his cold climate action is the means of enjoyment, the Hindu, in the languid East, where repose is the condition of enjoyment, conceives the highest blessedness to con-

[43] Sankhya Karika, pp. 16–18. [44] Vishnu Purana, p. 19.
[45] Herbert Spencer, Principles of Psychology, ch. xxv.

sist in exemption from every disturbance, in an unruffled unity excluding all changes. Therefore, while in some of its forms his dream of Nirwána admits not consciousness, still, it is not inconsistent with a homogeneous state of being, which he, in his metaphysical and theosophic soarings, apprehends as the grandest and most ecstatic of all.

The etymological force of the word Nirwána is extinction, as when the sun has set, a fire has burned out, or a lamp is extinguished. The fair laws of interpretation do not compel us, in cases like this, to receive the severest literal significance of a word as conveying the meaning which a popular doctrine holds in the minds of its believers. There is almost always looseness, vagueness, metaphor, accommodation. But take the term before us in its strictest sense, and mark the result. When a fire is extinguished, it is obvious that, while the flame has disappeared, the substance of the flame, whatever it was, has not ceased to be, has not been actually annihilated. It has only ceased to be in a certain visible form in which it existed before; but it still survives under altered conditions. Now, to compare the putting out of a lamp to the death of a man, extinction is not actual destruction, but a transition of the flame into another state of being. That other state, in the case of the soul, is Nirwána.

There is a final consideration, possibly of some worth in dealing with this obscure theme. We will approach it through a preliminary query and quotation. That nothing can extend beyond its limits is an identical proposition. How vast, then, must be the soul of man in form or in power!

> "If souls be substances corporeal,
> Be they as big just as the body is?
> Or shoot they out to the height ethereal?
> Doth it not seem the impression of a seal
> Can be no larger than the wax?
> The soul with that vast latitude must move
> Which measures the objects that it doth descry.
> So must it be upstretch'd unto the sky
> And rub against the stars."

Cousin asserts that man is conscious of infinity, that "the unconditional, the absolute, the infinite, is immediately known in consciousness by difference, plurality, and relation." Now, does not the consciousness of infinity imply the infinity of consciousness? If not, we are compelled into the contradiction that a certain entity or force reaches outside of its outermost boundary. The Buddhist ideal is not self-annihilation, but self-universalization. It is not the absorption of a drop into the sea, but the dilatation of a drop to the sea. Each drop swells to the whole ocean, each soul becomes the Boundless One, each rahat is identified with the total Nirwána. The rivers of emancipated men neither disembogue into the ocean of spirit nor evaporate into the abyss of nonentity, but are blended with infinitude as an ontological integer. Nirwána is unexposed and illimitable space. Buddhism is perfect disinterestedness, absolute self-surrender. It is the gospel of everlasting emancipation for all. It

cannot be that a deliberate suicide of soul is the ideal holding the deepest desire of four hundred millions of people. Nirwâna is not negation, but a pure positive without alternation or foil.

Some light may be thrown on the subject by contemplating the successive states through which the dying Gôtama passed. Max Müller describes them, after the Buddhist documents, thus:—"He enters into the first stage of meditation when he feels freedom from sin, acquires a knowledge of the nature of all things, and has no desire except that of Nirvâna. But he still feels pleasure; he even uses his reasoning and discriminating powers. The use of these powers ceases in the second stage of meditation, when nothing remains but a desire after Nirvâna, and a general feeling of satisfaction arising from his intellectual perfection. That satisfaction, also, is extinguished in the third stage. Indifference succeeds; yet there is still self-consciousness, and a certain amount of physical pleasure. In the fourth stage these last remnants are destroyed; memory fades away, all pleasure and pain are gone, and the doors of Nirvâna now open before him. We must soar still higher, and, though we may feel giddy and disgusted,[46] we must sit out the tragedy till the curtain falls. After the four stages of meditation are passed, the Buddha (and every being is to become a Buddha) enters first into the infinity of space, then into the infinity of intelligence, and thence he passes into the third region, the realm of nothing. But even here there is no rest. There is still something left,—the idea of the nothing in which he rejoices. That also must be destroyed; and it is destroyed in the fourth and last region, where there is not even the idea of a nothing left, and where there is complete rest, undisturbed by nothing, or what is not nothing."[47] Analyze away all particulars until you reach an uncolored boundlessness of pure immateriality, free from every predicament; and that is Nirwâna. This is one possible way of conceiving the fate of the soul; and the speculative mind must conceive it in every possible way. However closely the result resembles the vulgar notion of annihilation, the difference in method of approach and the difference to the contemplator's feeling are immense. The Buddhist apprehends Nirwâna as infinitude in absolute and eternal equilibrium: the atheist finds Nirwâna in a coffin. That is thought of with rapture, this, with horror.

It should be noticed, before we close this chapter, that some of the Hindus give a spiritual interpretation to all the gross physical details of their so highly-colored and extravagant mythology. One of their sacred books says, "Pleasure and pain are states of the mind. Heaven is that which delights the mind, hell is that which gives it pain. Hence vice is called hell, and virtue is called heaven." Another author says, "The fire of the angry mind produces the fire of hell, and consumes its possessor. A wicked person causes his evil deeds to impinge upon himself,

[46] Not disgust, but wonder and awe, fathomless intellectual emotion, at so unparalleled a phenomenon of our miraculous human nature.

[47] Buddhism and Buddhist Pilgrims, p. 19.

and that is hell." The various sects of mystics, allied in faith and feeling to the Sufis, which are quite numerous in the East, agree in a deep metaphorical explanation of the vulgar notions pertaining to Deity, judgment, heaven, and hell.

In conclusion, the most remarkable fact in this whole field of inquiry is the contrast of the Eastern horror of individuality and longing for absorption with the Western clinging to personality and abhorrence of dissolution.[48] The true Orientalist, whether Brahman, Buddhist, or Sufi, is in love with death. Through this gate he expects to quit his frail and pitiable consciousness, losing himself, with all evil, to be born anew and find himself, with all good, in God. All sense, passion, care, and grief shall cease with deliverance from the spectral semblances of this false life. All pure contemplation, perfect repose, unsullied and unrippled joy shall begin with entrance upon the true life beyond. Thus thinking, he feels that death is the avenue to infinite expansion, freedom, peace, bliss; and he longs for it with an intensity not dreamed of by more frigid natures. He often compares himself, in this world aspiring towards another, to an enamored moth drawn towards the fire, and he exclaims, with a sigh and a thrill,—

> "Highest nature wills the capture; 'Light to light!' the instinct cries;
> And in agonizing rapture falls the moth, and bravely dies.
> Think not what thou art, Believer; think but what thou mayst become
> For the World is thy deceiver, and the Light thy only home."[49]

The Western mind approaches the subject of death negatively, stripping off the attributes of finite being; the Eastern mind, positively, putting on the attributes of infinite being. Negative acts, denying function, are antipathetic, and lower the sense of life; positive acts, affirming function, are sympathetic, and raise the sense of life. Therefore the end to which those look, annihilation, is dreaded; that to which these look, Nirwana, is desired. To become nothing, is measureless horror; to become all, is boundless ecstasy.

CHAPTER VII.

PERSIAN DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

THE name of Zoroaster is connected, either as author or as reviser, with that remarkable system of rites and doctrines which constituted the religion of the ancient Iranians, and which yet finds adherents in the Ghebers of Persia and the Parsees of India. Pliny, following the affirmation of Aristotle, asserts that he flourished six thousand years before Plato. Moyle, Gibbon, Volney, Rhode, concur in throwing him back into this vast antiquity. Foucher, Hölty, Heeren, Tychsen, Guizot, assign

[48] Burnouf, Le Bhâgavata Purâna, tome i. livre iii. ch. 28: Acquisition de la Délivrance, ch. 31. Marche de l'âme individuelle.

[49] Milnes, Palm Leaves.

his birth to the beginning of the seventh century before Christ. Hyde, Prideaux, Du Perron, Kleuker, Herder, Klaproth, and others, bring him down to about a hundred and fifty years later. Meanwhile, several weighty names press the scale in favor of the hypothesis of two or three Zoroasters, living at separate epochs. So the learned men differ, and the genuine date in question cannot, at present at least, be decided. It is comparatively certain that, if he was the author of the work attributed to him, he must have flourished as early as the sixth century before Christ. The probabilities seem, upon the whole, that he lived four or five centuries earlier than that, even,—"in the pre-historic time," as Spiegel says. However, the settlement of the era of Zoroaster is not a necessary condition of discovering the era when the religion commonly traced to him was in full prevalence as the established faith of the Persian empire. The latter may be conclusively fixed without clearing up the former. And it is known, without disputation, that that religion—whether it was primarily Persian, Median, Assyrian, or Chaldean—was flourishing at Babylon in the maturity of its power in the time of the Hebrew prophets Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Daniel, twenty-five hundred years ago.

The celebrated work on the religion of the ancient Medes and Persians by Dr. Hyde, published in 1700, must be followed with much caution and be taken with many qualifications. The author was biassed by unsound theories of the relation of the Hebrew theology to the Persian, and was, of course, ignorant of the most authoritative ancient documents afterwards brought to light. His work, therefore, though learned and valuable, considering the time when it was written, is vitiated by numerous mistakes and defects. In 1762, Anquetil du Perron, returning to France from protracted journeying and abode in the East, brought home, among the fruits of his researches, manuscripts purporting to be parts of the old Persian Bible composed or collected by Zoroaster. It was written in a language hitherto unknown to European scholars,—one of the primitive dialects of Persia. This work, of which he soon published a French version at Paris was entitled by him the "Zend-Avesta." It confirmed all that was previously known of the Zoroastrian religion, and, by its allusions, statements, and implications, threw great additional light upon the subject.

A furious controversy, stimulated by personal rivalries and national jealousy, immediately arose. Du Perron was denounced as an impostor or an ignoramus, and his publication stigmatized as a wretched forgery of his own, or a gross imposition palmed upon him by some lying pundit. Sir William Jones and John Richardson, both distinguished English Orientalists, and Meiners in Germany, were the chief impugners of the document in hand. Richardson obstinately went beyond his data, and did not live long enough to retract; but Sir William, upon an increase of information, changed his views, and regretted his first inconsiderate zeal and somewhat mistaken championship. The ablest defender of Du Perron was Kleuker, who translated the whole work from French into German,

adding many corrections, new arguments, and researches of great ability. His work was printed at Riga, in seven quarto volumes, from 1777 to 1783. The progress and results of the whole discussion are well enough indicated in the various papers which the subject drew forth in the volumes of the "Asiatic Researches" and the numbers of the "Asiatic Journal." The conclusion was that, while Du Perron had indeed betrayed partial ignorance and crudity, and had committed some glaring errors, there was not the least ground for doubt that his asserted discovery was in every essential what it claimed to be. It is a sort of litany; a collection of prayers and of sacred dialogues held between Ormuzd and Zoroaster, from which the Persian system of theology may be inferred and constructed with some approach to completeness.

The assailants of the genuineness of the "Zend-Avesta" were effectually silenced when, some thirty years later, Professor Rask, a well-known Danish linguist, during his inquiries in the East, found other copies of it, and gave to the world such information and proofs as could not be suspected. He, discovering the close affinities of the Zend with Sanscrit, led the way to the most brilliant triumph yet achieved by comparative philology. Portions of the work in the original character were published in 1829, under the supervision of Burnouf at Paris and of Olshausen at Hamburg. The question of the genuineness of the dialect exhibited in these specimens, once so freely mooted, has been discussed, and definitively settled in the affirmative, by several eminent scholars, among whom may be mentioned Bopp, whose "Comparative Grammar of the Sanscrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Gothic, and German Languages" is an astonishing monument of erudition and toil. It is the conviction of Major Rawlinson that the Zoroastrian books of the Parsees were imported to Bombay from Persia in their present state in the seventh century of our era, but that they were written at least twelve centuries earlier.[1]

But the two scholars whose opinions upon any subject within this department of learning are now the most authoritative are Professor Spiegel of Erlangen, and Professor Westergaard of Copenhagen. Their investigations, still in progress, made with all the aids furnished by their predecessors, and also with the advantage of newly-discovered materials and processes, are of course to be relied on in preference to the earlier, and in some respects necessarily cruder, researches. It appears that the proper Zoroastrian Scriptures—namely, the Yasna, the Vispered, the Vendidad, the Yashts, the Nyaish, the Afrigans, the Gahs, the Sirozah, and a few other fragments—were composed in an ancient Iranian dialect, which may—as Professor W. D. Whitney suggests in his very lucid and able article in vol. v. of the Journal of the American Oriental Society—most fitly be called the Avestan dialect. (No other book in this dialect, we believe, is known to be in existence now.) It is difficult to say when

[1] Wilson, Parsi Religion Unfolded, p. 406.

these documents were written; but in view of all the relevant information now possessed, including that drawn from the deciphered cuneiform inscriptions, the most probable date is about a thousand years before Christ. Professor R. Roth of Tübingen—whose authority herein as an original investigator is perhaps hardly second to any other man's—says the books of the Zoroastrian faith were written a considerable time before the rise of the Achæmenian dynasty. He is convinced that the whole substantial contents of the Zend-Avesta are many centuries older than the Christian era.[2] Professor Müller of Oxford also holds the same opinion.[3] And even those who set the date of the literary record a few centuries later, as Spiegel does, freely admit the great antiquity of the doctrines and usages then first committed to manuscript. In the fourth century before Christ, Alexander of Macedon overran the Persian empire. With the new rule new influences prevailed, and the old national faith and ritual fell into decay and neglect. Early in the third century of the Christian era, Ardeshir overthrew the Parthian dominion in Persia and established the Sassanian dynasty. One of his first acts was, stimulated doubtless by the surviving Magi and the old piety of the people, to reinaugurate the ancient religion. A fresh zeal of loyalty broke out, and all the prestige and vigor of the long-suppressed worship were restored. The Zoroastrian Scriptures were now sought for, whether in manuscript or in the memories of the priests. It would seem that only remnants were found. The collection, such as it was, was in the Avestan dialect, which had grown partially obsolete and unintelligible. The authorities accordingly had a translation of it made in the speech of the time, Pehlevî. This translation—most of which has reached us written in with the original, sentence after sentence—forms the real Zend language, often confounded by the literary public with Avestan. The translation of the Avestan books, probably made under these circumstances as early as A.D. 350, is called the Huzvâresch. In regard to some of these particulars there are questions still under investigation, but upon which it is not worth our while to pause here. For example, Spiegel thinks the Zend identical with the Pehlevî of the fourth century; Westergaard believes it entirely distinct from Pehlevî, and in truth only a disguised mode of writing Parsee, the oldest form of the modern Persian language.

The source from which the fullest and clearest knowledge of the Zoroastrian faith, as it is now held by the Parsees, is drawn, is the Desatir and the Bundehesh. The former work is the unique vestige of an extinct dialect called the Mahabadian, accompanied by a Persian translation and commentary. It is impossible to ascertain the century when the Maha-

[2] Ueber die Heiligen Schriften der Arier. Jahrbücher für Deutsche Theologie, 1857, band ii. ss. 146, 147.

[3] Essay on the Veda and the Zend-Avesta, p. 24. See also Bunsen's Christianity and Mankind, vol. iii. p. 114.

badian text was written; but the translation into Persian was, most probably, made in the seventh century of the Christian era.[4] Spiegel, in 1847, says there can be no doubt of the spuriousness of the Desatir; but he gives no reasons for the statement, and we do not know that it is based on any other arguments than those which, advanced by De Sacy, were refuted by Von Hammer. The Bundehesh is in the Pehlevi or Zend language, and was written, it is thought, about the seventh century, but was derived, it is claimed, from a more ancient work.[5] The book entitled "Revelations of Ardai-Viraf" exists in Pehlevi probably of the fourth century, according to Troyer,[6] and is believed to have been originally written in the Avestan tongue, though this is extremely doubtful. It gives a detailed narrative of the scenery of heaven and hell, as seen by Ardai-Viraf during a visit of a week which his soul—leaving his body for that length of time—paid to those regions. Many later and enlarged versions of this have appeared. One of them, dating from the sixteenth century, was translated into English by T. A. Pope and published in 1816. Sanscrit translations of several of the before-named writings are also in existence. And several other comparatively recent works, scarcely needing mention here, although considered as somewhat authoritative by the modern followers of Zoroaster, are to be found in Guzeratee, the present dialect of the Indian Parsees. A full exposition of the Zoroastrian religion, with satisfactory proofs of its antiquity and documentary genuineness, is presented in the Preliminary Discourse and Notes to the Dabistán. This curious and entertaining work, a fund of strange and valuable lore, is an historico-critical view of the principal religions of the world, especially of the Oriental sects, schools, and manners. It was composed in Persian, apparently by Mohsan Fani, about the year 1645. An English translation, with elaborate explanatory matter, by David Shea and Anthony Troyer, was published at London and at Paris in 1843.[7]

In these records there are obscurities, incongruities, and chasms, as might naturally be anticipated, admitting them to be strictly what they would pass for. These faults may be accounted for in several ways. First, in a rude stage of philosophical culture, incompleteness of theory, inconsistent conceptions in different parts of a system, are not unusual, but are rather to be expected, and are slow to become troublesome to its adherents. Secondly, distinct contemporary thinkers or sects may give expression to their various views in literary productions of the same date and possessing a balanced authority. Or, thirdly, the heterogeneous conceptions in some particulars met with in these scriptures may be a result of the fact that the collection contains writings of distinct ages,

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[4] Baron von Hammer, in Heidelberger Jahrbücher der Literatur, 1823. — Id. in Journal Asiatique, Juillet, 1833. Dabistán, Preliminary Discourse, pp. xix.–lxv.

[5] Dabistán, vol. i. p. 226, note. [6] Ibid. p. 185, note.

[7] Reviewed in Asiatic Journal, 1844, pp. 582–596.

when the same problems had been differently approached and had given birth to opposing or divergent speculations. The later works of course cannot have the authority of the earlier in deciding questions of ancient belief: they are to be taken rather as commentaries, interpreting and carrying out in detail many points that lie only in obscure hints and allusions in the primary documents. But it is a significant fact that, in the generic germs of doctrine and custom, in the essential outlines of substance, in rhetorical imagery, in practical morals, the statements of all these books are alike: they only vary in subordinate matters and in degrees of fulness.

The charge has repeatedly been urged that the materials of the more recent of the Parsee Scriptures—the Desatir and the Bundehesh—were drawn from Christian and Mohammedan sources. No evidence of value for sustaining such assertions has been adduced. Under the circumstances, scarcely any motive for such an imposition appears. In view of the whole case, the reverse supposition is rather to be credited. In the first place, we have ample evidence for the existence of the general Zoroastrian system long anterior to the rise of Christianity. The testimony of the classic authors—to say nothing of the known antiquity of the language in which the system is preserved—is demonstrative on this point. Secondly, the striking agreement—in regard to fundamental doctrines, pervading spirit, and ritual forms—between the accounts in the classics and those in the Avestan books, and of both these with the later writings and traditional practice of the Parsees, furnishes powerful presumption that the religion was a connected development, possessing the same essential features from the time of its national establishment. Thirdly, we have unquestionable proofs that, during the period from the Babylonish captivity to the advent of Christ, the Jews borrowed and adapted a great deal from the Persian theology, but no proof that the Persians took any thing from the Jewish theology. This is abundantly confessed by such scholars as Gesenius, Rosenmüller, Stuart, Lücke, De Wette, Neander; and it will hardly be challenged by any one who has investigated the subject. But the Jewish theology being thus impregnated with germs from the Persian faith, and being in a sense the historic mother of Christian theology, it is far more reasonable, in seeking the origin of dogmas common to Parsees and Christians, to trace them through the Pharisees to Zoroaster, than to imagine them suddenly foisted upon the former by forgery on the part of the latter at a late period. Fourthly, it is notorious that Mohammed, in forming his religion, made wholesale draughts upon previously existing faiths, that their adherents might more readily accept his teachings, finding them largely in unison with their own. It is altogether more likely, aside from historic evidence which we possess, that he drew from the tenets and imagery of the Ghebers, than that they, when subdued by his armies and persecuted by his rule from their native land, introduced new doctrines from the Koran into the ancestral creed which they so revered that

neither exile nor death could make them abjure it. For, driven by those fierce proselytes, the victorious Arabs, to the mountains of Kirman and to the Indian coast, they clung with unconquerable tenacity to their religion, still scrupulously practising its rites, proudly mindful of the time when every village, from the shore of the Caspian Sea to the outlet of the Persian Gulf, had its splendid fire-temple,—

> "And Iran like a sunflower turn'd
> Where'er the eye of Mithra burn'd."

We therefore see no reason for believing that important Christian or Mohammedan ideas have been interpolated into the old Zoroastrian religion. The influence has been in the other direction. Relying then, though with caution, on what Dr. Edward Röth says, that "the certainty of our possessing a correct knowledge of the leading ancient doctrines of the Persians is now beyond all question," we will try to exhibit so much of the system as is necessary for appreciating its doctrine of a future life.

In the deep background of the Magian theology looms, in mysterious obscurity, the belief in an infinite First Principle, Zeruana Akerana. According to most of the scholars who have investigated it, the meaning of this term is "Time without Bounds," or absolute duration. But Bohlen says it signifies the "Uncreated Whole;" and Schlegel thinks it denotes the "Indivisible One." The conception seems to have been to the people mostly an unapplied abstraction, too vast and remote to become prominent in their speculation or influential in their faith. Spiegel, indeed, thinks the conception was derived from Babylon, and added to the system at a later period than the other doctrines. The beginning of vital theology, the source of actual ethics to the Zoroastrians, was in the idea of the two antagonist powers, Ormuzd and Ahriman, the first emanations of Zeruana, who divide between them in unresting strife the empire of the universe. The former is the Principle of Good,—the perfection of intelligence, beneficence, and light, the source of all reflected excellence. The latter is the Principle of Evil,—the contriver of misery and death, the king of darkness, the instigator of all wrong. With sublime beauty the ancient Persian said, "Light is the body of Ormuzd; Darkness is the body of Ahriman." There has been much dispute whether the Persian theology grew out of the idea of an essential and eternal dualism, or was based on the conception of a partial and temporary battle; in other words, whether Ahriman was originally and necessarily evil, or fell from a divine estate. In the fragmentary documents which have reached us, the whole subject lies in confusion. It is scarcely possible to unravel the tangled mesh. Sometimes it seems to be taught that Ahriman was at first good,—an angel of light who, through envy of his great compeer, sank from his primal purity, darkened into hatred, and became the rancorous enemy of truth and love. At other times he appears to be considered as the pure primordial essence of evil.

The various views may have prevailed in different ages or in different schools. Upon the whole, however, we hold the opinion that the real Zoroastrian idea of Ahriman was moral and free, not physical and fatal. The whole basis of the universe was good; evil was an after-perversion, a foreign interpolation, a battling mixture. First, the perfect Zeruana was once all in all: Ahriman, as well as Ormuzd, proceeded from him; and the inference that he was pure would seem to belong to the idea of his origin. Secondly, so far as the account of Satan given in the book of Job—perhaps the earliest appearance of the Persian notion in Jewish literature—warrants any inference or supposition at all, it would lead to the image of one who was originally a prince in heaven, and who must have fallen thence to become the builder and potentate of hell. Thirdly, that matter is not an essential core of evil, the utter antagonist of spirit, and that Ahriman is not evil by an intrinsic necessity, will appear from the two conceptions lying at the base and crown of the Persian system: —that the creation, as it first came from the hands of Ormuzd, was perfectly good; and that finally the purified material world shall exist again unstained by a breath of evil, Ahriman himself becoming like Ormuzd. He is not, then, aboriginal and indestructible evil in substance. The conflict between Ormuzd and him is the temporary ethical struggle of light and darkness, not the internecine ontological war of spirit and matter. Röth says, "Ahriman was originally good: his fall was a determination of his will, not an inherent necessity of his nature."[8] Whatever other conceptions may be found, whatever inconsistencies or contradictions to this may appear, still, we believe the genuine Zoroastrian view was such as we have now stated. The opposite doctrine arose from the more abstruse lucubrations of a more modern time, and is Manichæan, not Zoroastrian.

Ormuzd created a resplendent and happy world. Ahriman instantly made deformity, impurity, and gloom, in opposition to it. All beauty, virtue, harmony, truth, blessedness, were the work of the former. All ugliness, vice, discord, falsehood, wretchedness, belonged to the latter. They grappled and mixed in a million hostile shapes. This universal battle is the ground of ethics, the clarion-call to marshal out the hostile hosts of good and ill; and all other war is but a result and a symbol of it. The strife thus indicated between a Deity and a Devil, both subordinate to the unmoved Eternal, was the Persian solution of the problem of evil,—their answer to the staggering question, why pleasure and pain, benevolence and malignity, are so conflictingly mingled in the works of nature and in the soul of man. In the long struggle that ensued, Ormuzd created multitudes of co-operant angels to assail his foe, stocking the clean empire of Light with celestial allies of his holy banner, who hang from heaven in great numbers, ready at the prayer of the righteous man to hie to his aid and work him a thousandfold good. Ahriman, like-

[8] Zoroastrische Glaubenslehre, ss. 397, 398.

wise, created an equal number of assistant demons, peopling the filthy domain of Darkness with counterbalancing swarms of infernal followers of his pirate flag, who lurk at the summit of hell, watching to snatch every opportunity to ply their vocation of sin and ruin. There are such hosts of these invisible antagonists sown abroad, and incessantly active, that every star is crowded and all space teems with them. Each man has a good and a bad angel, a ferver and a dev, who are endeavoring in every manner to acquire control over his conduct and possession of his soul.

The Persians curiously personified the source of organic life in the world under the emblem of a primeval bull. In this symbolic beast were packed the seeds and germs of all the creatures afterwards to people the earth. Ahriman, to ruin the creation of which this animal was the life-medium, sought to kill him. He set upon him two of his devs, who are called "adepts of death." They stung him in the breast, and plagued him until he died of rage. But, as he was dying, from his right shoulder sprang the androgynal Kaiomorts, who was the stock-root of humanity. His body was made from fire, air, water, and earth, to which Ormuzd added an immortal soul, and bathed him with an elixir which rendered him fair and glittering as a youth of fifteen, and would have preserved him so perennially had it not been for the assaults of the Evil One.[9] Ahriman, the enemy of all life, determined to slay him, and at last accomplished his object; but, as Kaiomorts fell, from his seed, through the power of Ormuzd, originated Meschia and Meschiane, male and female, the first human pair, from whom all our race have descended. They would never have died,[10] but Ahriman, in the guise of a serpent, seduced them, and they sinned and fell. This account is partly drawn from that later treatise, the Bundehesh, whose mythological cosmogony reminds us of the Scandinavian Ymer. But we conceive it to be strictly reliable as a representation of the Zoroastrian faith in its essential doctrines; for the earlier documents, the Yasna, the Yeshts, and the Vendidad, contain the same things in obscure and undeveloped expressions. They, too, make repeated mention of the mysterious bull, and of Kaiomorts.[11] They invariably represent death as resulting from the hostility of Ahriman. The earliest Avestan account of the earthly condition of men describes them as living in a garden which Yima or Jemschid had enclosed at the command of Ormuzd.[12] During the golden age of his reign they were free from heat and cold, sickness and death. "In the garden which Yima made they led a most beautiful life, and they bore none of the marks which Ahriman has since made upon men." But Ahriman's envy and hatred knew no rest until he and his devs had, by their wiles, broken into this paradise, betrayed Yima and his people into falsehood, and so, by introducing corruption into their hearts, put

[9] Kleuker, Zend-Avesta, band i. anhang 1, s. 263. [10] Ibid. band i. s. 27. [11] Yasna, 24th Hâ.
[12] Die Sage von Dschemschid. Von Professor R. Roth. In Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, band iv. ss. 417–431.

an end to their glorious earthly immortality. This view is set forth in the opening fargards of the Vendidad; and it has been clearly illustrated in an elaborate contribution upon the "Old Iranian Mythology" by Professor Westergaard.[13] Death, like all other evils, was an after-effect, thrust into the purely good creation of Ormuzd by the cunning malice of Ahriman. The Vendidad, at its commencement, recounts the various products of Ormuzd's beneficent power, and adds, after each particular, "Thereupon Ahriman, who is full of death, made an opposition to the same."

According to the Zoroastrian modes of thought, what would have been the fate of man had Ahriman not existed or not interfered? Plainly, mankind would have lived on forever in innocence and joy. They would have been blessed with all placid delights, exempt from hate, sickness, pain, and every other ill; and, when the earth was full of them, Ormuzd would have taken his sinless subjects to his own realm of light on high. But when they forsook the true service of Ormuzd, falling into deceit and defilement, they became subjects of Ahriman; and he would inflict on them, as the creatures of his hated rival, all the calamities in his power, dissolve the masterly workmanship of their bodies in death, and then take their souls as prisoners into his own dark abode. "Had Meschia continued to bring meet praises, it would have happened that when the time of man, created pure, had come, his soul, created pure and immortal, would immediately have gone to the seat of bliss."[14] "Heaven was destined for man upon condition that he was humble of heart, obedient to the law, and pure in thought, word, and deed." But "by believing the lies of Ahriman they became sinners, and their souls must remain in his nether kingdom until the resurrection of their bodies."[15] Ahriman's triumph thus culminates in the death of man and that banishment of the disembodied soul into hell which takes the place of its originally-intended reception into heaven.

The law of Ormuzd, revealed through Zoroaster, furnishes to all who faithfully observe it in purity of thought, speech, and action, "when body and soul have separated, attainment of paradise in the next world,"[16] while the neglecters of it "will pass into the dwelling of the devs,"[17]— "after death will have no part in paradise, but will occupy the place of darkness destined for the wicked."[18] The third day after death, the soul advances upon "the way created by Ormuzd for good and bad," to be examined as to its conduct. The pure soul passes up from this evanescent world, over the bridge Chinevad, to the world of Ormuzd, and joins the angels. The sinful soul is bound and led over the way made for the godless, and finds its place at the bottom of gloomy hell.[19] An Avestan

[13] Weber, Indische Studien, band iii. s. 411.
[14] Yesht LXXXVII. Kleuker, band ii. sect. 211. [15] Bundehesh, ch. xv.
[16] Avesta die Heiligen Schriften der Parsen. Von Dr. F. Spiegel, band i. s. 171.
[17] Ibid. s. 168. [18] Ibid. s. 127. [19] Ibid. ss. 248–252. Vendidad, Fargard XIX.

fragment[20] and the Viraf-Nameh give the same account, only with more picturesque fulness. On the soaring bridge the soul meets Rashne-rast, the angel of justice, who tries those that present themselves before him. If the merits prevail, a figure of dazzling substance, radiating glory and fragrance, advances and accosts the justified soul, saying, "I am thy good angel: I was pure at the first, but thy good deeds have made me purer;" and the happy one is straightway led to Paradise. But when the vices outweigh the virtues, a dark and frightful image, featured with ugliness and exhaling a noisome smell, meets the condemned soul, and cries, "I am thy evil spirit: bad myself, thy crimes have made me worse." Then the culprit staggers on his uncertain foothold, is hurled from the dizzy causeway, and precipitated into the gulf which yawns horribly below. A sufficient reason for believing these last details no late and foreign interpolation, is that the Vendidad itself contains all that is essential in them,—Garotman, the heaven of Ormuzd, open to the pure,—Dutsakh, the abode of devs, ready for the wicked,—Chinevad, the bridge of ordeal, upon which all must enter.[21]

Some authors have claimed that the ancient disciples of Zoroaster believed in a purifying, intermediate state for the dead. Passages stating such a doctrine are found in the Yeshts, Sades, and in later Parsee works. But whether the translations we now possess of these passages are accurate, and whether the passages themselves are authoritative to establish the ancient prevalence of such a belief, we have not yet the means for deciding. There was a yearly solemnity, called the "Festival for the Dead,"—still observed by the Parsees,—held at the season when it was thought that that portion of the sinful departed who had ended their penance were raised from Dutsakh to earth, from earth to Garotman. Du Perron says that this took place only during the last five days of the year, when the souls of all the deceased sinners who were undergoing punishment had permission to leave their confinement and visit their relatives; after which, those not yet purified were to return, but those for whom a sufficient atonement had been made were to proceed to Paradise. For proof that this doctrine was held, reference is made to the following passage, with others:—"During these five days Ormuzd empties hell. The imprisoned souls shall be freed from Ahriman's plagues when they pay penance and are ashamed of their sins; and they shall receive a heavenly nature; the meritorious deeds of themselves and of their families cause this liberation: all the rest must return to Dutsakh."[22] Rhode thinks this was a part of the old Persian faith, and the source of the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory.[23] But, whether so or not, it is certain that the Zoroastrians regarded the whole residence of the departed souls in hell as temporary.

The duration of the present order of the world was fixed at twelve

[20] Kleuker, band i. ss. xxxi.-xxxv.
[21] Spiegel, Vendidad, ss. 207, 229, 233, 250.
[22] Kleuker, band ii. s. 173.
[23] Rhode, Heilige Sage des Zendvolks, s. 410.

thousand years, divided into four equal epochs. In the first three thousand years, Ormuzd creates and reigns triumphantly over his empire. Through the next cycle, Ahriman is constructing and carrying on his hostile works. The third epoch is occupied with a drawn battle between the upper and lower kings and their adherents. During the fourth period, Ahriman is to be victorious, and a state of things inconceivably dreadful is to prevail. The brightness of all clear things will be shrouded, the happiness of all joyful creatures be destroyed, innocence disappear, religion be scoffed from the world, and crime, horror, and war be rampant. Famine will spread, pests and plagues stalk over the earth, and showers of black rain fall. But at last Ormuzd will rise in his might and put an end to these awful scenes. He will send on earth a savior, Sosiosch, to deliver mankind, to wind up the final period of time, and to bring the arch-enemy to judgment. At the sound of the voice of Sosiosch the dead will come forth. Good, bad, indifferent, all alike will rise, each in his order. Kaiomorts, the original single ancestor of men, will be the firstling. Next, Meschia and Meschiane, the primal parent pair, will appear. And then the whole multitudinous family of mankind will throng up. The genii of the elements will render up the sacred materials intrusted to them, and rebuild the decomposed bodies. Each soul will recognise, and hasten to reoccupy, its old tenement of flesh, now renewed, improved, immortalized. Former acquaintances will then know each other. "Behold, my father! my mother! my brother! my wife!—they shall exclaim."[24]

In this exposition we have—following the guidance of Du Perron, Foucher, Kleuker, J. G. Müller, and other early scholars in this field—attributed the doctrine of a general and bodily resurrection of the dead to the ancient Zoroastrians. The subsequent researches of Burnouf, Roth, and others, have shown that several, at least, of the passages which Anquetil supposed to teach such a doctrine were erroneously translated by him, and do not really contain it. And recently the ground has been often assumed that the doctrine of the resurrection does not belong to the Avesta, but is a more modern dogma, derived by the Parsees from the Jews or the Christians, and only forced upon the old text by misinterpretation through the Pehlevi version and the Parsee commentary. A question of so grave importance demands careful examination. In the absence of that reliable translation of the entire original documents, and that thorough elaboration of all the extant materials, which we are awaiting from the hands of Professor Spiegel, whose second volume has long been due, and Professor Westergaard, whose second and third volumes are eagerly looked for, we must make the best use of the resources actually available, and then leave the point in such plausible light as existing testimony and fair reasoning can throw upon it.

In the first place, it should be observed that, admitting the doctrine

[24] Bundeheah, ch. xxxi.

to be nowhere mentioned in the Avesta, still, it does not follow that the belief was not prevalent when the Avesta was written. We know that the Christians of the first two centuries believed a great many things of which there is no statement in the New Testament. Spiegel holds that the doctrine in debate is not in the Avesta, the text of which in its present form he thinks was written after the time of Alexander.[25] But he confesses that the resurrection-theory was in existence long before that time.[26] Now, if the Avesta, committed to writing three hundred years before Christ, at a time when the doctrine of the resurrection is known to have been believed, contains no reference to it, the same relation of facts may just as well have existed if we date the record seven centuries earlier. We possess only a small and broken portion of the original Zoroastrian Scriptures; as Roth says, "songs, invocations, prayers, snatches of traditions, parts of a code,—the shattered fragments of a once stately building." If we could recover the complete documents in their earliest condition, it might appear that the now lost parts contained the doctrine of the general resurrection fully formed. We have many explicit references to many ancient Zoroastrian books no longer in existence. For example, the Parsees have a very early account that the Avesta at first consisted of twenty-one Nosks. Of these but one has been preserved complete, and small parts of three or four others. The rest are utterly wanting. The fifth Nosk, whereof not any portion remains to us, was called the Do-az-ah Hamast. It contained thirty-two chapters, treating, among other things, "of the upper and nether world, of the resurrection, of the bridge Chinevad, and of the fate after death."[27] If this evidence be true,—and we know of no reason for not crediting it,—it is perfectly decisive. But, at all events, the absence from the extant parts of the Zend-Avesta of the doctrine under examination would be no proof that that doctrine was not received when those documents were penned.

Secondly, we have the unequivocal assertion of Theopompus, in the fourth century before Christ, that the Magi taught the doctrine of a general resurrection.[28] "At the appointed epoch Ahriman shall be subdued," and "men shall live again and shall be immortal." And Diogenes adds, "Eudemus of Rhodes affirms the same things." Aristotle calls Ormuzd Zeus, and Ahriman Haides, the Greek names respectively of the lord of the starry Olympians above, and the monarch of the Stygian ghosts beneath. Another form also in which the early Greek authors betray their acquaintance with the Persian conception of a conflict between Ormuzd and Ahriman is in the idea—expressed by Xenophon in his Cyropædia, in the dialogue between Araspes and Cyrus—of two

[25] Studien über das Zend-Avesta, in Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1855, band ix. s. 192.

[26] Spiegel, Avesta, band i. s. 16.

[27] Dabistán, vol. i. pp. 272–274.

[28] Diogenes Laertius, Lives of the Philosophers, Introduction, sect. vi. Plutarch, concerning Isis and Osiris.

souls in man, one a brilliant efflux of good, the other a dusky emanation of evil, each bearing the likeness of its parent.[29] Since we know from Theopompus that certain conceptions, illustrated in the Bundehesh and not contained in the fragmentary Avestan books which have reached us, were actually-received Zoroastrian tenets four centuries before Christ, we are strongly supported in giving credence to the doctrinal statements of that book as affording, in spite of its lateness, a correct epitome of the old Persian theology.

Thirdly, we are still further warranted in admitting the antiquity of the Zoroastrian system as including the resurrection-theory, when we consider the internal harmony and organic connection of parts in it; how the doctrines all fit together, and imply each other, and could scarcely have existed apart. Men were the creatures of Ormuzd. They should have lived immortally under his favor and in his realm. But Ahriman, by treachery, obtained possession of a large portion of them. Now, when, at the end of the fourth period into which the world-course was divided by the Magian theory, as Theopompus testifies, Ormuzd overcomes this arch-adversary, will he not rescue his own unfortunate creatures from the realm of darkness in which they have been imprisoned? When a king storms an enemy's castle, he delivers from the dungeons his own soldiers who were taken captives in a former defeat. The expectation of a great prophet, Sosiosch, to come and vanquish Ahriman and his swarms, unquestionably appears in the Avesta itself.[30] With this notion, in inseparable union, the Parsee tradition, running continuously back, as is claimed, to a very remote time, joins the doctrine of a general resurrection; a doctrine literally stated in the Vendidad,[31] and in many other places in the Avesta,[32] where it has not yet been shown to be an interpolation, but only supposed so by very questionable constructive inferences. The consent of intrinsic adjustment and of historic evidence would, therefore, lead to the conclusion that this was an old Zoroastrian dogma. In disproof of this conclusion we believe there is no direct positive evidence whatever, and no inferential argument cogent enough to produce conviction.

There are sufficient reasons for the belief that the doctrine of a resurrection was quite early adopted from the Persians by the Jews, not borrowed at a much later time from the Jews by the Parsees. The conception of Ahriman, the evil serpent, bearing death, (*die Schlange Angramainyus der voll Tod ist,*) is interwrought from the first throughout the Zoroastrian scheme. In the Hebrew records, on the contrary, such an idea appears but incidentally, briefly, rarely, and only in the later books. The account of the introduction of sin and death by the serpent in the garden of Eden dates from a time subsequent to the commencement of the Captivity. Von Bohlen, in his Introduction to the Book of Genesis, says

[29] Lib. vi. cap. i. sect. 41.
[30] Spiegel, Avesta, band i. ss. 16, 244.
[31] Fargard XVIII., Spiegel's Uebersetzung, s. 236.
[32] Kleuker, band ii. ss. 123, 124, 164.

the narrative was drawn from the Zend-Avesta. Rosenmüller, in his commentary on the passage, says the narrator had in view the Zoroastrian notions of the serpent Ahriman and his deeds. Dr. Martin Haug—an acute and learned writer, whose opinion is entitled to great weight, as he is the freshest scholar acquainted with this whole field in the light of all that others have done—thinks it certain that Zoroaster lived in a remote antiquity, from fifteen hundred to two thousand years before Christ. He says that Judaism after the exile—and, through Judaism, Christianity afterwards—received an important influence from Zoroastrianism, an influence which, in regard to the doctrine of angels, Satan, and the resurrection of the dead, cannot be mistaken.[33] The Hebrew theology had no demonology, no Satan, until after the residence at Babylon. This is admitted. Well, is not the resurrection a pendant to the doctrine of Satan? Without the idea of a Satan there would be no idea of a retributive banishment of souls into hell, and of course no occasion for a vindicating restoration of them thence to their former or a superior state.

On this point the theory of Rawlinson is very important. He argues, with various proofs, that the Dualistic doctrine was a heresy which broke out very early among the primitive Aryans, who then were the single ancestry of the subsequent Iranians and Indians. This heresy was forcibly suppressed. Its adherents, driven out of India, went to Persia, and, after severe conflicts and final admixture with the Magians, there established their faith.[34] The sole passage in the Old Testament teaching the resurrection is in the so-called Book of Daniel, a book full of Chaldean and Persian allusions, written less than two centuries before Christ, long after we know it was a received Zoroastrian tenet, and long after the Hebrews had been exposed to the whole tide and atmosphere of the triumphant Persian power. The unchangeable tenacity of the Medes and Persians is a proverb. How often the Hebrew people lapsed into idolatry, accepting Pagan gods, doctrines, and ritual, is notorious. And, in particular, how completely subject they were to Persian influence appears clearly in large parts of the Biblical history, especially in the Books of Esther and Ezekiel. The origin of the term Beelzebub, too, in the New Testament, is plain. To say that the Persians derived the doctrine of the resurrection from the Jews seems to us as arbitrary as it would be to affirm that they also borrowed from them the custom, mentioned by Ezekiel, of weeping for Tammuz in the gates of the temple.

In view of the whole case as it stands, until further researches either strengthen it or put a different aspect upon it, we feel forced to think that the doctrine of a general resurrection was a component element in the ancient Avestan religion. A further question of considerable interest

[33] Die Lehre Zoroasters nach den alten Liedern des Zendavesta. Zeitschrift der Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, band ix. ss. 286, 683–692.

[34] Rawlinson's Herodotus, vol. i. pp. 426–431.

arises as to the nature of this resurrection,—whether it was conceived as physical or as spiritual. We have no data to furnish a determinate answer. Plutarch quotes from Theopompus the opinion of the Magi, that when, at the subdual of Ahriman, men are restored to life, "they will need no nourishment and cast no shadow." It would appear, then, that they must be spirits. The inference is not reliable; for the idea may be that all causes of decay will be removed, so that no food will be necessary to supply the wasting processes which no longer exist; and that the entire creation will be so full of light that a shadow will be impossible. It might be thought that the familiar Persian conception of angels, both good and evil, fervers and devs, and the reception of departed souls into their company, with Ormuzd in Garotman, or with Ahriman in Dutsakh, would exclude the belief in a future bodily resurrection. But Christians and Mohammedans at this day believe in immaterial angels and devils, and in the immediate entrance of disembodied souls upon reward or punishment in their society, and still believe in their final return to the earth, and in a restoration to them of their former tabernacles of flesh. Discordant, incoherent, as the two beliefs may be, if their coexistence is a fact with cultivated and reasonable people now, much more was it possible with an undisciplined and credulous populace three thousand years in the past. Again, it has been argued that the indignity with which the ancient Persians treated the dead body, refusing to bury it or to burn it, lest the earth or the fire should be polluted, is incompatible with the supposition that they expected a resurrection of the flesh. In the first place, it is difficult to reason safely to any dogmatic conclusions from the funeral customs of a people. These usages are so much a matter of capricious priestly ritual, ancestral tradition, unreasoning instinct, blind or morbid superstition, that any consistent doctrinal construction is not fairly to be put upon them. Secondly, the Zoroastrians did not express scorn or loathing for the corpse by their manner of disposing of it. The greatest pains were taken to keep it from disgusting decay, by placing it in "the driest, purest, openest place," upon a summit where fresh winds blew, and where certain beasts and birds, accounted most sacred, might eat the corruptible portion: then the clean bones were carefully buried. The dead body had yielded to the hostile working of Ahriman, and become his possession. The priests bore it out on a bed or a carpet, and exposed it to the light of the sun. The demon was thus exorcised; and the body became further purified in being eaten by the sacred animals, and no putrescence was left to contaminate earth, water, or fire.[85] Furthermore, it is to be noticed that the modern Parsees dispose of their dead in exactly the same manner depicted in the earliest accounts; yet they zealously hold to a literal resurrection of the body. If the giving of the flesh to the dog and the vulture in their case exists with this belief, it may have done so with their ancestors before

[85] Spiegel, Avesta, ss. 82, 104, 109, 111, 122.

Nebuchadnezzar swept the Jews to Babylon. Finally, it is quite reasonable to conclude that the old Persian doctrine of a resurrection did include the physical body, when we recollect that in the Zoroastrian scheme of thought there is no hostility to matter or to earthly life, but all is regarded as pure and good except so far as the serpent Ahriman has introduced evil. The expulsion of this evil with his ultimate overthrow, the restoration of all as it was at first, in purity, gladness, and eternal life, would be the obvious and consistent carrying out of the system. Hatred of earthly life, contempt for the flesh, the notion of an essential and irreconcilable warfare of soul against body, are Brahmanic and Manichæan, not Zoroastrian. Still, the ground-plan and style of thought may not have been consistently adhered to. The expectation that the very same body would be restored was known to the Jews a century or two before Christ. One of the martyrs whose history is told in the Second Book of Maccabees, in the agonies of death plucked out his own bowels, and called on the Lord to restore them to him again at the resurrection. Considering the notion of a resurrection of the body as a sensuous burden on the idea of a resurrection of the soul, it may have been a later development originating with the Jews. But it seems to us decidedly more probable that the Magi held it as a part of their creed before they came in contact with the children of Israel. Such an opinion may be modestly held until further information is afforded[36] or some new and fatal objection brought.

After this resurrection a thorough separation will be made of the good from the bad. "Father shall be divided from child, sister from brother, friend from friend. The innocent one shall weep over the guilty one, the guilty one shall weep for himself. Of two sisters one shall be pure, one corrupt: they shall be treated according to their deeds."[37] Those who have not, in the intermediate state, fully expiated their sins, will, in sight of the whole creation, be remanded to the pit of punishment. But the author of evil shall not exult over them forever. Their prison-house will soon be thrown open. The pangs of three terrible days and nights, equal to the agonies of nine thousand years, will purify all, even the worst of the demons. The anguished cry of the damned, as they writhe in the lurid caldron of torture, rising to heaven, will find pity in the soul of Ormuzd, and he will release them from their sufferings. A blazing star, the comet Gurtzscher, will fall upon the earth. In the heat of its conflagration, great and small mountains will melt and flow together as liquid metal. Through this glowing flood all human kind must pass. To the righteous it will prove as a pleasant bath, of the temperature of milk; but on the wicked the flame will inflict terrific pain. Ahriman will run up and down Chinevad in the perplexities of anguish and despair. The earth-wide stream of fire, flowing on, will cleanse every spot and every thing. Even the loathsome realm of darkness and torment shall be bur-

[36] Windischmann has now (1863) fully proved this, in his Zoroastrische Studien. Spiegel frankly avows it: Avesta, band iii., einleitung, s. lxxv. [37] Rhode, Heilige Sage des Zendvolks, s. 467.

nished and made a part of the all-inclusive Paradise. Ahriman himself, reclaimed to virtue, replenished with primal light, abjuring the memories of his envious ways, and furling thenceforth the sable standard of his rebellion, shall become a ministering spirit of the Most High, and, together with Ormuzd, chant the praises of Time-without-Bounds. All darkness, falsehood, suffering, shall flee utterly away, and the whole universe be filled by the illumination of good spirits blessed with fruitions of eternal delight. In regard to the fate of man,—

> Such are the parables Zartusht address'd
> To Iran's faith, in the ancient Zend-Avest.

CHAPTER VIII.

HEBREW DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

On the one extreme, a large majority of Christian scholars have asserted that the doctrine of a retributive immortality is clearly taught throughout the Old Testament. Able writers, like Bishop Warburton, have maintained, on the other extreme, that it says nothing whatever about a future life, but rather implies the total and eternal end of men in death. But the most judicious, trustworthy critics hold an intermediate position, and affirm that the Hebrew Scriptures show a general belief in the separate existence of the spirit, not indeed as experiencing rewards and punishments, but as surviving in the common silence and gloom of the under-world, a desolate empire of darkness yawning beneath all graves and peopled with dream-like ghosts.[1]

A number of important passages have been cited from different parts of the Old Testament by the advocates of the view first mentioned above. It will be well for us to notice these and their misuse before proceeding farther.

The translation of Enoch has been regarded as a revelation of the immortality of man. It is singular that Dr. Priestley should suggest, as the probable fact, so sheer and baseless a hypothesis as he does in his notes upon the Book of Genesis. He says, "Enoch was probably a prophet authorized to announce the reality of another life after this; and he might be removed into it without dying, as an evidence of the truth of his doctrine." The gross materialism of this supposition, and the failure of God's design which it implies, are a sufficient refutation of it. And,

[1] Boettcher, De Inferis Rebusque post mortem futuris ex Hebræorum et Græcorum Opinionibus.

besides the utter unlikelihood of the thought, it is entirely destitute of support in the premises. One of the most curious of the many strange things to be found in Warburton's argument for the Divine Legation of Moses—an argument marked, as is well known, by profound erudition, and, in many respects, by consummate ability—is the use he makes of this account to prove that Moses believed the doctrine of immortality, but purposely obscured the fact from which it might be drawn by the people, in order that it might not interfere with his doctrine of the temporal special providence of Jehovah over the Jewish nation. Such a course is inconsistent with sound morality, much more with the character of an inspired prophet of God.

The only history we have of Enoch is in the fifth chapter of the Book of Genesis. The substance of it is as follows:—"And Enoch walked with God during his appointed years; and then he was not, for God took him." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, following the example of those Rabbins who, several centuries before his time, began to give mystical interpretations of the Scriptures, infers from this statement that Enoch was borne into heaven without tasting death. But it is not certainly known who the author of that epistle was; and, whoever he was, his opinion, of course, can have no authority upon a subject of *criticism* like this. Replying to the supposititious argument furnished by this passage, we say, Take the account as it reads, and it neither asserts nor implies the idea commonly held concerning it. It says nothing about translation or immortality; nor can any thing of the kind be legitimately deduced from it. Its plain meaning is no more nor less than this: Enoch lived three hundred and sixty-five years, fearing God and keeping his commandments, and then he died. Many of the Rabbins, fond as they are of finding in the Pentateuch the doctrine of future blessedness for the good, interpret this narrative as only signifying an immature death; for Enoch, it will be recollected, reached but about half the average age of the others whose names are mentioned in the chapter. Had this occurrence been intended as the revelation of a truth, it would have been fully and clearly stated; otherwise it could not answer any purpose. As Le Clerc observes, "If the writer believed so important a fact as that Enoch was immortal, it is wonderful that he relates it as secretly and obscurely as if he wished to hide it." But, finally, even admitting that the account is to be regarded as teaching literally that God took Enoch, it by no means proves a revelation of the doctrine of general immortality. It does not show that anybody else would ever be translated or would in any way enter upon a future state of existence. It is not put forth as a revelation; it says nothing whatever concerning a revelation. It seems to mean either that Enoch suddenly died, or that he disappeared, nobody knew whither. But, if it really means that God took him into heaven, it is more natural to think that that was done as a special favor than as a sign of what awaited others. No general cause is stated, no consequence deduced, no principle laid down, no reflection added. How,

then, can it be said that the doctrine of a future life for man is revealed by it or implicated in it?

The removal of Elijah in a chariot of fire, of which we read in the second chapter of the Second Book of Kings, is usually supposed to have served as a miraculous proof of the fact that the faithful servants of Jehovah were to be rewarded with a life in the heavens. The author of this book is not known, and can hardly be guessed at with any degree of plausibility. It was unquestionably written, or rather compiled, a long time—probably several hundred years—after the prophets whose wonderful adventures it recounts had passed away. The internal evidence is sufficient, both in quality and quantity, to demonstrate that the book is for the most part a collection of traditions. This characteristic applies with particular force to the ascension of Elijah. But grant the literal truth of the account: it will not prove the point in support of which it is advanced, because it does not purport to have been done as a revelation of the doctrine in question, nor did it in any way answer the purpose of such a revelation. So far from this, in fact, it does not seem even to have suggested the bare idea of another state of existence in a single instance. For when Elisha returned without Elijah, and told the sons of the prophets at Jericho that his master had gone up in a chariot of fire,—which event they knew beforehand was going to happen,—they, instead of asking the particulars or exulting over the revelation of a life in heaven, calmly said to him, "Behold, there be with thy servants fifty sons of strength: let them go, we pray thee, and seek for Elijah, lest peradventure a whirlwind, the blast of the Lord, hath caught him up and cast him upon one of the mountains or into one of the valleys. And he said, Ye shall not send. But when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send." This is all that is told us. Had it occurred as is stated, it would not so easily have passed from notice, but mighty inferences, never to be forgotten, would have been drawn from it at once. The story as it stands reminds one of the closing scene in the career of Romulus, speaking of whom the historians say, "In the thirty-seventh year of his reign, while he was reviewing an army, a tempest arose, in the midst of which he was suddenly snatched from the eyes of men. Hence some thought he was killed by the senators, others, that he was borne aloft to the gods."[2] If the ascension of Elijah to heaven in a chariot of fire did really take place, and if the books held by the Jews as inspired and sacred contained a history of it at the time of our Savior, it is certainly singular that neither he nor any of the apostles allude to it in connection with the subject of a future life.

The miracles performed by Elijah and by Elisha in restoring the dead children to life—related in the seventeenth chapter of the First Book of Kings and in the fourth chapter of the Second Book—are often cited in proof of the position that the doctrine of immortality is revealed in the

[2] Livy, i. 16; Dion. Hal. ii. 56.

Old Testament. The narration of these events is found in a record of unknown authorship. The mode in which the miracles were effected, if they were miracles,—the prophet measuring himself upon the child, his eyes upon his eyes, his mouth upon his mouth, his hands upon his hands, and in one case the child sneezing seven times,—looks dubious. The two accounts so closely resemble each other as to cast still greater suspicion upon both. In addition to these considerations, and even fully granting the reality of the miracles, they do not touch the real controversy,—namely, whether the Hebrew Scriptures contain the revealed doctrine of a conscious immortality or of a future retribution. The prophet said, "O Lord my God, let this child's soul, I pray thee, come into his inward parts again." "And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived." Now, the most this can show is that the child's soul was then existing in a separate state. It does not prove that the soul was immortal, nor that it was experiencing retribution, nor even that it was conscious. And we do not deny that the ancient Jews believed that the spirits of the dead retained a nerveless, shadowy being in the solemn vaults of the under-world. The Hebrew word rendered *soul* in the text is susceptible of three meanings: first, the *shade*, which, upon the dissolution of the body, is gathered to its fathers in the great subterranean congregation; second, the *breath* of a person, used as synonymous with his life; third, a part of the vital breath of God, which the Hebrews regarded as the source of the *life* of all creatures, and the withdrawing of which they supposed was the cause of death. It is clear that neither of these meanings can prove any thing in regard to the real point at issue,—that is, concerning a future life of rewards and punishments.

One of the strongest arguments brought to support the proposition which we are combating—at least, so considered by nearly all the Rabbins, and by not a few modern critics—is the account of the vivification of the dead recorded in the thirty-seventh chapter of the Book of Ezekiel. The prophet "was carried in the spirit of Jehovah"—that is, mentally, in a prophetic ecstasy—into a valley full of dry bones. "The bones came together, the flesh grew on them, the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceeding great army." It should first be observed that this account is not given as an actual occurrence, but, after the manner of Ezekiel, as a prophetic vision meant to symbolize something. Now, of what was it intended as the symbol?—a doctrine, or a coming event?—a general truth to enlighten and guide uncertain men, or an approaching deliverance to console and encourage the desponding Jews? It is fair to let the prophet be his own interpreter, without aid from the glosses of prejudiced theorizers. It must be borne in mind that at this time the prophet and his countrymen were bearing the grievous burden of bondage in a foreign nation. "And Jehovah said to me, Son of man, these bones denote the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off."

This plainly denotes their present suffering in the Babylonish captivity, and their despair of being delivered from it. "Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people, and bring you into the land of Israel." That is, I will rescue you from your slavery and restore you to freedom in your own land. The dry bones and their subsequent vivification, therefore, clearly symbolize the misery of the Israelites and their speedy restoration to happiness. Death is frequently used in a figurative sense to denote misery, and life to signify happiness. But those who maintain that the doctrine of the resurrection is taught as a revealed truth in the Hebrew Scriptures are not willing to let this passage pass so easily. Mr. Barnes says, "The illustration proves that the doctrine was one with which the people were familiar." Jerome states the argument more fully, thus:—"A similitude drawn from the resurrection, to foreshadow the restoration of the people of Israel, would never have been employed unless the resurrection itself were believed to be a fact of future occurrence; for no one thinks of confirming what is uncertain by what has no existence."

It is not difficult to reply to these objections with convincing force. First, the vision was not used as proof or confirmation, but as symbol and prophecy. Secondly, the use of any thing as an illustration does by no means imply that it is commonly believed as a fact. For instance, we are told in the ninth chapter of the Book of Judges that Jotham related an allegory to the people as an illustration of their conduct in choosing a king, saying, "The trees once on a time went forth to anoint a king over them; and they said to the olive-tree, Come thou and reign over us;"—and so on. Does it follow that at that time it was a common belief that the trees actually went forth occasionally to choose them a king? Thirdly, if a given thing is generally believed as a fact, a person who uses it expressly as a symbol, of course does not thereby give his sanction to it as a fact. And if a belief in the resurrection of the dead was generally entertained at the time of the prophet, its origin is not implied, and it does not follow that it was a doctrine of revelation, or even a true doctrine. Finally, there is one consideration which shows conclusively that this vision was never intended to typify the resurrection; namely, that it has nothing corresponding to the most essential part of that doctrine. When the bones have come together and are covered with flesh, God does not call up the departed spirits of these bodies from Sheol, does not bring back the vanished lives to animate their former tabernacles, now miraculously renewed. No: he but breathes on them with his vivifying breath, and straightway they live and move. This is not a resurrection, but a new creation. The common idea of a bodily restoration implies—and, that any just retribution be compatible with it, it necessarily implies—the vivification of the dead frame, not by the introduction of new life, but by the reinstalment of the very same life or spirit, the identical consciousness that before ani-

mated it. Such is not represented as being the case in Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones. That vision had no reference to the future state.

In this connection, the revelation made by the angel in his prophecy, recorded in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Daniel, concerning the things which should happen in the Messianic times, must not be passed without notice. It reads as follows:—"And many of the sleepers of the dust of the ground shall awake, those to life everlasting, and these to shame, to contempt everlasting. And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." No one can deny that a judgment, in which reward and punishment shall be distributed according to merit, is here clearly foretold. The meaning of the text, taken with the connection, is, that when the Messiah appears and establishes his kingdom the righteous shall enjoy a bodily resurrection upon the earth to honor and happiness, but the wicked shall be left below in darkness and death.[3] This seems to imply, fairly enough, that until the advent of the Messiah none of the dead existed consciously in a state of retribution. The doctrine of the passage, as is well known, was held by some of the Jews at the beginning of the Christian era, and, less distinctly, for about two centuries previous. Before that time no traces of it can be found in their history. Now, had a doctrine of such intense interest and of such vast importance as this been a matter of revelation, it seems hardly possible that it should have been confined to one brief and solitary text, that it should have flashed up for a single moment so brilliantly, and then vanished for three or four centuries in utter darkness. Furthermore, nearly one-half of the Book of Daniel is written in the Chaldee tongue, and the other half in the Hebrew,—indicating that it had two authors, who wrote their respective portions at different periods. Its critical and minute details of events are history rather than prophecy. The greater part of the book was undoubtedly written as late as about a hundred and sixty years before Christ, long after the awful simplicity and solitude of the original Hebrew theology had been marred and corrupted by an intermixture of the doctrines of those heathen nations with whom the Jews had been often brought in contact. Such being the facts in the case, the text is evidently without force to prove a divine revelation of the doctrine it teaches.

In the twenty-second chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, Jesus says to the Sadducees, "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." The passage to which reference is made is written in the third chapter of the Book of Exodus. In order to ascertain the force of the Savior's argument, the extent of meaning

[3] Wood, The Last Things, p. 45.

it had in his mind, and the amount of knowledge attributed by it to Moses, it will be necessary to determine first the definite purpose he had in view in his reply to the Sadducees, and how he proposed to accomplish it. We shall find that the use he made of the text does not imply that Moses had the slightest idea of any sort of future life for man, much less of an immortal life of blessedness for the good and of suffering for the bad. We should suppose, beforehand, that such would be the case, since upon examining the declaration cited, with its context, we find it to be simply a statement made by Jehovah explaining who he was,—that he was the ancient national guardian of the Jews, the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This does not seem to contain the most distant allusion to the immortality of man, or to have suggested any such thought to the mind of Moses. It should be distinctly understood from the outset that Jesus did not quote this passage from the Pentateuch as proving any thing of itself, or as enabling him to prove any thing by it directly, but as being of acknowledged authority to the Sadducees themselves, *to form the basis of a process of reasoning.* The purpose he had in view, plainly, was to convince the Sadducees either of the possibility or of the actuality of the resurrection of the dead:—its possibility, if we assume that by resurrection he meant the Jewish doctrine of a material restoration, the reunion of soul and body; its actuality, if we suppose he meant the conscious immortality of the soul separate from the body. If the resurrection was physical, Christ demonstrates to the Sadducees its possibility, by refuting the false notion upon which they based their denial of it. They said, The resurrection of the body is impossible, because the principle of life, the consciousness, has utterly perished, and the body cannot live alone. He replied, It is possible, because the soul has an existence separate from the body, and, consequently, may be reunited to it. You admit that Jehovah said, after they were dead, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: but he is the God of the living, and not of the dead, for all live unto him. You must confess this. The soul, then, survives the body, and a resurrection is possible. It will be seen that this implies nothing concerning the nature or duration of the separate existence, but merely the fact of it. But, if Christ meant by the resurrection of the dead—as we think he did—the introduction of the disembodied and conscious soul into a state of eternal blessedness, the Sadducees denied its reality by maintaining that no such thing as a soul existed after bodily dissolution. He then proved to them its reality in the following manner. You believe—for Moses, to whose authority you implicitly bow, relates it—that God said, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," and this, long after they died. But evidently he cannot be said to be the God of that which does not exist: therefore their souls must have been still alive. And if Jehovah was emphatically their God, their friend, of course he will show them his loving-kindness. They are, then, in a conscious state of blessedness. The Savior does not imply that God said so much in substance,

nor that Moses intended to teach, or even knew, any thing like it, but that, by adding to the passage cited a premise of his own, which his hearers granted to be true, he could deduce so much from it by a train of new and unanswerable reasoning. His opponents were compelled to admit the legitimacy of his argument, and, impressed by its surpassing beauty and force, were silenced, if not convinced. The credit of this cogent proof of human immortality, namely, that God's love for man is a pledge and warrant of his eternal blessedness—a proof whose originality and significance set it far beyond all parallel—is due to the dim gropings of no Hebrew prophet, but to the inspired insight of the great Founder of Christianity.

The various passages yet unnoticed which purport to have been uttered by Jehovah or at his command, and which are urged to show that the reality of a retributive life after death is a revealed doctrine of the Old Testament, will be found, upon critical examination, either to owe their entire relevant force to mistranslation, or to be fairly refuted by the reasonings already advanced. Professor Stuart admits that he finds only one consideration to show that Moses had any idea of a future retribution; and that is, that the Egyptians expressly believed it; and he is not able to comprehend how Moses, who dwelt so long among them, should be ignorant of it.[4] The reasoning is obviously inconsequential. It is not certain that the Egyptians held this doctrine in the time of Moses: it may have prevailed among them before or after, and not during, that period. If they believed it at that time, it may have been an esoteric doctrine, with which he did not become acquainted. If they believed it, and he knew it, he might have classed it with other heathen doctrines, and supposed it false. And, even if he himself believed it, he might possibly not have inculcated it upon the Israelites; and the question is, what he did actually teach, not what he knew.

The opinions of the Jews at the time of the Savior have no bearing upon the point in hand, because they were acquired at a later period than that of the writing of the records we are now considering. They were formed, and gradually grew in consistency and favor, either by the natural progress of thought among the Jews themselves, or, more probably, by a blending of the intimations of the Hebrew Scriptures with Gentile speculations,—the doctrines of the Egyptians, Hindus, and Persians. We leave this portion of the subject, then, with the following proposition. In the canonic books of the Old Dispensation there is not a single genuine text, claiming to come from God, which teaches explicitly any doctrine whatever of a life beyond the grave. That doctrine as it existed among the Jews was no part of their pure religion, but was a part of their philosophy. It did not, as they held it, imply any thing like our present idea of the immortality of the soul reaping in the spiritual world what it has sowed in the physical. It simply declared

[4] Exegetical Essays, (Andover, 1830,) p. 108.

the existence of human ghosts amidst unbroken gloom and stillness in the cavernous depths of the earth, without reward, without punishment, without employment, scarcely with consciousness,—as will immediately appear.

We proceed to the second general division of the subject. What does the Old Testament, apart from the revelation claimed to be contained in it, and regarding only those portions of it which are confessedly a collection of the poetry, history, and philosophy of the Hebrews, intimate concerning a future state of existence? Examining these writings with an unbiassed mind, we discover that in different portions of them there are large variations and opposition of opinion. In some books we trace an undoubting belief in certain rude notions of the future condition of souls; in other books we encounter unqualified denials of every such thought. "Man lieth down and riseth not," sighs the despairing Job. "The dead cannot praise God, neither any that go down into darkness," wails the repining Psalmist. "All go to one place," and "the dead know not any thing," asserts the disbelieving Preacher. These inconsistencies we shall not stop to point out and comment upon. They are immaterial to our present purpose, which is to bring together, in their general agreement, the sum and substance of the Hebrew ideas on this subject.

The separate existence of the soul is necessarily implied by the distinction the Hebrews made between the grave, or sepulchre, and the under-world, or abode of shades. The Hebrew words *bor* and *keber* mean simply the narrow place in which the dead body is buried; while *Sheol* represents an immense cavern in the interior of the earth where the ghosts of the deceased are assembled. When the patriarch was told that his son Joseph was slain by wild beasts, he cried aloud, in bitter sorrow, "I will go down to Sheol unto my son, mourning." He did not expect to meet Joseph in the grave; for he supposed his body torn in pieces and scattered in the wilderness, not laid in the family tomb. The dead are said to be "gathered to their people," or to "sleep with their fathers," and this whether they are interred in the same place or in a remote region. It is written, "Abraham gave up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people," notwithstanding his body was laid in a cave in the field of Machpelah, close by Hebron, while his people were buried in Chaldea and Mesopotamia. "Isaac gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people;" and then we read, as if it were done afterwards, "His sons, Jacob and Esau, buried him." These instances might be multiplied. They prove that "to be gathered unto one's fathers" means to descend into Sheol and join there the hosts of the departed. A belief in the separate existence of the soul is also involved in the belief in necromancy, or divination, the prevalence of which is shown by the stern laws against those who engaged in its unhallowed rites, and by the history of the witch of Endor. She, it is said, by magical spells evoked the shade of old Samuel from below. It must

have been the spirit of the prophet that was supposed to rise; for his body was buried at Ramah, more than sixty miles from Endor. The faith of the Hebrews in the separate existence of the soul is shown, furthermore, by the fact that the language they employed expresses, in every instance, the distinction of body and spirit. They had particular words appropriated to each. "As thy soul liveth," is a Hebrew oath. "With my spirit within me will I seek thee early." "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body:" the figure here represents the soul in the body as a sword in a sheath. "Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the under-world, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth;" that is, the soul, expelled from its case of clay by the murderer's weapon, flees into Sheol and leaves its *exuvia* at the entrance. "Thy voice shall be as that of a spirit out of the ground:" the word *aov* here used signifies the shade evoked by a necromancer from the region of death, which was imagined to speak in a feeble whisper.

The term *rephaim* is used to denote the *manes* of the departed. The etymology of the word, as well as its use, makes it mean the weak, the relaxed. "I am counted as them that go down into the under-world; I am as a man that hath no strength." This faint, powerless condition accords with the idea that they were destitute of flesh, blood, and animal life,—mere *umbræ*. These ghosts are described as being nearly as destitute of sensation as they are of strength. They are called "the inhabitants of the land of stillness." They exist in an inactive, partially-torpid state, with a dreamy consciousness of past and present, neither suffering nor enjoying, and seldom moving. Herder says of the Hebrews, "The sad and mournful images of their ghostly realm disturbed them, and were too much for their self-possession." Respecting these images, he adds, "Their voluntary force and energy were destroyed. They were feeble as a shade, without distinction of members, as a nerveless breath. They wandered and flitted in the dark nether world." This "wandering and flitting," however, is rather the spirit of Herder's poetry than of that of the Hebrews; for the whole tenor and drift of the representations in the Old Testament show that the state of disembodied souls is deep quietude. Freed from bondage, pain, toil, and care, they repose in silence. The ghost summoned from beneath by the witch of Endor said, "Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?" It was, indeed, in a dismal abode that they took their long quiet; but then it was in a place "where the wicked ceased from troubling and the weary were at rest."

Those passages which attribute active employments to the dwellers in the under-world are specimens of poetic license, as the context always shows. When Job says, "Before Jehovah the shades beneath tremble," he likewise declares, "The pillars of heaven tremble and are confounded at his rebuke." When Isaiah breaks forth in that stirring lyric to the King of Babylon,—

"The under-world is in commotion on account of thee,
To meet thee at thy coming;
It stirreth up before thee the shades, all the mighty of the earth;
It arouseth from their thrones all the kings of the nations;
They all accost thee, and say,
Art thou too become weak as we?"—

he also exclaims, in the same connection,—

"Even the cypress-trees exult over thee,
And the cedars of Lebanon, saying,
Since thou art fallen,
No man cometh up to cut us down."

The activity thus vividly described is evidently a mere figure of speech: so is it in the other instances which picture the *rephaim* as employed and in motion. "Why," complainingly sighed the afflicted patriarch,—"why died I not at my birth? For now should I lie down and be quiet; I should slumber; I should then be at rest." And the wise man says, in his preaching, "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol." What has already been said is sufficient to establish the fact that the Hebrews had an idea that the souls of men left their bodies at death and existed as dim shadows, in a state of undisturbed repose, in the bowels of the earth.

Sheol is directly derived from a Hebrew word, signifying, first, *to dig* or *excavate*. It means, therefore, a cavity, or empty subterranean place. Its derivation is usually connected, however, with the secondary meaning of the Hebrew word referred to, namely, *to ask*, *to desire*, from the notion of demanding, since rapacious Orcus lays claim unsparingly to all; or, as others have fancifully construed it, the object of universal inquiry, the unknown mansion concerning which all are anxiously inquisitive. The place is conceived on an immense scale, shrouded in accompaniments of gloomy grandeur and peculiar awe:—an enormous cavern in the earth, filled with night; a stupendous hollow kingdom, to which are poetically attributed valleys and gates, and in which are congregated the slumberous and shadowy hosts of the *rephaim*, never able to go out of it again forever. Its awful stillness is unbroken by noise. Its thick darkness is uncheered by light. It stretches far down under the ground. It is wonderfully deep. In language that reminds one of Milton's description of hell, where was

"No light, but rather darkness visible,"

Job describes it as "the land of darkness, like the blackness of death-shade, where is no order, and where the light is as darkness." The following passages, selected almost at random, will show the ideas entertained of the place, and confirm and illustrate the foregoing statements. "But he considers not that in the valleys of Sheol are her guests." "Now shall I go down into the gates of Sheol." "The ground clave asunder, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all their men, and all their goods: they and all that appertained to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed

upon them." Its depth is contrasted with the height of the sky. "Though they dig into Sheol, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down." It is the destination of all; for, though the Hebrews believed in a world of glory above the solid ceiling of the dome of day, where Jehovah and the angels dwelt, there was no promise, hope, or hint that any man could ever go there. The dirge-like burden of their poetry was literally these words:—"What man is he that liveth and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his spirit from the hand of Sheol?" The old Hebrew graves were crypts, wide, deep holes, like the habitations of the troglodytes. In these subterranean caves they laid the dead down; and so the Grave became the mother of Sheol, a rendezvous of the fathers, a realm of the dead, full of eternal ghost-life.

This under-world is dreary and altogether undesirable, save as an escape from extreme anguish. But it is not a place of retribution. Jahn says, "That, in the belief of the ancient Hebrews, there were different situations in Sheol for the good and the bad, cannot be proved."[5] The sudden termination of the present life is the judgment the Old Testament threatens upon sinners; its happy prolongation is the reward it promises to the righteous. Texts that prove this might be quoted in numbers from almost every page. "The wicked shall be turned into Sheol, and all the nations that forget God,"—not to be punished there, but as a punishment. It is true, the good and the bad alike pass into that gloomy land; but the former go down tranquilly in a good old age and full of days, as a shock of corn fully ripe cometh in its season, while the latter are suddenly hurried there by an untimely and miserable fate. The man that loves the Lord shall have length of days; the unjust, though for a moment he flourishes, yet the wind bloweth, and where is he?

We shall perhaps gain a more clear and adequate knowledge of the ideas the Hebrews had of the soul and of its fate, by marking the different meanings of the words they used to denote it. *Neshamah*, primarily meaning breath or airy effluence, next expresses the Spirit of God as imparting life and force, wisdom and love; also the spirit of man as its emanation, creation, or sustained object. The citation of a few texts in which the word occurs will set this in a full light. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the spirit of existence, and man became a conscious being." "It is the divine spirit of man, even the inspiration of the Almighty, that giveth him understanding." "The Spirit of God made me, and his breath gave me life."

Ruah signifies, originally, a breathing or blowing. Two other meanings are directly connected with this. First, the vital spirit, the principle of life as manifested in the breath of the mouth and nostrils.

[5] Biblical Archæology, sect. 314.

"And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh in whose nostrils was the breath of life." Second, the wind, the motions of the air, which the Hebrews supposed caused by the breath of God. "By the blast of thine anger the waters were gathered on an heap." "The channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils." So they regarded the thunder as his voice. "The voice of Jehovah cutteth out the fiery lightnings," and "shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh." This word is also frequently placed for the rational spirit of man, the seat of intellect and feeling. It is likewise sometimes representative of the character and disposition of men, whether good or bad. Hosea speaks of "a spirit of vile lust." In the Second Book of Chronicles we read, "There came out a spirit, and stood before Jehovah, and said, I will entice King Ahab to his destruction. I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." Belshazzar says to Daniel, "I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee." Finally, it is applied to Jehovah, signifying the divine spirit, or power, by which all animate creatures live, the universe is filled with motion, all extraordinary gifts of skill, genius, strength, or virtue are bestowed, and men incited to forsake evil and walk in the paths of truth and piety. "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth; thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust." "Jehovah will be a spirit of justice in them that sit to administer judgment." It seems to be implied that the life of man, having emanated from the spirit, is to be again absorbed in it, when it is said, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

Nephesh is but partially a synonym for the word whose significations we have just considered. The different senses it bears are strangely interchanged and confounded in King James's version. Its first meaning is breath, the breathing of a living being. Next it means the vital spirit, the indwelling life of the body. "If any mischief follow, thou shalt take life for life." The most adequate rendering of it would be, in a great majority of instances, by the term *life*. "In jeopardy of his life [not *soul*] hath Adonijah spoken this." It sometimes represents the intelligent soul or mind, the subject of knowledge and desire. "My soul knoweth right well."

Lev also, or the heart, is often used—more frequently perhaps than any other term—as meaning the vital principle, and the seat of consciousness, intellect, will, and affection. Jehovah said to Solomon, in answer to his prayer, "Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart." The later Jews speculated much, with many cabalistic refinements, on these different words. They said many persons were supplied with a Nephesh without a Ruah, much more without a Neshamah. They declared that the Nephesh (Psyche) was the soul of the body, the Ruah (Pneuma) the soul of the Nephesh, and the

Neshamah (Nous) the soul of the Ruah. Some of the Rabbins assert that the destination of the Nephesh, when the body dies, is Sheol; of the Ruah, the air; and of the Neshamah, heaven.[6]

The Hebrews used all those words in speaking of brutes, to denote their sensitive existence, that they did in reference to men. They held that life was in every instance an emission, or breath, from the Spirit of God. But they do not intimate of brutes, as they do of men, that they have surviving shades. The author of the Book of Ecclesiastes, however, bluntly declares that "all have one breath, and all go to one place, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast." As far as the words used to express existence, soul, or mind, legitimate any inference, it would seem to be, either that the essential life is poured out at death as so much air, or else that it is received again by God,—in both cases implying naturally, though not of philosophic necessity, the close of conscious, individual existence. But the examination we have made of their real opinions shows that, however obviously this conclusion might flow from their pneumatology, it was not the expectation they cherished. They believed there was a dismal empire in the earth where the *rephaim*, or ghosts of the dead, reposed forever in a state of semi-sleep.

> "It is a land of shadows: yea, the land
> Itself is but a shadow, and the race
> That dwell therein are voices, forms of forms,
> And echoes of themselves."

That the Hebrews, during the time covered by their sacred records, had no conception of a retributive life beyond the present, knew nothing of a blessed immortality, is shown by two conclusive arguments, in addition to the positive demonstration afforded by the views which, as we have seen, they did actually hold in regard to the future lot of man. First, they were puzzled, they were troubled and distressed, by the moral phenomena of the present life,—the misfortunes of the righteous, the prosperity of the wicked. Read the Book of Ecclesiastes, the Book of Job, some of the Psalms. Had they been acquainted with future reward and punishment, they could easily have solved these problems to their satisfaction. Secondly, they regarded life as the one blessing, death as the one evil. Something of sadness, we may suppose, was in the wise man's tones when he said, "A living dog is better than a dead lion." Obey Jehovah's laws, that thy days may be long in the land he giveth thee; the wicked shall not live out half his days: such is the burden of the Old Testament. It was reserved for a later age to see life and immortality brought to light, and for the disciples of a clearer faith to feel that death is gain.

There are many passages in the Hebrew Scriptures generally supposed —and really appearing, upon a slight examination, not afterwards—to teach doctrines different from those here stated. We will give two

[6] Tractatus de Anima a R. Moscheh Korduero. In Kabbala Denudata, tom. i. pars ii.

examples in a condensed form. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol: . . . at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." This text, properly translated and explained, means, Thou wilt not leave me to misfortune and untimely death: . . . in thy royal favor is prosperity and length of days. "I know that my Redeemer liveth: . . . in my flesh I shall see God." The genuine meaning of this triumphant exclamation of faith is, I know that God is the Vindicator of the upright, and that he will yet justify me before I die. A particular examination of the remaining passages of this character with which erroneous conceptions are generally connected would show, first, that in nearly every case these passages are not accurately translated; secondly, that they may be satisfactorily interpreted as referring merely to this life, and cannot by a sound exegesis be explained otherwise; thirdly, that the meaning usually ascribed to them is inconsistent with the whole general tenor, and with numberless positive and explicit statements, of the books in which they are found; fourthly, that if there are, as there dubiously seem to be in some of the Psalms, texts implying the ascent of souls after death to a heavenly life,—for example, "Thou shalt guide me with thy countenance, and afterward receive me to glory,"—they were the product of a late period, and reflect a faith not native to the Hebrews, but first known to them after their intercourse with the Persians.

Christians reject the allegorizing of the Jews, and yet traditionally accept, on their authority, doctrines which can be deduced from their Scriptures in no other way than by the absurd hypothesis of a double or mystic sense. For example, scores of Christian authors have taught the dogma of a general resurrection of the dead, deducing it from such passages as God's sentence upon Adam:—"From the dust wast thou taken, and unto the dust shalt thou return;" as Joel's patriotic picture of the Jews victorious in battle, and of the vanquished heathen gathered in the valley of Jehoshaphat to witness their installation as rulers of the earth; and as the declaration of the God of battles:—"I am he that kills and that makes alive, that wounds and that heals." And they maintain that the doctrine of immortality is inculcated in such texts as these:—when Moses asks to see God, and the reply is, "No man can see me and live;" when Bathsheba bows and says, "Let my lord King David live forever;" and when the sacred poet praises God, saying, "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." Such interpretations of Scripture are lamentable in the extreme; their context shows them to be absurd. The meaning is forced into the words, not derived from them.

Such as we have now seen were the ancient Hebrew ideas of the future state. To those who received them the life to come was cheerless, offering no attraction save that of peace to the weary sufferer. On the other hand, it had no terror save the natural revulsion of the human heart from everlasting darkness, silence, and dreams. In view of deliverance from so dreary a fate, by translation through Jesus Christ to the splen-

dors of the world above the firmament, there are many exultations in the Epistles of Paul, and in other portions of the New Testament.

The Hebrew views of the soul and its destiny, as discerned through the intimations of their Scriptures are very nearly what, from a fair consideration of the case, we should suppose they would be, agreeing in the main with the natural speculations of other early nations upon the same subject. These opinions underwent but little alteration until a century or a century and a half before the dawn of the Christian era. This is shown by the phraseology of the Septuagint version of the Pentateuch, and by the allusions in the so-called Apocryphal books. In these, so far as there are any relevant statements or implications, they are of the same character as those which we have explained from the more ancient writings. This is true, with the notable exceptions of the Wisdom of Solomon and the Second Maccabees, neither of which documents can be dated earlier than a hundred and twenty years before Christ. The former contains the doctrine of transmigration. The author says, "Being wise, I came into a body undefiled."[7] But, with the exception of this and one other passage, there is little or nothing in the book which is definite on the subject of a future life. It is difficult to tell what the author's real faith was: his words seem rather rhetorical than dogmatic. He says, "To be allied unto wisdom is immortality;" but other expressions would appear to show that by immortality he means merely a deathless posthumous fame, "leaving an eternal memorial of himself to all who shall come after him." Again he declares, "The spirit when it is gone forth returneth not; neither the soul received up cometh again." And here we find, too, the famous text, "God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world, and they that hold of his side do find it."[8] Upon the whole, it is pretty clear that the writer believed in a future life; but the details are too partially and obscurely shadowed to be drawn forth. We may, however, hazard a conjecture on the passage last quoted, especially with the help of the light cast upon it from its evident Persian origin. What is it, expressed by the term "death," which is found by the adherents of the devil distinctively? "Death" cannot here be a metaphor for an inward state of sin and woe, because it is contrasted with the plainly literal phrases, "created to be immortal," "an image of God's eternity." It cannot signify simply physical dissolution, because this is found as well by God's servants as by the devil's. Its genuine meaning is, most probably, a descent into the black kingdom of sadness and silence under the earth, while the souls of the good were "received up."

The Second Book of Maccabees with emphasis repeatedly asserts future retribution and a bodily resurrection. In the seventh chapter a full account is given of seven brothers and their mother who suffered martyr-

[7] Cap. viii. 20. [8] Cap. ii. 23, 24.

dom, firmly sustained by faith in a glorious reward for their heroic fidelity, to be reaped at the resurrection. One of them says to the tyrant by whose order he was tortured, "As for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life." Nicanor, bleeding from many horrible wounds, "plucked out his bowels and cast them upon the throng, and, calling upon the Lord of life and spirit to restore him those again, [at the day of resurrection,] he thus died."[9] Other passages in this book to the same effect it is needless to quote. The details lying latent in those we have quoted will soon be illuminated and filled out when we come to treat of the opinions of the Pharisees.[10]

There lived in Alexandria a very learned Jew named Philo, the author of voluminous writings, a zealous Israelite, but deeply imbued both with the doctrines and the spirit of Plato. He was born about twenty years before Christ, and survived him about thirty years. The weight of his character, the force of his talents, the fascinating adaptation of his peculiar philosophical speculations and of his bold and subtle allegorical expositions of Scripture to the mind of his age and of the succeeding centuries, together with the eminent literary position and renown early secured for him by a concurrence of causes, have combined to make him exert—according to the expressed convictions of the best judges, such as Lücke and Norton—a greater influence on the history of Christian opinions than any single man, with the exception of the Apostle Paul, since the days of Christ. It is important, and will be interesting, to see some explanation of his views on the subject of a future life. A synopsis of them must suffice.

Philo was a Platonic Alexandrian Jew, not a Zoroastrian Palestinian Pharisee. It was a current saying among the Christian Fathers, "*Vel Plato Philonizat, vel Philo Platonizat.*" He has little to say of the Messiah, nothing to say of the Messianic eschatology. We speak of him in this connection because he was a Jew, flourishing at the commencement of the Christian epoch, and contributing much, by his cabalistic interpretations, to lead Christians to imagine that the Old Testament contained the doctrine of a spiritual immortality connected with a system of rewards and punishments.

Three principal points include the substance of Philo's faith on the subject in hand. He rejected the notion of a resurrection of the body and held to the natural immortality of the soul. He entertained the most profound and spiritual conceptions of the intrinsically deadly nature and wretched fruits of all sin, and of the self-contained welfare and self-rewarding results of every element of virtue, in themselves, independent of time and place and regardless of external bestowments of

[9] Cap. xiv. 46.

[10] See a very able discussion of the relation between the ideas concerning immortality, resurrection, judgment, and retribution, contained in the Old Testament Apocrypha, and those in the New Testament, by Frisch, inserted in Eichhorn's Allgemeine Bibliothek der Biblischen Literatur, band iv. stück iv.

woe or joy. He also believed at the same time in contrasted localities above and below, appointed as the residences of the disembodied souls of good and of wicked men. We will quote miscellaneously various passages from him in proof and illustration of these statements:—

"Man's bodily form is made from the ground, the soul from no created thing, but from the Father of all; so that, although man was mortal as to his body, he was immortal as to his mind."[11] "Complete virtue is the tree of immortal life."[12] "Vices and crimes, rushing in through the gate of sensual pleasure, changed a happy and immortal life for a wretched and mortal one."[13] Referring to the allegory of the garden of Eden, he says, "The death threatened for eating the fruit was not natural, the separation of soul and body, but penal, the sinking of the soul in the body."[14] "Death is twofold, one of man, one of the soul. The death of man is the separation of the soul from the body; the death of the soul is the corruption of virtue and the assumption of vice."[15] "To me, death with the pious is preferable to life with the impious. For those so dying, deathless life delivers; but those so living, eternal death seizes."[16] He writes of three kinds of life, "one of which neither ascends nor cares to ascend, groping in the secret recesses of Hades and rejoicing in the most lifeless life."[17] Commenting on the promise of the Lord to Abram, that he should be buried in a good old age, Philo observes that "A polished, purified soul does not die, but emigrates: it is of an inextinguishable and deathless race, and goes to heaven, escaping the dissolution and corruption which death seems to introduce."[18] "A vile life is the true Hades, despicable and obnoxious to every sort of execration."[19] "Different regions are set apart for different things,—heaven for the good, the confines of the earth for the bad."[20] He thinks the ladder seen by Jacob in his dream "is a figure of the air, which, reaching from earth to heaven, is the house of unembodied souls, the image of a populous city having for citizens immortal souls, some of whom descend into mortal bodies, but soon return aloft, calling the body a sepulchre from which they hasten, and, on light wings seeking the lofty ether, pass eternity in sublime contemplations."[21] "The wise inherit the Olympic and heavenly region to dwell in, always studying to go above; the bad, the innermost parts of Hades, always laboring to die."[22] He literally accredits the account, in the sixteenth chapter of Numbers, of the swallowing of Korah and his company, saying, "The earth opened and took them alive into Hades."[23] "Ignorant men regard death as the end of punishments, whereas in the Divine judgment it is scarcely the beginning of them."[24] He describes the meritorious man as "fleeing to God and receiving the most intimate honor of a firm place in heaven; but the reprobate man is dragged below, down to the very lowest place, to Tartarus itself and pro-

[11] Mangey's edition of Philo's Works, vol. i. p. 32. [12] Ibid. p. 38. [13] Ibid. p. 37.
[14] Ibid. p. 65. [15] Ibid. p. 65. [16] Ibid. p. 233. [17] Ibid. p. 479.
[18] Ibid. p. 513. [19] Ibid. p. 527. [20] Ibid. p. 555. [21] Ibid. pp. 641, 642.
[22] Ibid. p. 643. [23] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 178. [24] Ibid. p. 419.

found darkness."[25] "He who is not firmly held by evil may by repentance return to virtue, as to the native land from which he has wandered. But he who suffers from incurable vice must endure its dire penalties, banished into the place of the impious until the whole of eternity."[26]

Such, then, was the substance of Philo's opinions on the theme before us, as indeed many more passages, which we have omitted as superfluous, might be cited from him to show. Man was made originally a mortal body and an immortal soul. He should have been happy and pure while in the body, and on leaving it have soared up to the realm of light and bliss on high, to join the angels. "Abraham, leaving his mortal part, was added to the people of God, enjoying immortality and made similar to the angels. For the angels are the army of God, bodiless and happy souls."[27] But, through the power of evil, all who yield to sin and vice lose that estate of bright and blessed immortality, and become discordant, wretched, despicable, and, after the dissolution of the body, are thrust down to gloom and manifold just retribution in Hades. He believed in the pre-existence, and in a limited transmigration, of souls. Here he leaves the subject, saying nothing of a resurrection or final restoration, and not speculating as to any other of the details.[28]

We pass on to speak of the Jewish sects at the time of Christ. There were three of these, cardinally differing from each other in their theories of the future fate of man. First, there were the skeptical, materialistic Sadducees, wealthy, proud, few. They openly denied the existence of any disembodied souls, avowing that men utterly perished in the grave. "The cloud faileth and passeth away: so he that goeth down to the grave doth not return."[29] We read in the Acts of the Apostles, "The Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit." At the same time they accepted the Pentateuch, only rejecting or explaining away those portions of it which relate to the separate existence of souls and to their subterranean abode. They strove to confound their opponents, the advocates of a future life, by such perplexing questions as the one they addressed to Jesus, asking, in the case of a woman who had had seven successive husbands, which one of them should be her husband in the resurrection. All that we can gather concerning the Sadducees from the New Testament is amply confirmed by Josephus, who explicitly declares, "Their doctrine is that souls die with the bodies."

The second sect was the ascetical and philosophical Essenes, of whom the various information given by Philo in his celebrated paper on the Therapeutæ agrees with the account in Josephus and with the scattered gleams in other sources. The doctrine of the Essenes on the subject of our present inquiry was much like that of Philo himself; and in some par-

[25] Mangey's edition of Philo's Works, vol. ii. p. 433. [26] Ibid. vol. i. p. 139. [27] Ibid. p. 164.

[28] See, in the Analekten of Keil and Tzschirner, band i. stück ii., an article by Dr. Schreiter, entitled Philo's Ideen über Unsterblichkeit, Auferstehung, und Vergeltung.

[29] Lightfoot in Matt. xxii. 23.

ticulars it remarkably resembles that of many Christians. They rejected the notion of the resurrection of the body, and maintained the inherent immortality of the soul. They said that "the souls of men, coming out of the most subtle and pure air, are bound up in their bodies as in so many prisons; but, being freed at death, they do rejoice, and are borne aloft where a state of happy life forever is decreed for the virtuous; but the vicious are assigned to eternal punishment in a dark, cold place."[30] Such sentiments appear to have inspired the heroic Eleazar, whose speech to his followers is reported by Josephus, when they were besieged at Masada, urging them to rush on the foe, "for death is better than life, is the only true life, leading the soul to infinite freedom and joy above."[31]

But by far the most numerous and powerful of the Jewish sects at that time, and ever since, were the eclectic, traditional, formalist Pharisees: eclectic, inasmuch as their faith was formed by a partial combination of various systems; traditional, since they allowed a more imperative sway to the authority of the Fathers, and to oral legends and precepts, than to the plain letter of Scripture; formalist, for they neglected the weightier spiritual matters of the law in a scrupulous tithing of mint, cumin, and anise-seed, a pretentious wearing of broad phylacteries, an uttering of long prayers in the streets, and the various other hypocritical priestly paraphernalia of a severe mechanical ritual.

From Josephus we learn that the Pharisees believed that the souls of the faithful—that is, of all who punctiliously observed the law of Moses and the traditions of the elders—would live again by transmigration into new bodies; but that the souls of all others, on leaving their bodies, were doomed to a place of confinement beneath, where they must abide forever. These are his words:—"The Pharisees believe that souls have an immortal strength in them, and that in the under-world they will experience rewards or punishments according as they have lived well or ill in this life. The righteous shall have power to live again, but sinners shall be detained in an everlasting prison."[32] Again, he writes, "The Pharisees say that all souls are incorruptible, but that only the souls of good men are removed into other bodies."[33] The fragment entitled "Concerning Hades," formerly attributed to Josephus, is now acknowledged on all sides to be a gross forgery. The Greek culture and philosophical tincture with which he was imbued led him to reject the doctrine of a bodily resurrection; and this is probably the reason why he makes no allusion to that doctrine in his account of the Pharisees. That such a doctrine was held among them is plain from passages in the New Testament,—passages which also shed light upon the statement actually made by Josephus. Jesus says to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." She replies, "I know that he shall rise in the resurrection, at

[30] Josephus, De Bell. lib. ii. cap. 8.
[31] Ibid. lib. vii. cap. 8.
[32] Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 1.
[33] De Bell. lib. ii. cap. 8.

the last day." Some of the Pharisees, furthermore, did not confine the privilege or penalty of transmigration, and of the resurrection, to the righteous. They once asked Jesus, "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Plainly, he could not have been born blind for his own sins unless he had known a previous life. Paul, too, says of them, in his speech at Cæsarea, "They themselves also allow that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust." This, however, is very probably an exception to their prevailing belief. Their religious intolerance, theocratic pride, hereditary national vanity, and sectarian formalism, often led them to despise and overlook the Gentile world, haughtily restricting the boon of a renewed life to the legal children of Abraham.

But the grand source now open to us of knowledge concerning the prevailing opinions of the Jews on our present subject at and subsequent to the time of Christ is the Talmud. This is a collection of the traditions of the oral law, (Mischna,) with the copious precepts and comments (Gemara) of the most learned and authoritative Rabbins. It is a wonderful monument of myths and fancies, profound speculations and ridiculous puerilities, antique legends and cabalistic subtleties, crowned and loaded with the national peculiarities. The Jews reverence it extravagantly, saying, "The Bible is salt, the Mischna pepper, the Gemara balmy spice." Rabbi Solomon ben Joseph sings, in our poet's version,—

> "The Kabbala and Talmud hear
> Than all the Prophets prize I more;
> For water is all Bible lore,
> But Mischna is pure wine."

The rambling character and barbarous dialect of this work have joined with various other causes to withhold from it far too much of the attention of Christian critics. Saving by old Lightfoot and Pocock, scarcely a contribution has ever been offered us in English from this important field. The Germans have done far better; and numerous huge volumes, the costly fruits of their toils, are standing on neglected shelves. The eschatological views derived from this source are authentically Jewish, however closely they may resemble some portion of the popular Christian conceptions upon the same subject. The correspondences between some Jewish and some Christian theological dogmas betoken the influx of an adulterated Judaism into a nascent Christianity, not the reflex of a pure Christianity upon a receptive Judaism. It is important to show this; and it appears from several considerations. In the first place, it is demonstrable, it is unquestioned, that at least the germs and outlines of the dogmas referred to were in actual existence among the Pharisees before the conflict between Christianity and Judaism arose. Secondly, in the Rabbinical writings these dogmas are most fundamental, vital, and pervading, in relation to the whole system; but in the Christian they seem subordinate and incidental, have every appearance of being ingrafts, not

outgrowths. Thirdly, in the apostolic age Judaism was a consolidated, petrified system, defended from outward influence on all sides by an invulnerable bigotry, a haughty exclusiveness; while Christianity was in a young and vigorous, an assimilating and formative, state. Fourthly, the overweening sectarian vanity and scorn of the Jews, despising, hating, and fearing the Christians, would not permit them to adopt peculiarities of belief from the latter; but the Christians were undeniably Jews in almost every thing except in asserting the Messiahship of Jesus: they claimed to be the genuine Jews, children of the law and realizers of the promise. The Jewish dogmas, therefore, descended to them as a natural lineal inheritance. Finally, in the Acts of the Apostles, the letters of Paul, and the progress of the Ebionites, (which sect included nearly all the Christians of the first century,) we can trace step by step the actual workings, in reliable history, of the process that we affirm,—namely, the assimilation of Jewish elements into the popular Christianity.

CHAPTER IX.

RABBINICAL DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

The starting-point in the Talmud on this subject is with the effects of sin upon the human race. Man was made radiant, pure, immortal, in the image of God. By sin he was obscured, defiled, burdened with mortal decay and judgment. In this representation that misery and death were an after-doom brought into the world by sin, the Rabbinical authorities strikingly agree. The testimony is irresistible. We need not quote confirmations of this statement, as every scholar in this department will accept it at once. But as to what is meant precisely by the term "death," as used in such a connection, there is no little obscurity and diversity of opinion. In all probability, some of the Pharisaical fathers—perhaps the majority of them—conceived that, if Adam had not sinned, he and his posterity would have been physically immortal, and would either have lived forever on the earth, or have been successively transferred to the home of Jehovah over the firmament. They call the devil, who is the chief accuser in the heavenly court of justice, the angel of death, by the name of "Sammael." Rabbi Reuben says, "When Sammael saw Adam sin, he immediately sought to slay him, and went to the heavenly council and clamored for justice against him, pleading thus:—'God made this decree, "In the day thou eatest of the tree thou shalt surely die." Therefore give him to me, for he is mine, and I will kill him; to this end was I created; and give me power over all his descend-

ants.' When the celestial Sanhedrim perceived that his petition was just, they decreed that it should be granted."[1] A great many expressions of kindred tenor might easily be adduced, leaving it hardly possible to doubt—as indeed we are not aware that any one does doubt—that many of the Jews literally held that sin was the sole cause of bodily dissolution. But, on the other hand, there were as certainly others who did not entertain that idea, but understood and explained the terms in which it was sometimes conveyed in a different, a partially figurative, sense. Rabbi Samuel ben David writes, "Although the first Adam had not sinned, yet death would have been; for death was created on the first day." The reference here is, as Rabbi Berechias explains, to the account in Genesis where we read that "darkness was upon the face of the deep," "by which is to be understood the angel of death, who has darkened the face of man."[2] The Talmudists generally believed also in the pre-existence of souls in heaven, and in a spiritual body investing and fitting the soul for heaven, as the present carnal body invests and fits it for the earth. Schoettgen has collected numerous illustrations in point, of which the following may serve as specimens.[3] "When the first Adam had not sinned, he was every way an angel of the Lord, perfect and spotless, and it was decreed that he should live forever like one of the celestial ministers." "The soul cannot ascend into Paradise except it be first invested with a clothing adapted to that world, as the present is for this world." These notions do not harmonize with the thought that man was originally destined for a physical eternity on this globe. All this difficulty disappears, we think, and the true metaphorical force often intended in the word "death" comes to view, through the following conception, occupying the minds of a portion of the Jewish Rabbins, as we are led to believe by the clews furnished in the close connection between the Pharisaic and the Zoroastrian eschatology, by similar hints in various parts of the New Testament, and by some quite explicit declarations in the Talmud itself, which we shall soon cite in a different connection. God at first intended that man should live for a time in pure blessedness on the earth, and then without pain should undergo a glorious change making him a perfect peer of the angels, and be translated to their lofty abode in his own presence; but, when he sinned, God gave him over to manifold suffering, and on the destruction of his body adjudged his naked soul to descend to a doleful imprisonment below the grave. The immortality meant for man was a timely ascent to heaven in a paradisal clothing, without dying. The doom brought on him by sin was the alteration of that desirable change of bodies and ascension to the supernal splendors, for a permanent disembodiment and a dreaded descent to the subterranean glooms. It is a Tal-

[1] Schoettgen, Dissertatio de Hierosolyma Coelesti, cap. iii. sect. 9.
[2] Schoettgen, Horæ Biblicæ et Talmudicæ, in Rom. v. 12, et in Johan. iii. 19.
[3] Ibid. in 2 Cor. v. 2.

mudical as much as it is a Pauline idea, that the triumphant power of the Messiah would restore what the unfortunate fall of Adam forfeited. Now, if we can show—as we think we can, and as we shall try to do in a later part of this article—that the later Jews expected the Messianic resurrection to be the prelude to an ascent into heaven, and not the beginning of a gross earthly immortality, it will powerfully confirm the theory which we have just indicated. "When," says one of the old Rabbins, "the dead in Israelitish earth are restored alive," their bodies will be "as the body of the first Adam before he sinned, and they shall all fly into the air like birds."[4]

At all events, whether the general Rabbinical belief was in the primitive destination of man to a heavenly or to an earthly immortality,—whether the "death" decreed upon him in consequence of sin was the dissolution of the body or the wretchedness of the soul,—they all agree that the banishment of souls into the realm of blackness under the grave was a part of the penalty of sin. Some of them maintained, as we think, that, had there been no sin, souls would have passed to heaven in glorified bodies; others of them maintained, as we think, that, had there been no sin, they would have lived eternally upon earth in their present bodies; but all of them agreed, it is undisputed, that in consequence of sin souls were condemned to the under-world. No man would have seen the dismal realm of the sepulchre had there not been sin. The earliest Hebrew conception was that all souls went down to a common abode, to spend eternity in dark slumber or nerveless groping. This view was first modified soon after the Persian captivity, by the expectation that there would be discrimination at the *resurrection* which the Jews had learned to look for, when the just should rise but the wicked should be left.

The next alteration of their notions on this subject was the subdivision of the under-world into Paradise and Gehenna,—a conception known among them probably as early as a century before Christ, and very prominent with them in the apostolic age. "When Rabbi Jochanan was dying, his disciples asked him, 'Light of Israel, main pillar of the right, thou strong hammer, why dost thou weep?' He answered, 'Two paths open before me, the one leading to bliss, the other to torments; and I know not which of them will be my doom.'"[5] "Paradise is separated from hell by a distance no greater than the width of a thread."[6] So, in Christ's parable of Dives and Lazarus, Abraham's bosom and hell are two divisions. "There are three doors into Gehenna: one in the wilderness, where Korah and his company were swallowed; one in the sea, where Jonah descended when he 'cried out of the belly of hell;' one in Jerusalem, for the Lord says, 'My furnace is in Jerusalem.'"[7] "The under-

[4] Schoettgen, in 1 Cor. xv. 44.
[5] Talmud, tract. Berachoth.
[6] Eisenmenger, Entdecktes Judenthum, th. ii. cap. v. s. 315.
[7] Lightfoot, in Matt. v. 22.

world is divided into palaces, each of which is so large that it would take a man three hundred years to roam over it. There are distinct apartments where the hell-punishments are inflicted. One place is so dark that its name is 'Night-of-Horrors.'"[8] "In Paradise there are certain mansions for the pious from the Gentile peoples, and for those mundane kings who have done kindness to the Israelites."[9] "The fire of Gehenna was kindled on the evening of the first Sabbath, and shall never be extinguished."[10] The Egyptians, Persians, Hindus, and Greeks, with all of whom the Jews held relations of intercourse, had, in their popular representations of the under-world of the dead, regions of peace and honor for the good, and regions of fire for the bad. The idea may have been adopted from them by the Jews, or it may have been at last developed among themselves, first by the imaginative poetical, afterwards by the literally believing, transference below of historical and local imagery and associations, such as those connected with the ingulfing of Sodom and Gomorrah in fire and sulphur, and with the loathed fires in the valley of Hinnom.

Many of the Rabbins believed in the transmigration or revolution of souls, an immemorial doctrine of the East, and developed it into the most ludicrous and marvellous details.[11] But, with the exception of those who adopted this Indian doctrine, the Rabbins supposed all departed souls to be in the under-world, some in the division of Paradise, others in that of hell. Here they fancied these souls to be longingly awaiting the advent of the Messiah. "Messiah and the patriarchs weep together in Paradise over the delay of the time of the kingdom."[12] In this quotation the Messiah is represented as being in the under-world, for the Jews expected that he would be a man, very likely some one who had already lived. For a delegation was once sent to ask Jesus, "Art thou Elias? art thou the Messiah? art thou that prophet?" Light is thus thrown upon the Rabbinical saying that "it was doubted whether the Messiah would come from the living, or the dead."[13] Borrowing some Persian modes of thinking, and adding them to their own inordinate national pride, the Rabbins soon began to fancy that the observance or non-observance of the Pharisaic ritual, and kindred particulars, must exert a great effect in determining the destination of souls and their condition in the under-world. Observe the following quotations from the Talmud. "Abraham sits at the gate of hell to see that no Israelite enters." "Circumcision is so agreeable to God, that he swore to Abraham that no one who was circumcised should descend into hell."[14] "What does Abraham to those circumcised who have sinned too much? He takes the foreskins from Gentile boys who died without circumcision, and places them on those

[8] Schröder, Satzungen und Gebräuche des Talmudisch-Rabbinischen Judenthums, s. 408.

[9] Schoettgen, in Johan. xiv. 2. [10] Nov. Test. ex Talmude, etc. illustratum a J. G. Meuschen, p. 125.

[11] Basnage, Hist. of Jews, lib. iv. cap. 30. Also, Traditions of the Rabbins, in Blackwood for April, 1833.

[12] Eisenmenger, th. ii. s. 304. [13] Lightfoot, in Matt. ii. 16. [14] Schröder, s. 332.

Jews who were circumcised but have become godless, and then kicks them into hell."[15] Hell here denotes that division in the under-world where the condemned are punished. The younger Buxtorf, in a preface to his father's "Synagoga Judaica," gives numerous specimens of Jewish representations of "the efficacy of circumcision being so great that no one who has undergone it shall go down into hell." Children can help their deceased parents out of hell by their good deeds, prayers, and offerings.[16] "Beyond all doubt," says Gfrörer, "the ancient Jewish synagogue inculcated the doctrine of supererogatory good works, the merit of which went to benefit the departed souls."[17] Here all souls were, in the under-world,—either in that part of it called Paradise, or in that named Gehenna,—according to certain conditions. But in whichever place they were, and under whatever circumstances, they were all tarrying in expectation of the advent of the Messiah.

How deeply rooted, how eagerly cherished, the Jewish belief in the approaching appearance of the Messiah was, and what a splendid group of ideas and imaginations they clustered around his reign, are well-known facts. He was to be a descendant of royal David, an inspired prophet, priest, and king, was to subdue the whole earth beneath his Jewish sceptre and establish from Jerusalem a theocratic empire of unexampled glory, holiness, and delight. In so much the consent was general and earnest; though in regard to many further details there would seem to have been an incongruous diversity of opinions. They supposed the coming of the Messiah would be preceded by ten frightful woes,[18] also by the appearance of the prophet Elias as a forerunner.[19] There are a few passages in the Rabbinical writings which, unless they were forged and interpolated by Christians at a late period, show that there were in the Jewish mind anticipations of the personal descent of the Messiah into the under-world.[20] "After this the Messiah, the son of David, came to the gates of the under-world. But when the bound, who are in Gehenna, saw the light of the Messiah, they began rejoicing to receive him, saying, 'He shall lead us up from this darkness.'" "The captives shall ascend from the under-world, Schechinah at their head."[21] Gfrörer derives the origin of the doctrine that Christ rescued souls out of the under-world, from a Jewish notion, preserved in the Talmud,[22] that the just patriarchs sometimes did it.[23] Bertholdt adduces Talmudical declarations to show that through the Messiah "God would hereafter liberate the Israelites

[15] Eisenmenger, th. ii. kap. vi. s. 340.
[16] Ibid. s. 358.
[17] Geschichte des Urchristenthums, zweit. abth. s. 186. Maimonides also asserts the doctrine of supererogatory works: see p. 237 of H. H. Bernard's Selections from the Yad Hachazakah of Maimonides.
[18] Surenhusius, Mischna, pars tertia, p. 308.
[19] Lightfoot, in Matt. xvii. 10.
[20] For a general view of the Jewish eschatology, see Gfrörer, Geschichte des Urchristenthums, kap. x.; Eisenmenger, Entdecktes Judenthum, th. ii. kap. xv.-xvii.
[21] Schoettgen, De Messia, lib. vi. cap. v. sect. 1.
[22] Eisenmenger, th. ii. ss. 343, 364.
[23] Geschichte Urchrist. kap. viii. s. 184.

from the under-world, on account of the merit of circumcision."[24] Schoettgen quotes this statement from the Sohar:—"Messia shall die, and shall remain in the state of death a time, and shall rise."[25] The so-called Fourth Book of Ezra says, in the seventh chapter, "My son, the Christ, shall die: then follow the resurrection and the judgment." Although it is clear, from various other sources, as well as from the account in John xii. 34, that there was a prevalent expectation among the Jews that "the Messiah would abide forever," it also seems quite certain that there were at the same time at least obscure presentiments, based on prophecies and traditions, that he must die,—that an important part of his mission was connected with his death. This appears from such passages as we have cited above, found in early Rabbinical writers, who would certainly be very unlikely to borrow and adapt a new idea of such a character from the Christians; and from the manner in which Jesus assumes his death to be a part of the Messianic fate and interprets the Scriptures as necessarily pointing to that effect. He charges his disciples with being "fools and blind" in not so understanding the doctrine; thus seeming to imply that it was plainly known to some. But this question—the origin of the idea of a suffering, atoning, dying Messiah—is confessedly a very nice and obscure one. The evidence, the silence, the inferences, the presumptions and doubts on the subject are such, that some of the most thorough and impartial students say they are unable to decide either way.

However the foregoing question be decided, it is admitted by all that the Jews earnestly looked for a resurrection of the dead as an accompaniment of the Messiah's coming. Whether Christ was to go down into the under-world, or to sit enthroned on Mount Zion, in either case the dead should come up and live again on earth at the blast of his summoning trumpet. Rabbi Jeremiah commanded, "When you bury me, put shoes on my feet, and give me a staff in my hand, and lay me on one side, that when the Messiah comes I may be ready."[26] Most of the Rabbins made this resurrection partial. "Whoever denies the resurrection of the dead shall have no part in it, for the very reason that he denies it."[27] Rabbi Abbu says, "A day of rain is greater than the resurrection of the dead; because the rain is for all, while the resurrection is only for the just."[28] "Sodom and Gomorrah shall not rise in the resurrection of the dead."[29] Rabbi Chebbo says, "The patriarchs so vehemently desired to be buried in the land of Israel, because those who are dead in that land shall be the first to revive and shall devour his years, [the years of the Messiah.] But for those just who are interred beyond the holy land, it is to be understood

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[24] Christologia Judæorum Jesu Apostolorumque Ætate, sect. 34, (De Descensu Messiæ ad Inferos.)
[25] De Messia, lib. vi. cap. v. sect. 2.
[26] Lightfoot, in Matt. xxvii. 52.
[27] Witsius, Dissertatio de Seculo, etc. sect. 9.
[28] Nov. Test. Illustratum, etc. a Meuschen, p. 62.
[29] Schoettgen, in Johan. vi. 39.

that God will make a passage in the earth, through which they will be rolled until they reach the land of Israel."[30] Rabbi Jochanan says, "Moses died out of the holy land, in order to show that in the same way that God will raise up Moses, so he will raise all those who observe his law." The national bigotry of the Jews reaches a pitch of extravagance in some of their views that is amusing. For instance, they declare that "one Israelitish soul is dearer and more important to God than all the souls of a whole nation of the Gentiles!" Again, they say, "When God judges the Israelites, he will stand, and make the judgment brief and mild; when he judges the Gentiles, he will sit, and make it long and severe!" They affirm that the resurrection will be effected by means of a dew; and they quote to that effect this verse from Canticles: —"I sleep, but my heart waketh; my head is filled with dew, and my locks with drops of the night." Some assert that "the resurrection will be immediately caused by God, who never gives to any one the three keys of birth, rain, and the resurrection of the dead." Others say that the power to raise and judge the dead will be delegated to the Messiah, and even go so far as to assert that the trumpet whose formidable blasts will then shake the universe is to be one of the horns of that ram which Abraham offered up instead of his son Isaac! Some confine the resurrection to faithful Jews, some extend it to the whole Jewish nation, some think all the righteous of the earth will have part in it, and some stretch its pale around all mankind alike.[31] They seem to agree that the reprobate would either be left in the wretched regions of Sheol when the just arose, or else be thrust back after the judgment, to remain there forever. It was believed that the righteous after their resurrection would never die again, but ascend to heaven. The Jews after a time, when the increase of geographical knowledge had annihilated from the earth their old Eden whence the sinful Adam was expelled, changed its location into the sky. Thither, as the later fables ran, Elijah was borne in his chariot of fire by the horses thereof. Rabbi Pinchas says, "Carefulness leads us to innocence, innocence to purity, purity to sanctity, sanctity to humility, humility to fear of sins, fear of sins to piety, piety to the holy spirit, the holy spirit to the resurrection of the dead, the resurrection of the dead to the prophet Elias."[32] The writings of the early Christian Fathers contain many allusions to this blessed habitation of saints above the clouds. It is illustrated in the following quaint Rabbinical narrative. Rabbi Jehosha ben Levi once besought the angel of death to take him up, ere he died, to catch a glimpse of Paradise. Standing on the wall, he suddenly snatched the angel's sword and sprang over, swearing by Almighty God that he would not come out. Death was not allowed to enter Paradise, and the son of Levi did not restore

[30] Schoettgen, De Messia, lib. vi. cap. vi. sect. 27.

[31] See an able dissertation on Jewish Notions of the Resurrection of the Dead, prefixed to Humphrey's Translation of Athenagoras on the Resurrection.

[32] Surenhusius, Mischna, pars tertia, p. 309.

his sword until he had promised to be more gentle towards the dying.[33] The righteous were never to return to the dust, but "at the end of the thousand years,"—the duration of the Messiah's earthly reign,—"when the Lord is lifted up, God shall fit wings to the just, like the wings of eagles."[34] In a word, the Messiah and his redeemed ones would ascend into heaven to the right hand of God. So Paul, who said, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee," declares that when the dead have risen "we shall be caught up in the clouds to be forever with the Lord."

We forbear to notice a thousand curious details of speculation and fancy in which individual Rabbins indulged; for instance, their common notion concerning the bone *luz*, the single bone which, withstanding dissolution, shall form the nucleus of the resurrection-body. It was a prevalent belief with them that the resurrection would take place in the valley of Jehoshaphat, in proof of which they quote this text from Joel:—"Let the heathen be wakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge the nations around." To this day, wherever scattered abroad, faithful Jews cling to the expectation of the Messiah's coming, and associate with his day the resurrection of the dead.[35] The statement in the Song of Solomon, "The king is held in the galleries," means, says a Rabbinical book, "that the Messiah is detained in Paradise, fettered by a woman's hair!" Every day, throughout the world, every consistent Israelite repeats the words of Moses Maimonides, the peerless Rabbi, of whom it is a proverb that "from Moses to Moses there arose not a Moses:"—"I believe with a perfect faith that the Messiah will come, and though he delays, nevertheless, I will always expect him till he come." Then shall glory cover the living, and the risen, children of Israel, and confusion fall on their Gentile foes. In almost every inch of the beautiful valley of Jehoshaphat a Jew has been buried. All over the slopes of the hill-sides around lie the thick-clustering sepulchral slabs, showing how eagerly the chosen people seek to sleep in the very spot where the first rising of the dead shall be. Entranced and mute,

> "In old Jehoshaphat's valley, they
> Of Israel think the assembled world
> Will stand upon that awful day,
> When the Ark's light, aloft unfurl'd,
> Among the opening clouds shall shine,
> Divinity's own radiant shrine."

Any one familiar with the Persian theology[36] will at once notice a striking resemblance between many of its dogmas and those, first, of Pharisaism, secondly; of the popular Christianity. Some examination of this subject properly belongs here. There is, then, as is well known, a

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[33] Schröder, s. 419. [34] Schoettgen, de Messia, lib. vi. cap. vi. sect. 23; cap. vii. ss. 3, 4.

[35] John Allen, Modern Judaism, ch. vi. and xv.

[36] See Abriss der Religion Zoroasters nach den Zendbüchern, von Abbé Foucher, in Kleuker's Zend-Avesta, band i. zweit. anhang, ss. 328-342.

circle or group of ideas, particularly pertaining to eschatology, which appear in the later Jewish writings, and remarkably correspond to those held by the Parsees, the followers of Zoroaster. The same notions also reappear in the early Christianity as popularly understood. We will specify some of these correspondences. The doctrine of angels, received by the Jews,—their names, offices, rank, and destiny,—was borrowed and formed by them during and just after the Babylonish captivity, and is much like that which they found among their enslavers.[37] The guardian angels appointed over nations, spoken of by Daniel, are Persian. The angels called in the Apocalypse "the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth," in Zechariah "the seven eyes of God which run to and fro through all the earth," are the Amschaspands of the Persian faith. The wars of the angels are described as minutely by the old Persians as by Milton. The Zend-Avesta pictures Ahriman pregnant with Death, (*die alte höllenschlange, todschwangere Ahriman,*) as Milton describes the womb of Sin bearing that fatal monster. The Gahs, or second order of angels, the Persians supposed,[38] were employed in preparing clothing and laying it up in heaven to clothe the righteous after the resurrection,—a fancy frequent among the Rabbins and repeatedly alluded to in the New Testament. With both the Persians and the Jews, all our race—both sexes —sprang from one original man. With both, the first pair were seduced and ruined by means of fruit which the devil gave to them. With both, there was a belief in demoniacal possessions, devils or bad spirits entering human bodies. With both, there was the expectation of a great Deliverer,—the Persian Sosiosch, the Jewish Messiah,—whose coming would be preceded by fearful woes, who would triumph over all evil, raise the dead, judge the world, separate the righteous and the wicked, purge the earth with fire, and install a reign of glorious blessedness.[39] "The conception of an under-world," says Dr. Röth, "was known centuries before Zoroaster; but probably he was the first to add to the old belief the idea that the under-world was a place of purification, wherein souls were purged from all traces of sin."[40] Of this belief in a subterranean purgatory there are numerous unmistakable evidences and examples in the Rabbinical writings.[41]

These notions and others the Pharisees early adopted, and wrought into the texture of what they called the "Oral Law," that body of verbally-transmitted legends, precepts, and dogmas, afterwards written out and collected in the Mischna, to which Christ repeatedly alluded with such severity, saying, "Ye by your traditions make the commandments of God of none effect." To some doctrines of kindred character

[37] Schröder, p. 385. [38] Yaçna, Hâ 411. Kleuker, zweit. auf. s. 198.

[39] Die Heiligen Schriften der Parsen, von Dr. F. Spiegel, kap. ii. ss. 32–37. Studien und Kritiken, 1836, band i., "Ist die Lehre von der Auferstehung des Leibes nicht ein alt-Persische Lehre?" F. Nork, Mythen der Alten Perser als Quellen Christlicher Glaubenslehren und Ritualien.

[40] Die Zoroastrischen Glaubenslehre, von Dr. Eduard Röth. s. 450.

[41] See, in tom. i. Kabbala Denudata, Synopsis Dogmatum Libri Sohar, pp. 106, 109, 113.

and origin with these Paul refers when he warns his readers against "the worshipping of angels," "endless genealogies," "philosophy falsely so called," and various besetting heresies of the time. But others were so woven and assimilated into the substance of the popular Judaism of the age, as inculcated by the Rabbins, that Paul himself held them, the lingering vestiges of his earnest Pharisaic education and organized experience. They naturally found their way into the Apostolic Church, principally composed of Ebionites, Christians who had been Jews; and from it they were never separated, but have come to us in seeming orthodox garb, and are generally retained now. Still, they were errors. They are incredible to the thinking minds of to-day. It is best to get rid of them by the truth, that they are pagan growths introduced into Christianity, but to be discriminated from it. By removing these antiquated and incredible excrescences from the real religion of Christ, we shall save the essential faith from the suspicion which their association with it, their fancied identity with it, invites and provokes.

The correspondences between the Persian and the Pharisaic faith, in regard to doctrines, are of too arbitrary and peculiar a character to allow us for a moment to suppose them to have been an independent product spontaneously developed in the two nations; though even in that case the doctrines in question have no sanction of authority, not being Mosaic nor Prophetic, but only Rabbinical. One must have received from the other. Which was the bestower and which the recipient is quite plain.[42] There is not a whit of evidence to show, but, on the contrary, ample presumption to disprove, that a certain cycle of notions were known among the Jews previous to a period of most intimate and constant intercourse between them and the Persians. But before that period those notions were an integral part of the Persian theology. Even Prideaux admits that the first Zoroaster lived and Magianism flourished at least a thousand years before Christ. And the dogmas we refer to are fundamental features of the religion. These dogmas of the Persians, not derived from the Old Testament nor known among the Jews before the captivity, soon after that time began to show themselves in their literature, and before the opening of the New Testament were prominent elements of the Pharisaic belief. The inference is unavoidable that the confluence of Persian thought and feeling with Hebrew thought and feeling, joined with the materials and flowing in the channels of the subsequent experience of the Jews, formed a mingled deposit about the age of Christ, which deposit was Pharisaism. Again: the doctrines common to Zoroastrianism and Pharisaism in the former seem to be prime sources, in the latter to be late products. In the former, they compose an organic, complete, inseparable system; in the latter, they are disconnected, mixed piecemeal, and, to a considerable extent, historically traceable to an origin beyond the native, national mind. It is

[42] Lücke, Einleitung in die Offenbarung des Johannes, kap. 2, sect. 8.

a significant fact that the abnormal symbolic beasts described by several of the Jewish prophets, and in the Apocalypse, were borrowed from Persian art. Sculptures representing these have been brought to light by the recent researches at Persepolis. Finally, all early ecclesiastical history incontestably shows that Persian dogmas exerted on the Christianity of the first centuries an enormous influence, a pervasive and perverting power unspent yet, and which it is one of the highest tasks of honest and laborious Christian students in the present day to explain, define, and separate. What was that Manichæanism which nearly filled Christendom for a hundred years,—what was it, in great part, but an influx of tradition, speculation, imagination, and sentiment, from Persia? The Gnostic Christians even had a scripture called "Zoroaster's Apocalypse."[48] The "wise men from the east," who knelt before the infant Christ, "and opened their treasures, and gave him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh," were Persian Magi. We may imaginatively regard that sacred scene as an emblematical figure of the far different tributes which a little later came from their country to his religion,—the unfortunate contributions that permeated and corrupted so much of the form in which it thenceforth appeared and spread. In the pure gospel's pristine day, ere it had hardened into theological dogmas or become encumbered with speculations and comments, from the lips of God's Anointed Son repeatedly fell the earnest warning, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." There is far more need to have this warning intelligently heeded now, coming with redoubled emphasis from the Master's own mouth, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." For, as the gospel is now generally set forth and received, that leaven has leavened well-nigh the whole lump of it.

CHAPTER X.

GREEK AND ROMAN DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

THE disembodied soul, as conceived by the Greeks, and after them by the Romans, is material, but of so thin a contexture that it cannot be felt with the hands. It is exhaled with the dying breath, or issues through a warrior's wounds. The sword passes through its uninjured form as through the air. It is to the body what a dream is to waking action. Retaining the shape, lineaments, and motion the man had in life, it is immediately recognised upon appearing. It quits the body with much

[48] Kleuker, Zend-Avesta, band II. anhang i. s. 12.

reluctance, leaving that warm and vigorous investiture for a chill and forceless existence. It glides along without noise and very swiftly, like a shadow. It is unable to enter the lower kingdom and be at peace until its deserted body has been buried with sacred rites: meanwhile, naked and sad, it flits restlessly about the gates, uttering doleful moans.

The early Greek authors describe the creation as a stupendous hollow globe cut in the centre by the plane of the earth. The upper hemisphere is lighted by beneficent luminaries; the lower hemisphere is filled with unvarying blackness. The top of the higher sphere is Heaven, the bright dwelling of the Olympian gods; its bottom is the surface of the earth, the home of living men. The top of the lower sphere is Hades, the abode of the ghosts of the dead; its bottom is Tartarus, the prison of the Titans, rebellious giants vanquished by Zeus. Earth lies half-way from the cope of Heaven to the floor of Tartarus. This distance is so great that, according to Hesiod, it would take an anvil nine days to fall from the centre to the nadir. Some of the ancients seem to have surmised the sphericity of the earth, and to have thought that Hades was simply its dark side, the dead being our antipodes. In the Odyssey, Ulysses reaches Hades by sailing across the ocean-stream and passing the eternal night-land of the Cimmerians, whereupon he comes to the edge of Acheron, the moat of Pluto's sombre house. Virgil also says, "One pole of the earth to us always points aloft; but the other is seen by black Styx and the infernal ghosts, where either dead night forever reigns or else Aurora returns thither from us and brings them back the day."[1] But the prevalent notion evidently was that Hades was an immense hollow region not far under the surface of the ground, and that it was to be reached by descent through some cavern, like that at Avernus.

This subterranean place is the destination of all alike, rapacious Orcus sparing no one, good or bad. It is wrapped in obscurity, as the etymology of its name implies,—a place where one cannot see.

> "No sun e'er gilds the gloomy horrors there;
> No cheerful gales refresh the stagnant air."

The dead are disconsolate in this dismal realm, and the living shrink from entering it, except as a refuge from intolerable afflictions. The shade of the princeliest hero dwelling there—the swift-footed Achilles—says, "I would wish, being on earth, to serve for hire another man of poor estate, rather than rule over all the dead." Souls carry there their physical peculiarities, the fresh and ghastly likenesses of the wounds which have despatched them thither, so that they are known at sight. Companies of fellow-countrymen, knots of friends, are together there, preserving their remembrance of earthly fortunes and beloved relatives left behind, and eagerly questioning each newly-arriving soul for tidings from above. When the soul of Achilles is told of the glorious deeds of

[1] Georg. lib. i. ll. 242–250.

Neoptolemus, "he goes away taking mighty steps through the meadow of asphodel in joyfulness, because he had heard that his son was very illustrious."[2] Sophocles makes the dying Antigone say, "Departing, I strongly cherish the hope that I shall be fondly welcomed by my father, and by my mother, and by my brother."[3] It is important to notice that, according to the early and popular view, this Hades, the "dark dwelling of the joyless images of deceased mortals," is the destination of universal humanity. In opposition to its dolorous gloom and repulsive inanity are vividly pictured the glad light of day, the glory and happiness of life. "Not worth so much to me as my life," says the incomparable son of Peleus, "are all the treasures which populous Troy possessed, nor all which the stony threshold of Phœbus Apollo contains in rocky Pytho. Oxen, and fat sheep, and trophies, and horses with golden manes, may be acquired by effort; but the breath of man to return again is not to be obtained by plunder nor by purchase, when once it has passed the barrier of his teeth."

It is not probable that all the ornamental details associated by the poets with the fate and state of the dead—as they are set forth, for instance, by Virgil in the sixth book of the Æneid—were ever credited as literal truth. But there is no reason to doubt that the essential features of this mythological scenery were accepted in the vulgar belief. For instance, that the popular mind honestly held that, in some vague sense or other, the ghost, on leaving the body, flitted down to the dull banks of Acheron and offered a shadowy obolus to Charon, the slovenly old ferryman, for a passage in his boat, seems attested not only by a thousand averments to that effect in the current literature of the time, but also by the invariable custom of placing an obolus in the dead man's mouth for that purpose when he was buried.

The Greeks did not view the banishment of souls in Hades as a punishment for sin, or the result of any broken law in the plan of things. It was to them merely the fulfilment of the inevitable fate of creatures who must die, in the order of nature, like successive growths of flowers, and whose souls were too feeble to rank with gods and climb into Olympus. That man should cease from his substantial life on the bright earth and subside into sunless Hades, a vapid form, with nerveless limbs and faint voice, a ghostly vision bemoaning his existence with idle lamentation, or busying himself with the misty mockeries of his former pursuits, was melancholy enough; but it was his natural destiny, and not an avenging judgment.

But that powerful instinct in man which desires to see villany punished and goodness rewarded could not fail, among so cultivated a people as the Greeks, to develop a doctrine of future compensation for the contrasted deserts of souls. The earliest trace of the idea of retribution which we find carried forward into the invisible world is the

[2] Odyssey, lib. xi. ll. 538, 539.

[3] Antigone, ll. 872–874.

punishment of the Titans, those monsters who tried by piling up mountains to storm the heavenly abodes, and to wrest the Thunderer's bolts from his hand. This germ is slowly expanded; and next we read of a few specified criminals, who had been excessively impious, personally offending Zeus, condemned by his direct indignation to a severe expiation in Tartarus. The insulted deity wreaks his vengeance on the tired Sisyphus, the mocked Tantalus, the gnawed Tityus, and others. Afterwards we meet the statement that condign retribution is always inflicted for the two flagrant sins of perjury and blasphemy. Finally, we discern a general prevalence of the belief that punishment is decreed, not by vindictive caprice, but on the grounds of universal morality, all souls being obliged in Hades to pass before Rhadamanthus, Minos, or Æacus,—three upright judges,—to be dealt with, according to their merits, with impartial accuracy. The distribution of poetic justice in Hades at last became, in many authors, so melodramatic as to furnish a fair subject for burlesque. Some ludicrous examples of this may be seen in Lucian's Dialogues of the Dead. A fine instance of it is also furnished in the Emperor Julian's Symposium. The gods prepare for the Roman emperors a banquet, in the air, below the moon. The good emperors are admitted to the table with honors; but the bad ones are hurled headlong down into Tartarus, amidst the derisive shouts of the spectators.

As the notion that the wrath of the gods would pursue their enemies in the future state gave rise to a belief in the punishments of Tartarus, so the notion that the distinguishing kindness of the gods would follow their favorites gave rise to the myth of Elysium. The Elysian Fields were earliest portrayed lying on the western margin of the earth, stretching from the verge of Oceanus, where the sun set at eve. They were fringed with perpetual green, perfumed with the fragrance of flowers, and eternally fanned by refreshing breezes. They were represented merely as the select abode of a small number of living men, who were either the mortal relatives or the special favorites of the gods, and who were transported thither without tasting death, there to pass an immortality which was described, with great inconsistency, sometimes as purely happy, sometimes as joyless and wearisome. To all except a few chosen ones this region was utterly inaccessible. Homer says, "But for you, O Menelaus, it is not decreed by the gods to die; but the immortals will send you to the Elysian plain, because you are the son-in-law of Zeus."[4] Had the inheritance of this clime been proclaimed as the reward of heroic merit, had it been really believed attainable by virtue, it would have been held up as a prize to be striven for. The whole account, as it was at first, bears the impress of imaginative fiction as legibly upon its front as the story of the dragon-watched garden of Hesperus's daughters, whose trees bore golden apples, or the story of the enchanted isle in the Arabian tales.

[4] Odyssey, lib. iv. ll. 565–570.

The early location of Elysium, and the conditions of admission to it, were gradually changed; and at length it reappeared, in the under-world, as the abode of the just. On one side of the primitive Hades Tartarus had now been drawn up to admit the condemned into its penal tortures, and on the other side Elysium was lowered down to reward the justified by receiving them into its peaceful and perennial happiness; while, between the two, Erebus remained as an intermediate state of negation and gloom for unsentenced shades. The highly-colored descriptions of this subterranean heaven, frequently found thenceforth, it is to be supposed were rarely accepted as solid verities. They were scarcely ever used, to our knowledge, as motives in life, incitement in difficulties, consolation in sorrow. They were mostly set forth in poems, works even professedly fictitious. They were often denied and ridiculed in speeches and writings received with public applause. Still, they unquestionably exerted some influence on the common modes of thought and feeling, had a shadowy seat in the popular imagination and heart, helped men to conceive of a blessed life hereafter and to long for it, and took away something of the artificial horror with which, under the power of rooted superstition, their departing ghosts hailed the dusky limits of futurity:—

"Umbræ
Non tacitas Erebi sedes, Ditisque profundi
Pallida regna petunt."

First, then, from a study of the Greek mythology we find all the dead —a dull populace of ghosts—fluttering through the neutral melancholy of Hades without discrimination. And finally we discern in the world of the dead a sad middle region, with a Paradise on the right and a Hell on the left, the whole presided over by three incorruptible judges, who appoint the new-comers their places in accordance with their deserts.

The question now arises, What did the Greeks think in relation to the ascent of human souls into heaven among the gods? Did they except none from the remediless doom of Hades? Was there no path for the wisest and best souls to climb starry Olympus? To dispose of this inquiry fairly, four distinct considerations must be examined. First, Ulysses sees in the infernal regions the image of Herakles shooting the shadows of the Stymphalian birds, while his soul is said to be rejoicing with fair-legged Hebe at the banquets of the immortal gods in the skies. To explain this, we must remember that Herakles was the son of Alcmene, a mortal woman, and of Zeus, the king of the gods. Accordingly, in the flames on Mount Oeta, the surviving ghost which he derived from his mother descends to Hades, but the purified soul inherited from his father has the proper nature and rank of a deity, and is received into the Olympian synod.[5] Of course no blessed life in heaven for the generality of men is here implied. Herakles, being a son and favorite of Zeus, has a corresponding destiny exceptional from that of other men.

[5] Ovid, Met. lib. ix. ll. 245–272.

Secondly, another double representation, somewhat similar, but having an entirely different interpretation, occurs in the case of Orion, the handsome Hyrian hunter whom Artemis loved. At one time he is described, like the spectre of the North American Indian, chasing over the Stygian plain the disembodied animals he had in his lifetime killed on the mountains:—

> "Swift through the gloom a giant hunter flies:
> A ponderous brazen mace, with direful sway,
> Aloft he whirls to crush the savage prey;
> Grim beasts in trains, that by his truncheon fell,
> Now, phantom forms, shoot o'er the lawn of hell."

In the common belief this, without doubt, was received as actual fact. But at another time Orion is deified and shown as one of the grandest constellations of the sky,—

> "A belted giant, who, with arm uplift,
> Threatening the throne of Zeus, forever stands,
> Sublimely impious."

This, obviously, is merely a poetic symbol, a beautiful artifice employed by the poets to perpetuate a legend by associating it with the imperishable hieroglyphs of the galaxy. It is not credible that men imagined that group of stars—only outlined in such shape by the help of arbitrary fancy—to be literally the translated hunter himself. The meaning simply was that he was immortalized through the eternal linking of his name and form with a stellar cluster which would always shine upon men. "The reverence and gratitude of a weak world for the heroes and benefactors they could not comprehend, named them divinities, whom they did star together to an idolatrous immortality which nationalized the heavens" with the shining shapes of the great and brave. These types of poetry, symbols lent to infant science, were never meant to indicate a literal translation and metamorphosis of human souls, but were honors paid to the memories of illustrious men, emblems and pledged securities of their unfading fame. With what glorious characters, with what forms of deathless beauty, defiant of decay, the sky was written over! Go out this evening beneath the old rolling dome, when the starry scroll is outspread, and you may still read the reveries of the marvelling minds of the antique world, as fresh in their magic loveliness as when the bards and seers of Olympus and the Ægean first stamped them in heaven. There "the great snake binds in his bright coil half the mighty host." There is Arion with his harp and the charmed dolphin. The fair Andromeda, still chained to her eternal rock, looks mournfully towards the delivering hero whose conquering hand bears aloft the petrific visage of Medusa. Far off in the north the gigantic Boötes is seen driving towards the Centaur and the Scorpion. And yonder, smiling benignantly upon the crews of many a home-bound ship, are revealed the twin-brothers, joined in the embrace of an undying friendship.

Thirdly, it is asserted by several Latin authors, in general terms, that

the ghost goes to Hades but the soul ascends to heaven; and it has been inferred—most erroneously—that this statement contains the doctrine of an abode for men after death on high with the gods. Ovid expresses the real thought in full, thus:—

> "Terra tegit carnem; tumulum circumvolat umbra;
> Orcus habet manes; spiritus astra petit."

"The earth conceals the flesh; the shade flits round the tomb; the underworld receives the image; the spirit seeks the stars." Those conversant with the opinions then prevalent will scarcely doubt that these words were meant to express the return of the composite man to the primordial elements of which he was made. The particulars of the dissolving individual are absorbed in the general elements of the universe. Earth goes back to earth, ghost to the realm of ghosts, breath to the air, fiery essence of soul to the lofty ether in whose pure radiance the stars burn. Euripides expressly says that when man dies each part goes whence it came,—"the body to the ground, the spirit to the ether."[6] Therefore the often-misunderstood phrase of the Roman writers, "the soul seeks the stars," merely denotes the impersonal mingling after death of the divine portion of man's being with the parent Divinity, who was supposed indeed to pervade all things, but more especially to reside beyond the empyrean.

Fourthly: what shall be said of the apotheosis of their celebrated heroes and emperors by the Greeks and Romans, whereby these were elevated to the dignity of deities, and seats were assigned them in heaven? What was the meaning of this ceremony? It does not signify that a celestial immortality awaits all good men; because it appears as a thing attainable by very few, is only allotted by vote of the Senate. Neither was it supposed actually to confer on its recipients equality of attributes with the great gods, making them peers of Zeus and Apollo. The homage received as gods by Alexander and others during their lives, the deification of Julius Cæsar during the most learned and skeptical age of Rome, with other obvious considerations, render such a supposition inadmissible. In view of all the direct evidence and collateral probabilities, we conclude that the genuine import of an ancient apotheosis was this: that the soul of the deceased person so honored was admitted, in deference to his transcendent merits, or as a special favor on the part of the gods, into heaven, into the divine society. He was really a human soul still, but was called a god because, instead of descending, like the multitude of human souls, to Hades, he was taken into the abode and company of the gods above the sky. This interpretation derives support from the remarkable declaration of Aristotle, that "of two friends one must be unwilling that the other should attain apotheosis, because in such case they must be forever separated."[7] One would be in Olympus,

[6] The Suppliants, l. 533.

[7] Nicomachean Ethics, lib. viii. cap. 7.

the other in Hades. The belief that any, even a favored few, could ever obtain this blessing, was of quite limited development, and probably sprang from the esoteric recesses of the Mysteries. To call a human soul a god is not so bold a speech as it may seem. Plotinus says, "Whoever has wisdom and true virtue in soul itself differs but little from superior beings, in this alone being inferior to them,—that he is in body. Such an one, dying, may therefore properly say, with Empedocles,—

'Farewell! a god immortal now am I.'"

The expiring Vespasian exclaimed, "I shall soon be a god."[8] Mure says that the doctrine of apotheosis belonged to the Græco-Pelasgic race through all their history.[9] Seneca severely satirizes the ceremony, and the popular belief which upheld it, in an elaborate lampoon called Apocolocyntosis, or the reception of Claudius among the pumpkins. The broad travesty of Deification exhibited in Pumpkinification obviously measures the distance from the honest credulity of one class and period to the keen infidelity of another.

One of the most important passages in Greek literature, in whatever aspect viewed, is composed of the writings of the great Theban lyrist. Let us see what representation is there made of the fate of man in the unseen world. The ethical perception, profound feeling, and searching mind of Pindar could not allow him to remain satisfied with the undiscriminating views of the future state prevalent in his time. Upon such a man the problem of death must weigh as a conscious burden, and his reflections would naturally lead him to improved conclusions. Accordingly, we find him representing the Blessed Isles not as the haven of a few favorites of the gods, but as the reward of virtue; and the punishments of the wicked, too, are not dependent on fickle inclinations, but are decreed by immutable right. He does not describe the common multitude of the dead, leading a dark sad existence, like phantoms in a dream: his references to death and Hades seem cheerful in comparison with those of many other ancient Greek authors. Dionysius the Rhetorician, speaking of his Threnes,—dirges sung at funerals,—says, "Simonides lamented the dead pathetically, Pindar magnificently."

His conceptions of the life to come were inseparably connected with certain definite locations. He believed Hades to be the destination of all our mortal race, but conceived it subdivided into a Tartarus for the impious and an Elysium for the righteous. He thought that the starry firmament was the solid floor of a world of splendor, bliss, and immortality, inhabited by the gods, but fatally inaccessible to man. When he thinks of this place, it is with a sigh,—a sigh that man's aspirations towards it are vain and his attempts to reach it irreverent. This latter thought he enforces by an earnest allusion to the myth of Bellerophon, who, daring to soar to the cerulean seat of the gods on the winged steed

[8] Suetonius, cap. xxiii.

[9] Hist. Greek Literature, vol. i. ch. 2, sect. 5.

Pegasus, was punished for his arrogance by being hurled down headlong. These assertions are to be sustained by citations of his own words. The references made are to Donaldson's edition.

In the second Pythian Ode[10] Pindar repeats, and would appear to endorse, the old monitory legend of Ixion, who for his outrageous crimes was bound to an ever-revolving wheel in Hades and made to utter warnings against such offences as his own. In the first Pythian we read, "Hundred-headed Typhon, enemy of the gods, lies in dreadful Tartarus."[11] Among the preserved fragments of Pindar the one numbered two hundred and twenty-three reads thus:—"The bottom of Tartarus shall press thee down with solid necessities." The following is from the first Isthmian Ode:—"He who, laying up private wealth, laughs at the poor, does not consider that he shall close up his life for Hades without honor."[12] The latter part of the tenth Nemean Ode recounts, with every appearance of devout belief, the history of Castor and Pollux, the god-begotten twins, who, reversing conditions with each other on successive days and nights, spent their interchangeable immortality each alternately in heaven and in Hades. The astronomical interpretation of this account may be correct; but its applicability to the wondering faith of the earlier poets is extremely doubtful.

The seventh Isthmian contains this remarkable sentence:—"Unequal is the fate of man: he can think of great things, but is too ephemeral a creature to reach the brazen-floored seat of the gods."[13] A similar sentiment is expressed in the sixth Nemean:—"Men are a mere nothing; while to the gods the brazen heaven remains a firm abode forever."[14] The one hundred and second fragment is supposed to be a part of the dirge composed by Pindar on the death of the grandfather of Pericles. It runs in this way:—"Whoso by good fortune has seen the things in the hollow under the earth knows indeed the end of life: he also knows the beginning vouchsafed by Zeus." It refers to initiation in the Eleusinian Mysteries, and means that the initiate understands the life which follows death. It is well known that a clear doctrine of future retribution was inculcated in the Mysteries long before it found general publication. The ninety-fifth fragment is all that remains to us of a dirge which appears, from the allusion in the first line, to have been sung at a funeral service performed at midnight, or at least after sunset. "While it is night here with us, to those below shines the might of the sun; and the red-rosied meadows of their suburbs are filled with the frankincense-tree, and with golden fruits. Some delight themselves there with steeds and exercises, others with games, others with lyres; and among them all fair-blossoming fortune blooms, and a fragrance is distilled through the lovely region, and they constantly mingle all kinds of offerings with the far-shining fire on the altars of the gods." This evidently is a picture of the happy scenes in the fields that stretch around the City of the

[10] L. 39. [11] Ll. 15, 16. [12] L. 68. [13] Ll. 42–44. [14] Ll. 4–6.

Blessed in the under-world, and is introduced as a comfort to the mourners over the dead body.

The ensuing passage—the most important one on our subject—is from the second Olympic Ode.[15] "An honorable, virtuous man may rest assured as to his future fate. The souls of the lawless, departing from this life, suffer punishment. One beneath the earth, pronouncing sentence by a hateful necessity imposed upon him, declares the doom for offences committed in this realm of Zeus. But the good lead a life without a tear, among those honored by the gods for having always delighted in virtue: the others endure a life too dreadful to look upon. Whoever has had resolution thrice in both worlds to stand firm, and to keep his soul pure from evil, has found the path of Zeus to the tower of Kronos, where the airs of the ocean breathe around the Isle of the Blessed, and where—some from resplendent trees, others from the water—glitter golden flowers, with garlands of which they wreathe their wrists and brows in the righteous assemblies of Rhadamanthus, whom father Kronos has as his willing assistant." The "path of Zeus," in the above quotation, means the path which Zeus takes when he goes to visit his father Kronos, whom he originally dethroned and banished, but with whom he is now reconciled, and who has become the ruler of the departed spirits of the just, in a peaceful and joyous region.

The following passage constitutes the ninety-eighth fragment. "To those who descend from a fruitless and ill-starred life Persephone [the Queen of the Dead] will grant a compensation for their former misfortune, after eight years [the judicial period of atonement and lustration for great crimes] granting them their lives again. Then, illustrious kings, strong, swift, wise, they shall become the mightiest leaders; and afterwards they shall be invoked by men as sacred heroes." In this piece, as in the preceding one where reference is made to the thrice-living man, is contained the doctrine, early brought from the East, that souls may repeatedly return from the dead and in new bodies lead new lives. One other fragment, the ninety-sixth, added to the foregoing, will make up all the important genuine passages in Pindar relating to the future life. "By a beneficent allotment, all travel to an end freeing from toil. The body indeed is subject to the power of death; but the eternal image is left alive, and this alone is allied to the gods. When we are asleep, it shows in many dreams the approaching judgment concerning happiness and misery." When our physical limbs are stretched in insensible repose, the inward spirit, rallying its sleepless and prophetic powers, foretells the balancing awards of another world.

We must not wholly confound with the mythological schemes of the vulgar creed the belief of the nobler philosophers, many of whom, as is well known, cherished an exalted faith in the survival of the conscious soul and in a just retribution. "Strike!" one of them said, with the

[15] Ll. 55–78.

dauntless courage of an immortal, to a tyrant who had threatened to have him brayed in a mortar: "strike! you may crush the shell of Anaxarchus: you cannot touch his life." Than all the maze of fabulous fancies and physical rites in which the dreams of the poets and the guesses of the people were entangled, how much more

> "Just was the prescience of the eternal goal
> That gleamed, 'mid Cyprian shades, on Zeno's soul,
> Or shone to Plato in the lonely cave,—
> God in all space, and life in every grave!"

An account of the Greek views on the subject of a future life which should omit the doctrine of Plato would be defective indeed. The influence of this sublime autocrat in the realms of intellect has transcended calculation. However coldly his thoughts may have been regarded by his contemporary countrymen, they soon obtained cosmopolitan audience, and—surviving the ravages of time and ignorance, overleaping the bars of rival schools and sects, appreciated and diffused by the loftiest spirits of succeeding ages, closely blended with their own speculations by many Christian theologians—have held an almost unparalleled dominion over the minds of millions of men for more than fifty generations.

In the various dialogues of Plato, written at different periods of his life, there are numerous variations and inconsistencies of doctrine. There are also many mythical passages obviously intended as symbolic statements, poetic drapery, by no means to be handled or looked at as the severe outlines of dialectic truth. Furthermore, in these works there are a vast number of opinions and expressions introduced by the interlocutors, who often belong to antagonistic schools of philosophy, and for which, of course, Plato is not to be held responsible. Making allowance for these facts, and resolutely grappling with the many other difficulties of the task, we shall now attempt to exhibit what we consider were the real teachings of Plato in relation to the fate of the soul. This exposition, sketchy as it is, and open to question as it may be in some particulars, is the carefully-weighed result of earnest, patient, and repeated study of all the relevant passages.

In the first place, it is plain that Plato had a firm religious and philosophical faith in the immortality of the soul, which was continually attracting his thoughts, making it a favorite theme with him and exerting no faint influence on his life. This faith rested both on ancient traditions, to which he frequently refers with invariable reverence, and on metaphysical reasonings, which he over and over presents in forms of conscientious elaboration. There are two tests of his sincerity of faith: first, that he always treats the subject with profound seriousness; secondly, that he always uses it as a practical motive. "I do not think," said Socrates, "that any one who should now hear us, even though he were a comic poet, would say that I am talking idly."[16] Again, referring

[16] Phædo, 40.

to Homer's description of the judgments in Hades, he says, "I, therefore, Callicles, am persuaded by these accounts, and consider how I may exhibit my soul before the judge in the most healthy condition."[17] "To a base man no man nor god is a friend on earth while living, nor under it when dead," say the souls of their ancestors to the living; "but live honorably, and when your destined fate brings you below you shall come to us as friends to friends."[18] "We are plants, not of earth, but of heaven."[19] We start, then, with the affirmation that Plato honestly and cordially believed in a future life.

Secondly, his ethical and spiritual beliefs, like those of nearly all the ancients, were closely interwoven with physical theories and local relations. The world to him consisted of two parts, the celestial region of ideas, and the mundane region of material phenomena,—corresponding pretty well, as Lewes suggests, to our modern conception of heaven and earth. Near the close of the Phædo, Socrates says that the earth is not of the kind and magnitude usually supposed. "We dwell in a decayed and corroded, muddy and filthy region in the sediment and hollows of the earth, and imagine that we inhabit its upper parts; just as if one dwelling in the bottom of the sea should think that he dwelt on the sea, and, beholding the sun through the water, should imagine that the sea was the heavens. So, if we could fly up to the summit of the air—as fishes emerging from the sea to behold what is on the earth here—and emerge hence, we should know that the true earth is there. The people there dwell with the gods, and see things as they really are; and what the sea is to us the air is to them, and what the air is to us the ether is to them." Again, in the tenth book of the Republic, eleventh chapter, the soul is metaphorically said in the sea of this corporeal life to get stones and shell-fish attached to it, and, fed on earth, to be rendered to a great extent earthy, stony, and savage, like the marine Glaucus, some parts of whose body were broken off and others worn away by the waves, while such quantities of shells, sea-weed, and stones had grown to him that he more resembled a beast than a man. In keeping with the whole tenor of the Platonic teaching, this is a fine illustration of the fallen state of man in his vile environment of flesh here below. The soul, in its earthly sojourn, embodied here, is as much mutilated and degraded from its equipped and pure condition in its lofty natal home, the archetypal world of Truth above the base Babel of material existence, as Glaucus was on descending from his human life on the sunny shore to his encrusted shape and blind prowling in the monstrous deep.

At another time Plato contrasts the situation of the soul on earth with its situation in heaven by the famous comparison of the dark cave. He supposes men, unable to look upwards, dwelling in a cavern which has an opening towards the light extending lengthwise through the top of the cavern. A great many images, carrying various objects and talking

[17] Gorgias, 173. [18] Menexenus, 19. [19] Timæus, 71.

aloud, pass and repass along the edge of the opening. Their shadows fall on the side of the cave below, in front of the dwellers there; also the echoes of their talk sound back from the wall. Now, the men, never having been or looked out of the cave, would suppose these shadows to be the real beings, these echoes the real voices. As respects this figure, says Plato, we must compare ourselves with such persons. The visible region around us is the cave, the sun is the light, and the soul's ascent into the region of mind is the ascent out of the cave and the contemplation of things above.[20]

Still again, Plato describes the ethereal paths and motions of the gods, who, in their chariots, which are the planets and stars, ride through the universe, accompanied by all pure souls, "the family of true science, contemplating things as they really are." "Reaching the summit, they proceed outside, and, standing on the back of heaven, its revolution carries them round, and they behold that supercelestial region which no poet here can ever sing of as it deserves." In this archetypal world all souls of men have dwelt, though "few have memory enough left," "after their fall hither," "to call to mind former things from the present." "Now, of justice and temperance, and whatever else souls deem precious, there are here but faint resemblances, dull images; but beauty was then splendid to look on when we, in company with the gods, beheld that blissful spectacle, and were initiated into that most blessed of all mysteries, which we celebrated when we were unaffected by the evils that awaited us in time to come, and when we beheld, in the pure light, perfect and calm visions, being ourselves pure and as yet unmasked with this shell of a body to which we are now fettered."[21]

To suppose all this employed by Plato as mere fancy and metaphor is to commit an egregious error. In studying an ancient author, we must forsake the modern stand-point of analysis, and envelop ourselves in the ancient atmosphere of thought, where poetry and science were as indistinguishably blended in the personal beliefs as oxygen and nitrogen are in the common air. We have not a doubt that Plato means to teach, literally, that the soul was always immortal, and that in its anterior states of existence, in the realm of ideas on high, it was in the midst of those essential realities whose shifting shadows alone it can behold in its lapsed condition and bodily imprisonment here. That he closely intertwisted ethical with physical theories, spiritual destinies with insphering localities, the fortunes of men with the revolutions of the earth and stars, is a fact which one can hardly read the Timæus and fail to see; a fact which continually reappears. It is strikingly shown in his idea of the consummation of all things at regular epochs determined by the recurrence of a grand revolution of the universe,—a period vulgarly known under the name of the "Platonic Year."[22] The second point, therefore, in the present explanation of Plato's doctrine

[20] Republic, lib. vii. cap. 1–4. [21] Phædrus, 56–58, 63, 64. [22] Statesman, 14, 15.

of another life, is the conception that there is in the empyrean a glorious world of incorruptible truth, beauty, and goodness, the place of the gods, the native haunt of souls; and that human souls, having yielded to base attractions and sunk into bodies, are but banished sojourners in this phenomenal world of evanescent shadows and illusions, where they are "stung with resistless longings for the skies, and only solaced by the vague and broken reminiscences of their former state."

Thirdly, Plato taught that after death an unerring judgment and compensation await all souls. Every soul bears in itself the plain evidence of its quality and deeds, its vices and virtues; and in the unseen state it will meet inevitable awards on its merits. "To go to Hades with a soul full of crimes is the worst of all evils."[23] "When a man dies, he possesses in the other world a destiny suited to the life which he has led in this."[24] In the second book of the Republic he says, "We shall in Hades suffer the punishment of our misdeeds here;" and he argues at much length the absolute impossibility of in any way escaping this. The fact of a full reward for all wisdom and justice, a full retribution for all folly and vice, is asserted unequivocally in scores of passages, most of them expressly connecting the former with the notion of an ascent to the bright region of truth and intellect, the latter with a descent to the black penal realm of Hades. Let the citation of a single further example suffice. "Some souls, being sentenced, go to places of punishment beneath the earth; others are borne upward to some region in heaven."[25] He proves the genuineness of his faith in this doctrine by continually urging it, in the most earnest, unaffected manner, as an animating motive in the formation of character and the conduct of life, saying, "He who neglects his soul will pass lamely through existence, and again pass into Hades, aimless and unserviceable."[26]

The fourth and last step in this exposition is to show the particular form in which Plato held his doctrine of future retribution,—the way in which he supposed the consequences of present good and evil would appear hereafter. He received the Oriental theory of transmigration. Souls are born over and over. The banishment of the wicked to Tartarus is provisional, a preparation for their return to incarnate life. The residence of the good in heaven is contingent, and will be lost the moment they yield to carelessness or material solicitations. The circumstances under which they are reborn, the happiness or misery of their renewed existence, depend on their character and conduct in their previous career; and thus a poetic justice is secured. At the close of the Timæus, Plato describes the whole animal kingdom as consisting of degraded human souls, from "the tribe of birds, which were light-minded souls, to the tribe of oysters, which have received the most remote habitations as a punishment of their extreme ignorance." "After this manner, then, both formerly and now, animals transmigrate, experiencing their

[23] Gorgias, 165. [24] Republic, lib. vi. cap. i. [25] Phædrus, 61. [26] Timæus, 18.

changes through the loss or acquisition of intellect and folly." The general doctrine of metempsychosis is stated and implied very frequently in many of the Platonic dialogues. Some recent writers have tried to explain these representations as figures of speech, not intended to portray the literal facts, but merely to hint their moral equivalents. Such persons seem to us to hold Plato's pages in the full glare of the nineteenth century and read them in the philosophic spirit of Bacon and Comte, instead of holding them in the old shades of the Academy and pondering them in the marvelling spirit of Pythagoras and Empedocles.

We are led by the following considerations to think that Plato really meant to accredit the transmigration of souls literally. First, he often makes use of the current poetic imagery of Hades, and of ancient traditions, avowedly in a loose metaphorical way, as moral helps, calling them "fables." But the metempsychosis he sets forth, without any such qualification or guard, with so much earnestness and frequency, as a promise and a warning, that we are forced, in the absence of any indication to the contrary, to suppose that he meant the statements as sober fact and not as mythical drapery. As with a parable, of course we need not interpret all the ornamental details literally; but we must accept the central idea. And in the present case the fundamental thought is that of repeated births of the soul, each birth trailing retributive effects from the foregone. For example, the last four chapters of the tenth book of the Republic contain the account of Erus, a Pamphylian, who, after lying dead on the battle-field ten days, revived, and told what he had seen in the other state. Plato in the outset explicitly names this recital an "apologue." It recounts a multitude of moral and physical particulars. These details may fairly enough be considered in some degree as mythical drapery, or as the usual traditional painting; but the essential conception running through the account, for the sake of which it is told, we are not at liberty to explain away as empty metaphor. Now, that essential conception is precisely this:—that souls after death are adjudged to Hades or to heaven as a recompense for their sin or virtue, and that, after an appropriate sojourn in those places, they are born again, the former ascending, squalid and scarred, from beneath the earth, the latter descending, pure, from the sky. In perfect consonance with this conclusion is the moral drawn by Plato from the whole narrative. He simply says, "If the company will be persuaded by me, considering the soul to be immortal and able to bear all evil and good, we shall always persevere in the road which leads upwards."

Secondly, the conception of the metempsychosis is thoroughly coherent with Plato's whole philosophy. If he was in earnest about any doctrine, it was the doctrine that all knowledge is reminiscence. The following declarations are his. "Soul is older than body." "Souls are continually born over again from Hades into this life." "To search and learn is simply to revive the images of what the soul saw in its pre-existent state

of being in the world of realities."[27] Why should we hesitate to attribute a sincere belief in the metempsychosis to the acknowledged author of the doctrine that the soul lived in another world before appearing here, and that its knowledge is but reminiscence? If born from the other world once, we may be many times; and then all that is wanted to complete the dogma of transmigration is the idea of a presiding justice. Had not Plato that idea?

Thirdly, the doctrine of a judicial metempsychosis was most profoundly rooted in the popular faith, as a strict verity, throughout the great East, ages before the time of Plato, and was familiarly known throughout Greece in his time. It had been imported thither by Musæus and Orpheus at an early period, was afterwards widely recommended and established by the Pythagoreans, and was unquestionably held by many of Plato's contemporaries. He refers once to those "who strongly believe that murderers who have gone to Hades will be obliged to come back and end their next lives by suffering the same fate which they had before inflicted on others."[28] It is also a remarkable fact that he states the conditions of transmigration, and the means of securing exemption from it, in the same way that the Hindus have from immemorial time:—"The soul which has beheld the essence of truth remains free from harm until the next revolution; and if it can preserve the vision of the truth it shall always remain free from harm," that is, be exempt from birth; but "when it fails to behold the field of truth it falls to the earth and is implanted in a body."[29] This statement—and several others in the context—corresponds precisely with Hindu theology, which proclaims that the soul, upon attaining real wisdom,—that is, upon penetrating beneath illusions and gazing on reality,—is freed from the painful necessity of repeated births. Now, since the Hindus and the Pythagoreans held the doctrine as a severe truth, and Plato states it in the identical forms which they employed, and never implies that he is merely poetizing, we naturally conclude that he, too, veritably inculcates it as fact.

Finally, we are the more confirmed in this supposition when we find that his lineal disciples and most competent expounders, such as Proclus, and nearly all his later commentators, such as Ritter, have so understood him. The great chorus of his interpreters, from Plotinus to Leroux, with scarcely a dissentient voice, approve the opinion pronounced by the learned German historian of philosophy, that "the conception of the metempsychosis is so closely interwoven both with his physical system and with his ethical as to justify the conviction that Plato looked upon it as legitimate and valid, and not as a merely figurative exposition of the soul's life after death." To sum up the whole in one sentence: Plato taught with grave earnestness the immortality of the soul, subject to a discriminating retribution, which opened for its temporary residences three local regions, heaven, earth, and Hades, and which sometimes led

[27] Menexenus, 15. [28] The Laws, b. ix. ch. 10. [29] Phædrus, 60–62.

it through different grades of embodied being. "O thou youth who thinkest that thou art neglected by the gods, the person who has become more wicked departs to the more wicked souls; but he who has become better departs to the better souls, both in life and in all deaths."[30]

Whether Aristotle taught or denied the immortality of the soul has been the subject of innumerable debates from his own time until now. It is certainly a most ominous fact that his great name has been cited as authority for rejecting the doctrine of a future life by so many of his keenest followers; for this has been true of weighty representatives of every generation of his disciples. Antagonistic advocates have collected from his works a large number of varying statements, endeavoring to distinguish between the literal and the figurative, the esoteric and the popular. It is not worth our while here, either for their intrinsic interest or for their historic importance, to quote the passages and examine the arguments. All that is required for our purpose may be expressed in the language of Ritter, who has carefully investigated the whole subject:— "No passage in his extant works is decisive; but, from the general context of his doctrine, it is clear that he had no conception of the immortality of any individual rational entity."[31]

It would take a whole volume instead of a chapter to set forth the multifarious contrasting tenets of individual Greek philosophers, from the age of Pherecydes to that of Iamblichus, in relation to a future life. Not a few held, with Empedocles, that human life is a penal state, the doom of such immortal souls as for guilt have been disgraced and expelled from heaven. "Man is a fallen god condemned to wander on the earth, sky-aspiring but sense-clouded." Purged by a sufficient penance, he returns to his former godlike existence. "When, leaving this body, thou comest to the free ether, thou shalt be no longer a mortal, but an undying god." Notions of this sort fairly represent no small proportion of the speculations upon the fate of the soul which often reappear throughout the course of Greek literature. Another class of philosophers are represented by such names as Marcus Antoninus, who, comparing death to disembarkation at the close of a voyage, says, "If you land upon another life, it will not be empty of gods: if you land in nonentity, you will have done with pleasures, pains and drudgery."[32] And again he writes, "If souls survive, how has ethereal space made room for them all from eternity? How has the earth found room for all the bodies buried in it? The solution of the latter problem will solve the former. The corpse turns to dust and makes space for another: so the spirit, let loose into the air, after a while dissolves, and is either renewed into another soul or absorbed into the universe. Thus room is made for succession."[33] These passages, it will be observed, leave the survival of the soul at all entirely hypothetical, and, even supposing it to survive, allow it but a

[30] The Laws, lib. x. cap. 18.
[31] Hist. Anc. Phil. p. iii. b. ix. ch. 4.
[32] Meditationes, lib. iii. cap. 3.
[33] Ibid. lib. iv. cap. 21.

temporary duration. Such was the common view of the great sect of the Stoics. They all agreed that there was no real immortality for the soul; but they differed greatly as to the time of its dissolution. In the words of Cicero, "*Diu mansuros aiunt animos; semper, negant:*" they say souls endure for a long time, but not forever. Cleanthes taught that the intensity of existence after death would depend on the strength or weakness of the particular soul. Chrysippus held that only the souls of the wise and good would survive at all.[34] Panætius said the soul always died with the body, because it was born with it,—which he proved by the resemblances of children's souls to those of their parents.[35] Seneca has a great many contradictory passages on this subject in his works; but his preponderant authority, upon the whole, is that the soul and the body perish together.[36] At one time he says, "The day thou fearest as the last is the birthday of eternity." "As an infant in the womb is preparing to dwell in this world, so ought we to consider our present life as a preparation for the life to come."[37] At another time he says, with stunning bluntness, "There is nothing after death, and death itself is nothing."

Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil.[38]

Besides the mystics, like Plotinus, who affirmed the strict eternity of the soul, and the Stoics, like Poseidonius, who believed that the soul, having had a beginning, must have an end, although it might endure for a long period after leaving the body, there were among the Greeks and Romans two other classes of believers in a future life,—namely, the ignorant body of the people, who credited, more or less fully, the common fables concerning Hades; and an educated body of select minds, who, while casting off the popular superstitions, yet clung tenaciously to the great fact of immortality in some form or other, without attempting to define the precise mode of it.

There was among the illiterate populace, both Greek and Roman, even from the age of Eumolpus to that of Augustus, a good deal of firm faith in a future life, according to the gross scheme and particulars preserved to us still in the classic mythology. A thousand current allusions and statements in the general literature of those times prove the actual existence of a common and literal belief in Hades with all its accompaniments. This was far from being, in the average apprehension, a mere myth. Plato says, "Many, of their own accord, have wished to descend into Hades, induced by the hope of there seeing and being with those they have loved."[39] He also says, "When a man is about to die, the stories of future punishment which he had formerly ridiculed trouble him with fears of their truth."[40] And that frightful accounts of hell really swayed and terrified the people, even so late as the time of the

[34] Plutarch, Plac. Phil. iv. 7. [35] Tusc. Quæst. lib. i. cap. 32.
[36] Christoph Meiners, Vermischte Philosophische Schriften. Commentarius quo Stoicorum Sententiæ de Animorum post mortem Statu satis illustrantur.
[37] Epist. 102. [38] Troades, l. 397. [39] Phædo, 34. [40] Republic, lib. i. cap. 5.

Roman republic, appears from the earnest and elaborate arguments employed by various writers to refute them.

The same thing is shown by the religious ritual enacted at funerals and festivals, the forms of public and private worship observed till after the conversion of Constantine. The cake of rice and honey borne in the dead hand for Cerberus, the periodical offerings to the ghosts of the departed, as at the festivals called Feralia and Parentalia,[41] the pictures of the scenery of the under-world, hung in the temples, of which there was a famous one by Polygnotus,[42]—all imply a literal crediting of the vulgar doctrine. Altars were set up on the spots where Tiberius and Caius Gracchus were murdered, and services were there performed in honor of their *manes*. Festus, an old Roman lexicographer who lived in the second or third century, tells us there was in the Comitium a stone-covered pit which was supposed to be the mouth of Orcus, and was opened three days in the year for souls to rise out into the upper world.[43] Apuleius describes, in his treatise on "the god of Socrates," the Roman conceptions of the departed spirits of men. They called all disembodied human souls "lemures." Those of good men were "lares," those of bad men "larvæ." And when it was uncertain whether the specified soul was a lar or a larva, it was named "manes." The lares were mild household gods to their posterity. The larvæ were wandering, frightful shapes, harmless to the pious, but destructive to the reprobate.[44]

The belief in necromancy is well known to have prevailed extensively among the Greeks and Romans. Aristophanes represents the coward, Pisander, going to a necromancer and asking to "see his own soul, which had long departed, leaving him a man with breath alone."[45] In Latin literature no popular terror is more frequently alluded to or exemplified than the dread of seeing ghosts. Every one will recall the story of the phantom that appeared in the tent of Brutus before the battle of Philippi. It pervades the "Haunted House" of Plautus. Callimachus wrote the following couplet as an epitaph on the celebrated misanthrope:—

> "Timon, hat'st thou the world or Hades worse? Speak clear!
> Hades, O fool, because there are more of us here!"[46]

Pythagoras is said once to have explained an earthquake as being caused by a synod of ghosts assembled under ground! It is one of the best of the numerous jokes attributed to the great Samian; a good nut for the spirit-rappers to crack. There is an epigram by Diogenes Laertius, on one Lycon, who died of the gout:—

> "He who before could not so much as walk alone,
> The whole long road to Hades travell'd in one night!"

Philostratus declares that the shade of Apollonius appeared to a skeptical disciple of his and said, "The soul is immortal."[47] It is unquestionable

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[41] Ovid, Fasti, lib. ii. ll. 530–560.
[42] Pausanias, lib. x. cap. 28.
[43] De Significatione Verborum, verbum "Manalis."
[44] Lessing, Wie die Alten den Tod gebildet.
[45] Aves, l. 1485.
[46] Epigram IV.
[47] Vita Apollonii, lib. viii. cap. 31.

that the superstitious fables about the under-world and ghosts had a powerful hold, for a very long period, upon the Greek and Roman imagination, and were widely accepted as facts.

At the same time, there were many persons of more advanced culture to whom such coarse and fanciful representations had become incredible, but who still held loyally to the simple idea of the survival of the soul. They cherished a strong expectation of another life, although they rejected the revolting form and drapery in which the doctrine was usually set forth. Xenophon puts the following speech into the mouth of the expiring Cyrus:—"I was never able, my children, to persuade myself that the soul, as long as it was in a mortal body, lived, but when it was removed from this, that it died; neither could I believe that the soul ceased to think when separated from the unthinking and senseless body; but it seemed to me most probable that when pure and free from any union with the body, then it became most wise."[48] Every one has read of the young man whose faith and curiosity were so excited by Plato's writings that he committed suicide to test the fact of futurity. Callimachus tells the story neatly:—

> "Cleombrotus, the Ambracian, having said, 'Farewell,
> O sun!' leap'd from a lofty wall into the world
> Of ghosts. No deadly ill had chanced to him at all;
> But he had read in Plato's book upon the soul."[49]

The falling of Cato on his sword at Utica, after carefully perusing the Phædo, is equally familiar.

In the case of Cicero, too,—notwithstanding his fluctuations of feeling and the obvious contradictions of sentiment in some of his letters and his more deliberate essays,—it is, upon the whole, plain enough that, while he always regarded the vulgar notions as puerile falsehoods, the hope of a glorious life to come was powerful in him. This may be stated as the result of a patient investigation and balancing of all that he says on the subject, and of the circumstances under which he says it. To cite and criticize the passages here would occupy too much space to too little profit.

At the siege of Jerusalem, Titus made a speech to his soldiers, in the course of it saying to them, "Those souls which are severed from their fleshly bodies by the sword in battle, are received by the pure ether and joined to that company which are placed among the stars."[50] The beautiful story of Cupid and Psyche, that loveliest of all the myths concerning the immortality of the soul, was a creation by no means foreign to the prevalent ideas and feelings of the time when it was written. The "Dissertations" of Maximus Tyrius abound with sentences like the following. "This very thing which the multitude call death is the birth of a new life, and the beginning of immortality."[51] "When Pherecydes lay sick, conscious of spiritual energy, he cared not for bodily disease,

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[48] Cyropædia, lib. viii. cap. 7. [49] Epigram XXIV. [50] Josephus, De Bell. lib. vi. cap. 1. [51] Diss. XXV.

his soul standing erect and looking for release from its cumbersome vestment. So a man in chains, seeing the walls of his prison crumbling, waits for deliverance, that from the darkness in which he has been buried he may soar to the ethereal regions and be filled with glorious light."[53]

The conception of man as a member of the cosmic family of gods and genii was known to all the classic philosophers, and was cherished by the larger portion of them. Pindar affirms one origin for gods and men. Plato makes wise souls accompany the gods in their excursions about the sky. Cicero argues that heaven, and not Hades, is the destination of the soul at death, because the soul, being lighter than the earthly elements surrounding it here, would rise aloft through the natural force of gravitation.[53] Plutarch says, "Demons are the spies and scouts of the gods, wandering and circuiting around on their commands." Disembodied souls and demons were the same. The prevalence of such ideas as these produced in the Greek and Roman imagination a profound sense of invisible beings, a sense which was further intensified by the popular personifications of all natural forces, as in fountains and trees, full of lapsing naiads and rustling dryads. An illustrative fact is furnished by an effect of the tradition that Thetis, snatching the body of Achilles from the funeral-pile, conveyed him to Leuke, an island in the Black Sea. The mariners sailing by often fancied they saw his mighty shade flitting along the shore in the dusk of evening.[54] But a passage in Hesiod yields a more adequate illustration:—"When the mortal remains of those who flourished during the golden age were hidden beneath the earth, their souls became beneficent demons, still hovering over the world they once inhabited, and still watching, clothed in thin air and gliding rapidly through every region of the earth, as guardians over the affairs of men."[55]

But there were always some who denied the common doctrine of a future life and scoffed at its physical features. Through the absurd extravagances of poets and augurs, and through the growth of critical thought, this unbelief went on increasing from the days of Anaxagoras, when it was death to call the sun a ball of fire, to the days of Catiline, when Julius Cæsar could be chosen Pontifex Maximus, almost before the Senate had ceased to reverberate his voice openly asserting that death was the utter end of man. Plutarch dilates upon the wide skepticism of the Greeks as to the infernal world, at the close of his essay on the maxim, "Live concealed." The portentous growth of irreverent unbelief, the immense change of feeling from awe to ribaldry, is made obvious by a glance from the known gravity of Hesiod's "Descent of Theseus and Pirithous into Hades," to Lucian's "Kataplous," which represents the cobbler Mycillus leaping from the banks of the Styx, swimming after Charon's boat, climbing into it upon the shoulders of the

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[52] Diss. XLI. [53] Tusc. Quest. lib i. cap. 17. [54] Müller, Greek Literature, ch. vi.
[55] Works and Days, lib. i. ll. 120–125.

tyrant Megapenthes and tormenting him the whole way. Pliny, in his Natural History, affirms that death is an everlasting sleep.[56] The whole great sect of the Epicureans united in supporting that belief by the combined force of ridicule and argument. Their views are the most fully and ably defended by the consummate Lucretius, in his masterly poem on the "Nature of Things." Horace,[57] Juvenal,[58] Persius,[59] concur in scouting at the tales which once, when recited on the stage, had made vast audiences perceptibly tremble.[60] And Cicero asks, "What old woman is so insane as to fear these things?"[61]

There were two classes of persons who sought differently to free mankind from the terrors which had invested the whole prospect of death and another world. The first were the materialists, who endeavored to prove that death was to man the absolute end of every thing. Secondly, there were the later Platonists, who maintained that this world is the only Hades, that heaven is our home, that all death is ascent to better life. "To remain on high with the gods is life; to descend into this world is death, a descent into Orcus," they said. The following couplet, of an unknown date, is translated from the Greek Anthology:—

> "Diogenes, whose tub stood by the road,
> Now, being dead, has the stars for his abode."

Macrobius writes, in his commentary on the "Dream of Scipio," "Here, on earth, is the cavern of Dis, the infernal region. The river of oblivion is the wandering of the mind forgetting the majesty of its former life and thinking a residence in the body the only life. Phlegethon is the fires of wrath and desire. Acheron is retributive sadness. Cocytus is wailing tears. Styx is the whirlpool of hatreds. The vulture eternally tearing the liver is the torment of an evil conscience."[62]

To the ancient Greek in general, death was a sad doom. When he lost a friend, he sighed a melancholy farewell after him to the faded shore of ghosts. Summoned himself, he departed with a lingering look at the sun, and a tearful adieu to the bright day and the green earth. To the Roman, death was a grim reality. To meet it himself he girded up his loins with artificial firmness. But at its ravages among his friends he wailed in anguished abandonment. To his dying vision there was indeed a future; but shapes of distrust and shadow stood upon its disconsolate borders; and, when the prospect had no horror, he still shrank from its poppied gloom.

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[56] Lib. ii. cap. 7. [57] Lib. i. epist. 16. [58] Sat. II. [59] Sat. II.
[60] Tusc. Quest. lib. i. cap. 16. [61] Ibid. cap. 21. [62] Lib. i. cap. 9, 10.

CHAPTER XI.

MOHAMMEDAN DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

Islam has been a mighty power in the earth since the middle of the seventh century. A more energetic and trenchant faith than it was for eight hundred years has not appeared among men. Finally expelled from its startling encampments in Spain and the Archipelago, it still rules with tenacious hold over Turkey, a part of Tartary, Palestine, Persia, Arabia, and large portions of Africa. At this moment, as to adherence and influence, it is subordinate only to the two foremost religious systems in the world,—Buddhism and Christianity. The dogmatic structure of Islam as a theology and its practical power as an experimental religion offer a problem of the gravest interest. But we must hasten on to give an exposition of merely those elements in it which are connected with its doctrine of a future life.

It is a matter of entire notoriety that there is but the least amount of originality in the tenets of the Mohammedan faith. The blending together of those tenets was distinctive, the unifying soul breathed into them was a new creation, and the great aim to which the whole was subordinated was peculiar; but the component doctrines themselves, with slight exception, existed before as avowed principles in the various systems of belief and practice that prevailed around. Mohammed adopted many of the notions and customs of the pagan Arabs, the central dogma of the Jews as to the unity of God, most of the traditions of the Hebrew Scriptures, innumerable fanciful conceits of the Rabbins,[1] whole doctrines of the Magians with their details, some views of the Gnostics, and extensive portions of a corrupted Christianity, grouping them together with many modifications of his own, and such additions as his genius afforded and his exigencies required. The motley strangely results in a compact and systematic working faith.

The Islamites are divided into two great sects,—the Sunnees and the Sheeahs. The Arabs, Tartars, and Turks are Sunnees, are dominant in numbers and authority, are strict literalists, and are commonly considered the orthodox believers. The Persians are Sheeahs, are inferior in point of numbers, are somewhat freer in certain interpretations, placing a mass of tradition, like the Jewish Mischna, on a level with the Koran,[2] and are usually regarded as heretical. To apply our own eccle-

[1] Rabbi Abraham Geiger, Prize Essay upon the question, proposed by the University of Bonn, "Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthum aufgenommen?"

[2] Merrick, Translation of the Sheeah Traditions of Mohammed in the Hyát-ul-Kuloob, note x.

siastical phraseology to them, the latter are the Moslem Protestants, the former the Moslem Catholics. Yet in relation to almost every thing which should seem at all fundamental or vital they agree in their teachings. Their differences in general are upon trivial opinions, or especially upon ritual particulars. For instance, the Sheeahs send all the Sunnees to hell because in their ablutions they wash from the elbow to the finger-tips; the Sunnees return the compliment to their rival sectarists because they wash from the finger-tips to the elbow. Within these two grand denominations of Sheeah and Sunnee are found a multitude of petty sects, separated from each other on various questions of speculative faith and ceremonial practice. Some take the Koran alone, and that in its plain literal sense, as their authority. Others read the Koran in the explanatory light of a vast collection of parables, proverbs, legends, purporting to be from Mohammed. There is no less than a score of mystic allegorizing sects[3] who reduce almost every thing in the Koran to symbol, or spiritual signification, and some of whom—as the Sufis—are the most rapt and imaginative of all the enthusiastic devotees in the world.

A cardinal point in the Mohammedan faith is the asserted existence of angels, celestial and infernal. Eblis is Satan. He was an angel of lofty rank; but when God created Adam and bade all the angels worship him, Eblis refused, saying, "I was created of fire, he of clay: I am more excellent and will not bow to him."[4] Upon this God condemned Eblis and expelled him from Paradise. He then became the unappeasable foe and seducing destroyer of men. He is the father of those swarms of jins, or evil spirits, who crowd all hearts and space with temptations and pave the ten thousand paths to hell with lures for men.

The next consideration preliminary to a clear exhibition of our special subject, is the doctrine of predestination, the unflinching fatalism which pervades and crowns this religion. The breath of this appalling faith is saturated with fatality, and its very name of Islâm means "Submission." In heaven the prophet saw a prodigious wax tablet, called the "Preserved Table," on which were written the decrees of all events between the morning of creation and the day of judgment. The burning core of Mohammed's preaching was the proclamation of the one true God whose volition bears the irresistible destiny of the universe; and inseparably associated with this was an intense hatred of idolatry, fanned by the wings of God's wrath and producing a fanatic sense of a divine commission to avenge him on his insulters and vindicate for him his rightful worship from every nation. There is an apparent conflict between the Mohammedan representations of God's absolute predestination of all things, and the abundant exhortations to all men to accept the true faith and bring forth good works, and thus make sure of an acceptable account in the day of judgment. The former make God's irreversi-

[3] Churchill, Mount Lebanon, vol. i. ch. xv. [4] Sale's Translation of the Koran, ch. vii.

ble will all in all. The latter seem to place alternative conditions before men, and to imply in them a power of choice. But this is a contradiction inseparable from the discussion of God's infinite sovereignty and man's individual freedom. The inconsistency is as gross in Augustine and Calvinism as it is in the Arabian lawgiver and the creed of the Sunnees. The Koran, instead of solving the difficulty, boldly cuts it, and does that in exactly the same way as the thorough Calvinist. God has respectively elected and reprobated all the destined inhabitants of heaven and hell, unalterably, independently of their choice or action. At the same time, reception of the true faith, and a life conformed to it, are virtually necessary for salvation, because it is decreed that all the elect shall profess and obey the true faith. Their obedient reception of it proves them to be elected. On the other hand, it is foreordained that none of the reprobate shall become disciples and followers of the Prophet. Their rejection of him, their wicked misbelief, is the evidence of their original reprobation. As the Koran itself expresses it, salvation is for "all who are willing to be warned; but they shall not be warned unless God please:"[5] "all who shall be willing to walk uprightly; but they shall not be willing unless God willeth."[6]

But such fine-drawn distinctions are easily lost from sight or spurned in the eager affray of affairs and the imminent straits of the soul. While in dogma and theory the profession of an orthodox belief, together with scrupulous prayer, fasting, alms, and the pilgrimage to Mecca, or the absence of these things, simply denotes the foregone determinations of God in regard to the given individuals, in practice and feeling the contrasted beliefs and courses of conduct are held to *obtain* heaven and hell. And we find, accordingly, that Mohammed spoke as if God's primeval ordination had fixed all things forever, whenever he wished to awaken in his followers reckless valor and implicit submission. "Whole armies cannot slay him who is fated to die in his bed." On the contrary, when he sought to win converts, to move his hearers by threatenings and persuasions, he spoke as if every thing pertaining to human weal and woe, present and future, rested on conditions within the choice of men. Say, "'There is but one God, and Mohammed is his prophet,' and heaven shall be your portion; but cling to your delusive errors, and you shall be companions of the infernal fire." Practically speaking, the essence of propagandist Islam was a sentiment like this. All men who do not follow Mohammed are accursed misbelievers. We are God's chosen avengers, the commissioned instruments for reducing his foes to submission. Engaged in that work, the hilts of all our scimitars are in his hand. He snatches his servant-martyr from the battle-field to heaven. Thus the weapons of the unbelievers send their slain to paradise, while the weapons of the believers send their slain to hell. Up, then, with the crescent banner, and, dripping with idolatrous gore, let it gleam over

[5] Koran, ch. lxxiv. [6] Ibid. ch. lxxxi.

mountain and plain till our sickles have reaped the earth! "The sword is the key of heaven and the key of hell. A drop of blood shed in the cause of Allah, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting and prayer. Whoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven. In the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion and odoriferous as musk."[7] An infuriated zeal against idolaters and unbelievers inflamed the Moslem heart, a fierce martial enthusiasm filled the Moslem soul, and tangible visions of paradise and hell floated, illuminate, through the Moslem imagination. And so from the Persian Gulf to the Caucasus, from Sierra Leone to the Pyrenees, the polity of Mohammed overran the nations, with the Koran in its left hand, the exterminating blade in its right, one thunder-shout still breaking from its awful lips:—"Profess Islâm, and live, with the clear prospect of eternal bliss beyond life; reject it, and die, with the full certainty of eternal anguish beyond death." When the crusading Christians and the Saracenic hosts met in battle, the conflict was the very frenzy of fanaticism. "There the question of salvation or damnation lay on the ground between the marshalled armies, to be fought for and carried by the stronger." Christ and Allah encountered, and the endless fate of their opposed followers hung on the swift-turning issue. "Never have the appalling ideas of the invisible world so much and so distinctly mingled with the fury of mortal strife as in this instance. To the eyes of Turk and Arab the smoke of the infernal pit appeared to break up from the ground in the rear of the infidel lines. As the squadrons of the faithful moved on to the charge, that pit yawned to receive the miscreant host; and in chasing the foe the prophet's champions believed they were driving their antagonists down the very slopes of perdition. When at length steel clashed upon steel and the yell of death shook the air, the strife was not so much between arm and arm as between spirit and spirit, and each deadly thrust was felt to pierce the life at once of the body and of the soul."[8]

That terrible superstition prevails almost universally among the Musulmâns, designated the "Beating in the Sepulchre," or the examination and torture of the body in the grave. As soon as a corpse is interred, two black and livid angels, called the Examiners, whose names are Munkeer and Nakeer, appear, and order the dead person to sit up and answer certain questions as to his faith. If he give satisfactory replies, they suffer him to rest in peace, refreshed by airs from paradise; but if he prove to have been an unbeliever or heretic, they beat him on the temples with iron maces till he roars aloud with pain and terror. They then press the earth on the body, which remains gnawed and stung by dragons and scorpions until the last day. Some sects give a figurative explanation of these circumstances. The utter denial of the whole representation is a schismatic peculiarity of the sect of Motozallites.

[7] Gibbon, Decline and Fall of Rome, ch. l.

[8] Taylor, Hist. of Fanaticism, sect. vii.

But all true believers, both Sunnee and Sheeah, devoutly accept it literally. The commentators declare that it is implied in the following verse of the Koran itself:—"How, therefore, will it be with them when they die and the angels shall strike their faces and their backs?"[9]

The intermediate state of souls from the time of death until the resurrection has been the subject of extensive speculation and argument with the Islamites. The souls of the prophets, it is thought, are admitted directly to heaven. The souls of martyrs, according to a tradition received from Mohammed, rest in heaven in the crops of green birds who eat of the fruits and drink of the rivers there. As to the location of the souls of the common crowd of the faithful, the conclusions are various. Some maintain that they and the souls of the impious alike sleep in the dust until the end, when Israfil's blasts will stir them into life to be judged. But the general and orthodox impression is that they tarry in one of the heavens, enjoying a preparatory blessedness. The souls of the wicked, it is commonly held, after being refused a place in the tomb and also being repulsed from heaven, are carried down to the lower abyss, and thrown into a dungeon under a green rock, or into the jaw of Eblis, there to be treated with foretastes of their final doom until summoned to the judgment.[10]

A very prominent doctrine in the Moslem creed is that of the resurrection of the body. This is a central feature in the orthodox faith. It is expounded in all the emphatic details of its gross literality by their authoritative doctors, and is dwelt upon with unwearied reiteration by the Koran. True, some minor heretical sects give it a spiritual interpretation; but the great body of believers accept it unhesitatingly in its most physical shape. The intrinsic unnaturalness and improbability of the dogma were evidently felt by Mohammed and his expositors; and all the more they strove to bolster it up and enforce its reception by vehement affirmations and elaborate illustrations. In the second chapter of the Koran it is related that, in order to remove the skepticism of Abraham as to the resurrection, God wrought the miracle of restoring four birds which had been cut in pieces and scattered. In chapter seventh, God says, "We bring rain upon a withered country and cause the fruits to spring forth. Thus will we bring the dead from their graves." The prophet frequently rebukes those who reject this belief. "What aileth them, that they believe not the resurrection?"[11] "Is not He who created man able to quicken the dead?"[12] "The scoffers say, 'Shall we be raised to life, and our forefathers too, after we have become dust and bones? This is nothing but sorcery.'"[13] First, Israfil will blow the blast of consternation. After an interval, he will blow the blast of examination, at which all creatures will die and the material universe will melt in horror. Thirdly, he will blow the blast of resurrection. Upon that instant, the

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[9] Ch. xlvii. [10] Sale, Preliminary Discourse, sect. iv. [11] Ch. lxxxiv.
[12] Ch. lxxv. [13] Ch. xxxvii., lvi.

assembled souls of mankind will issue from his trumpet, like a swarm of bees, and fill the atmosphere, seeking to be reunited to their former bodies, which will then be restored, even to their very hairs.

The day of judgment immediately follows. This is the dreadful day for which all other days were made; and it will come with blackness and consternation to unbelievers and evil-doers, but with peace and delight to the faithful. The total race of man will be gathered in one place. Mohammed will first advance in front, to the right hand, as intercessor for the professors of Islam. The preceding prophets will appear with their followers. Gabriel will hold suspended a balance so stupendous that one scale will cover paradise, the other hell. "Hath the news of the overwhelming day of judgment reached thee?"[14] "Whoever hath wrought either good or evil of the weight of an ant shall in that day behold the same."[15] An infallible scrutiny shall search and weigh every man's deeds, and exact justice shall be done, and no foreign help can avail any one. "One soul shall not be able to obtain any thing in behalf of another soul."[16] "Every man of them on that day shall have business enough of his own to employ his thoughts."[17] In all the Mohammedan representations of this great trial and of the principles which determine its decisions, no reference is made to the doctrine of predestination, but all turns on strict equity. Reckoning a reception or rejection of the true faith as a crowning merit or demerit, the only question is, Do his good works outweigh, by so much as a hair, his evil works? If so, he goes to the right; if not, he must take the left. The solitary trace of fatalism—or rather favoritism—is this: that no idolater, once in hell, can ever possibly be released, while no Islamite, however wicked, can be damned eternally. The punishment of unbelievers is everlasting, that of believers limited. The opposite of this opinion is a great heresy with the generality of the Moslems. Some say the judgment will require but the twinkling of an eye; others that it will occupy fifty thousand years, during which time the sun will be drawn from its sheath and burn insufferably, and the wicked will stand looking up, their feet shod with shoes of fire, and their skulls boiling like pots. At last, when sentence has been passed on them, all souls are forced to try the passage of al Sirat, a bridge thinner than a hair, sharper than a razor, and hotter than flame, spanning in one frail arch the immeasurable distance, directly over hell, from earth to paradise. Some affect a metaphorical solution of this air-severing causeway, and take it merely as a symbol of the true Sirat, or bridge of this world,—namely, the true faith and obedience; but every orthodox Mussulman firmly holds it as a physical fact to be surmounted in the last day.[18] Mohammed leading the way, the faithful and righteous will traverse it with ease and as quickly as a flash of lightning. The thin edge broadens beneath their

[14] Koran, ch. lxxxviii. [15] Ibid. ch. xcix. [16] Ibid. ch. lxxxii.
[17] Ibid. ch. lxxx. [18] W. C. Taylor, Mohammedanism and its Sects.

steps, the surrounding support of convoying angels' wings hides the fire-lake below from their sight, and they are swiftly enveloped in paradise. But as the infidel with his evil deeds essays to cross, thorns entangle his steps, the lurid glare beneath blinds him, and he soon topples over and whirls into the blazing abyss. In Dr. Frothingham's fine translation from Rückert,—

> "When the wicked o'er it goes, stands the bridge all sparkling;
> And his mind bewilder'd grows, and his eye swims darkling.
> Wakening, giddying, then comes in, with a deadly fright,
> Memory of all his sin, rushing on his sight.
> But when forward steps the just, he is safe e'en here:
> Round him gathers holy trust, and drives back his fear.
> Each good deed's a mist, that wide, golden borders gets;
> And for him the bridge, each side, shines with parapets."

Between hell and paradise is an impassable wall,—al Arâf,—separating the tormented from the happy, and covered with those souls whose good works exactly counterpoise their evil works, and who are, consequently, fitted for neither place. The prophet and his expounders have much to say of this narrow intermediate abode.[19] Its lukewarm denizens are contemptuously spoken of. It is said that Arâf seems hell to the blessed but paradise to the damned; for does not every thing depend on the point of view?

The Mohammedan descriptions of the doom of the wicked, the torments of hell, are constantly repeated and are copious and vivid. Reference to chapter and verse would be superfluous, since almost every page of the Koran abounds in such tints and tones as the following. "The unbelievers shall be companions of hell-fire forever." "Those who disbelieve we will surely cast to be broiled in hell-fire: so often as their skins shall be well burned we will give them other skins in exchange, that they may taste the sharper torment." "I will fill hell entirely full of genii and men." "They shall be dragged on their faces into hell, and it shall be said unto them, 'Taste ye that torment of hell-fire which ye rejected as a falsehood.'" "The unbelievers shall be driven into hell by troops." "They shall be taken by the forelocks and the feet and flung into hell, where they shall drink scalding water." "Their only entertainment shall be boiling water, and they shall be fuel for hell." "The smoke of hell shall cast forth sparks as big as towers, resembling yellow camels in color." "They who believe not shall have garments of fire fitted on them, and they shall be beaten with maces of red-hot iron." "The true believers, lying on couches, shall look down upon the infidels in hell and laugh them to scorn."

There is a tradition that a door shall be shown the damned opening into paradise, but when they approach it, it shall be suddenly shut, and the believers within will laugh. Pitiless and horrible as these expressions from the Koran are, they are merciful compared with the pictures

[19] Koran, ch. viii. Sale, Preliminary Discourse, p. 125.

in the later traditions, of women suspended by their hair, their brains boiling, suspended by their tongues, molten copper poured down their throats, bound hands and feet and devoured piecemeal by scorpions, hung up by their heels in flaming furnaces and their flesh cut off on all sides with scissors of fire.[20] Their popular teachings divide hell into seven stories, sunk one under another. The first and mildest is for the wicked among the true believers. The second is assigned to the Jews. The third is the special apartment of the Christians. The fourth is allotted to the Sabians, the fifth to the Magians, and the sixth to the most abandoned idolaters; but the seventh—the deepest and worst—belongs to the *hypocrites of all religions*. The first hell shall finally be emptied and destroyed, on the release of the wretched believers there; but all the other hells will retain their victims eternally.

If the visions of hell which filled the fancies of the faithful were material and glowing, equally so were their conceptions of paradise. On this world of the blessed were lavished all the charms so fascinating to the Oriental luxuriousness of sensual languor, and which the poetic Oriental imagination knew so well how to depict. As soon as the righteous have passed Sirat, they obtain the first taste of their approaching felicity by a refreshing draught from "Mohammed's Pond." This is a square lake, a month's journey in circuit, its water whiter than milk or silver and more fragrant than to be comparable to any thing known by mortals. As many cups are set around it as there are stars in the firmament; and whoever drinks from it will never thirst more. Then comes paradise,—an ecstatic dream of pleasure, filled with sparkling streams, honeyed fountains, shady groves, precious stones, all flowers and fruits, blooming youths, circulating goblets, black-eyed houris, incense, brilliant birds, delightsome music, unbroken peace.[21] A Sheeah tradition makes the prophet promise to Ali twelve palaces in paradise, built of gold and silver bricks laid in a cement of musk and amber. The pebbles around them are diamonds and rubies, the earth saffron, its hillocks camphor. Rivers of honey, wine, milk, and water flow through the court of each palace, their banks adorned with various resplendent trees, interspersed with bowers consisting each of one hollow transparent pearl. In each of these bowers is an emerald throne, with a houri upon it arrayed in seventy green robes and seventy yellow robes of so fine a texture, and she herself so transparent, that the marrow of her ankle, notwithstanding robes, flesh, and bone, is as distinctly visible as a flame in a glass vessel. Each houri has seventy locks of hair, every one under the care of a maid, who perfumes it with a censer which God has made to smoke with incense without the presence of fire; and no mortal has ever breathed such fragrance as is there exhaled.[22]

Such a doctrine of the future life as that here set forth, it is plain, was strikingly adapted to win and work fervidly on the minds of the imagina-

[20] Hyát-ul-Kuloob, ch. x. p. 206. [21] Koran, ch. lv. ch. lvi. [22] Hyát-ul-Kuloob, ch. xvi. p. 286.

tive, voluptuous, indolent, passionate races of the Orient. It possesses a nucleus of just and natural moral conviction and sentiment, around which is grouped a composite of a score of superstitions afloat before the rise of Islam, set off with the arbitrary drapery of a poetic fancy, colored by the peculiar idiosyncrasies of Mohammed, emphasized to suit his special ends, and all inflamed with a vindictive and propagandist animus. Any word further in explanation of the origin, or in refutation of the soundness, of this system of belief—once so imminently aggressive and still so widely established—would seem to be superfluous.

CHAPTER XII.

EXPLANATORY SURVEY OF THE FIELD AND ITS MYTHS.

Surveying the thought of mankind upon the subject of a future life, as thus far examined, one can hardly fail to be struck by the multitudinous variety of opinions and pictures it presents. Whence and how arose this heterogeneous mass of notions?

In consequence of the endowments with which God has created man, the doctrine of a future life arises as a normal fact in the development of his experience. But the forms and accompaniments of the doctrine, the immense diversity of dress and colors it appears in, are subject to all the laws and accidents that mould and clothe the products within any other department of thought and literature. We must refer the ethnic conceptions of a future state to the same sources to which other portions of poetry and philosophy are referred,—namely, to the action of sentiment, fancy, and reason, first; then to the further action, reaction, and interaction of the pictures, dogmas, and reasonings of authoritative poets, priests, and philosophers on one side, and of the feeling, faith, and thought of credulous multitudes and docile pupils on the other. In the light of these great centres of intellectual activity, parents of intellectual products, there is nothing pertaining to the subject before us, however curious, which may not be intelligibly explained, seen naturally to spring out of certain conditions of man's mind and experience as related with the life of society and the phenomena of the world.

So far as the views of the future life set forth in the religions of the ancient nations constitute systematically developed and arranged schemes of doctrine and symbol, the origin of them therefore needs no further explanation than is furnished by a contemplation of the regulated exercise of the speculative and imaginative faculties. But so far as those

representations contain unique, grotesque, isolated particulars, their production is accounted for by this general law:—In the early stages of human culture, when the natural sensibilities are intensely preponderant in power, and the critical judgment is in abeyance, whatever strongly moves the soul causes a poetical secretion on the part of the imagination.[1] Thus the rainbow is personified; a waterfall is supposed to be haunted by spiritual beings; a volcano with fiery crater is seen as a Cyclops with one flaming eye in the centre of his forehead. This law holds not only in relation to impressive objects or appearances in nature, but also in relation to occurrences, traditions, usages. In this way innumerable myths arise,—explanatory or amplifying thoughts secreted by the stimulated imagination and then narrated as events. Sometimes these tales are given and received in good faith for truth, as Grote abundantly proves in his volume on Legendary Greece; sometimes they are clearly the gleeful play of the fancy, as when it is said that the hated infant Herakles having been put to Hera's breast as she lay asleep in heaven, she, upon waking, thrust him away, and the lacteal fluid, streaming athwart the firmament, originated the Milky Way! To apply this law to our special subject: What would be likely to work more powerfully on the minds of a crude, sensitive people, in an early stage of the world, with no elaborate discipline of religious thought, than the facts and phenomena of death? Plainly, around this centre there must be deposited a vast quantity of ideas and fantasies. The task is to discriminate them, trace their individual origin, and classify them.

One of the most interesting and difficult questions connected with the subject before us is this:—What, in any given time and place, were the limits of the popular belief? How much of the current representations in relation to another life were held as strict verity? What portions were regarded as fable or symbolism? It is obvious enough that among the civilized nations of antiquity the distinctions of literal statement, allegory, historic report, embellished legend, satire, poetic creation, philosophical hypothesis, religious myth, were more or less generally known. For example, when Æschylus makes one of his characters say, "Yonder comes a herald: so Dust, Clay's thirsty sister, tells me," the personification, unquestionably, was as purposed and conscious as it is when a poet in the nineteenth century says, "Thirst dived from the brazen glare of the sky and clutched me by the throat." So, too, when Homer describes the bag of Æolus, the winds, in possession of the sailors on board Ulysses' ship, the half-humorous allegory cannot be mistaken for religious faith. It is equally obvious that these distinctions were not always carefully observed, but were often confounded. Therefore, in respect to the faith of primitive times, it is impossible to draw any broad, fixed lines and say conclusively that all on this side was consciously considered as fanciful play or emblem, all on that side as earnest fact. Each particular in each case

[1] Chambers's Papers for the People, vol. i.: The Myth, p. 1.

must be examined by itself and be decided on its own merits by the light and weight of the moral probabilities. For example, if there was any historic basis for the myth of Herakles dragging Cerberus out of Hades, it was that this hero forcibly entered the Mysteries and dragged out to light the enactor of the part of the three-headed dog. The aged Northman, committing martial suicide rather than die in his peaceful bed, undoubtedly accepted the ensanguined picture of Valhalla as a truth. Virgil, dismissing Æneas from the Tartarean realm through "the ivory gate by which false dreams and fictitious visions are wont to issue," plainly wrought as a poet on imaginative materials.

It should be recollected that most of the early peoples had no rigid formularies of faith like the Christian creeds. The writings preserved to us are often rather fragments of individual speculations and hopes than rehearsals of public dogmas. Plato is far from revealing the contemporaneous belief of Greece in the sense in which Thomas Aquinas reveals the contemporaneous belief of Christendom. In Egypt, Persia, Rome,—among every cultured people,—there were different classes of minds,—the philosophers, the priests, the poets, the warriors, the common multitude,—whose modes of thinking were in contrast, whose methods of interpreting their ancestral traditions and the phenomena of human destiny were widely apart, whose respective beliefs had far different boundaries. The openly skeptical Euripides and Lucian are to be borne in mind as well as the apparently credulous Hesiod and Homer. Of course the Fables of Æsop were not literally credited. Neither, as a general thing, were the Metamorphoses of Ovid. With the ancients, while there was a general national cast of faith, there were likewise varieties of individual and sectarian belief and unbelief, skepticism and credulity, solemn reason and recreative fancy.

The people of Lystra, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, actually thought Barnabas and Paul were Zeus and Hermes, and brought oxen and garlands to offer them the sacrifices appropriate to those deities. Peisistratus obtained rule over Athens by dressing a stately woman, by the name of Phyê, as Athene, and passing off her commands as those of the tutelary goddess. Herodotus ridicules the people for unsuspiciously accepting her.[2] The incredibleness of a doctrine is no obstacle to a popular belief in it. Whosoever thinks of the earnest reception of the dogma of transubstantiation—the conversion of a wheaten wafer into the infinite God—by nearly three-quarters of Christendom at this moment, must permit the paradox to pass unchallenged. Doubtless the closing eye of many an expiring Greek reflected the pitiless old oarsman plying his frost-cold boat across the Stygian ferry, and his failing ear caught the rush of the Phlegethonian surge. It is equally certain that, at the same time, many another laughed at these things as childish fictions, fitted only to scare "the baby of a girl."

[2] Lib. i. cap. 60.

Stricken memory, yearning emotion, kindled fancy, a sensitive and timorous observation of natural phenomena,—rustling leaves, wavering shadows, apparent effects of unknown causes,—each is a superstitious mother of beliefs. The Sonora Indians say that departed souls dwell among the caves and rocks of the cliffs, and that the echoes often heard there *are their voices*. Ruskin suggests that the cause of the Greeks surrounding the lower-world residence of Persephone with poplar groves was that "the frailness, fragility, and inconstancy of the leafage of the poplar-tree resembled the fancied ghost-people." We can very easily imagine how, in the breeze at the entrance to some subterranean descent,—

> "A ghostly rank
> Of poplars, like a halted train of shades,
> Trembled."

The operations of fierce passions, hate, fright, and rage, in a brain boiling with blood and fire, make pictures which the savage afterwards holds in remembrance as facts. He does not by reflection consciously distinguish the internal acts and sights of the mind from objective verities. Barbarians—as travellers and psychologists have repeatedly observed—usually pay great attention to the vagaries of madmen, the doings and utterances of the insane. These persons are regarded as possessed by higher beings. Their words are oracles: the horrible shapes, the grotesque scenes, which their disordered and inflamed faculties conjure up, are eagerly caught at, and such accounts of them as they are able to make out are treasured up as revelations. This fact is of no slight importance as an element in the hinting basis of the beliefs of uncultivated tribes. Many a vision of delirium, many a raving medley of insanity, has been accepted as truth.[8] Another phenomenon, closely allied to the former, has wrought in a similar manner and still more widely. It has been a common superstition with barbarous nations in every part of the world, from Timbuctoo to Siberia, to suppose that dreams are real adventures which the soul passes through, flying abroad while the body lies, a dormant shell, wrapped in slumber. The power of this influence in nourishing a copious credulity may easily be imagined.

The origin of many notions touching a future state, found in literature, is to be traced to those rambling thoughts and poetic reveries with which even the most philosophical minds, in certain moods, indulge themselves. For example, Sir Isaac Newton "doubts whether there be not superior intelligencies who, subject to the Supreme, oversee and control the revolutions of the heavenly bodies." And Goethe, filled with sorrow by the death of Wieland, musing on the fate of his departed friend, solemnly surmised that he had become the soul of a world in some far realm of space. The same mental exercises which supply the barbarian superstitions reappear in disciplined minds, on a higher plane and in

[8] De Boismont, Rational History of Hallucinations, ch. 15: Of Hallucinations considered in a Psychological, Historical, and Religious Point of View.

more refined forms. Culture and science do not deliver us from all illusion and secure us sober views conformed to fact. Still, what we think amid the solid realities of waking life, fancy in her sleep disjointedly reverberates from hollow fields of dream. The metaphysician or theologian, instead of resting contented with mere snatches and glimpses, sets himself deliberately to reason out a complete theory. In these elaborate efforts many an opinion and metaphor, plausible or absurd, sweet or direful, is born and takes its place. There is in the human mind a natural passion for congruity and completeness,—a passion extremely fertile in complementary products. For example, the early Jewish notion of literally sitting down at table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in the resurrection, was gradually developed by accretion of assisting particulars into all the details of a consummate banquet, at which Leviathan was to be the fish, Behemoth the roast, and so on.[4] In the construction of doctrines or of discourses, one thought suggests, one premise or conclusion necessitates, another. This genetic application is sometimes plainly to be seen even in parts of incoherent schemes. For instance, the conception that man has returned into this life from anterior experiences of it is met by the opposing fact that he does not remember any preceding career. The explanatory idea is at once hit upon of a fountain of oblivion—a river Lethe—from which the disembodied soul drinks ere it reappears. Once establish in the popular imagination the conception of the Olympian synod of gods, and a thousand dramatic tales of action and adventure, appropriate to the characters of the divine personages, will inevitably follow.

The interest, cunning, and authority of priesthoods are another source of prevailing opinions concerning a life to come. Many nations, early and late, have been quite under the spiritual direction of priests, and have believed almost every thing they said. Numerous motives conspire to make the priest concoct fictions and exert his power to gain credence for them. He must have an alluringly-colored elysium to reward his obedient disciples. When his teachings are rejected and his authority mocked, his class-isolation and incensed pride find a natural satisfaction in threatening the reprobate aliens that a rain of fire will one day wash them down the smoking gulfs of sulphur. The Maronites, a sect of Catholic Christians in Syria, purchase of their priests a few yards of land in heaven, to secure a residence there when they die.[5] The Siamese Buddhists accumulate silver and bury it in secret, to supply the needs of the soul during its wandering in the separate state. "This foolish opinion robs the state of immense sums. The lords and rich men erect pyramids over these treasures, and for their greater security place them *in charge of the talapoins!*"[6] When, for some reason or other,—either as a matter of neatness and convenience, or as a preventive of mutual claw-

[4] Corrodi, Gesch. des Chiliasmus, th. i. abschn. 15: Gastmahl des Leviathan.

[5] Churchill, Mt. Lebanon, vol. iii. ch. 7.

[6] Pallegoix, Description du Royaume de Siam, ch. xx. p. 113.

ing, or for some to us unimaginable end,—the authoritative Skald wished to induce the Northmen to keep their nails close-cut, he devised the awful myth of the ship Nagelfra, and made his raw-minded people swallow it as truth. The same process was followed unquestionably in a thousand other cases, in different particulars of thought and aim, in different parts of the world.

In a bird's-eye survey of the broad field we have traversed, one cannot help noticing the marked influence of the present scenery and habits, history and associations, of a people in deciding the character of their anticipations of the future. The Esquimaux paradise is surrounded by great pots full of boiled walrus-meat. The Turk's heaven is a gorgeously idealized pleasure-garden or celestial harem. As the apparition of a man wanders into the next state, a shadow of his present state floats over into the future with him. The Hereafter is the image flung by the Now. Heaven and hell are the upward and downward echoes of the earth. Like the spectre of the Brocken on the Hartz Mountains, our ideas of another life are a reflection of our present experience thrown in colossal on the cloud-curtains of futurity. Charles Lamb, pushing this elucidating observation much further, says, "The shapings of our heavens are the modifications of our constitutions." A tribe of savages has been described who hoped to go after death to their forefathers in an under-ground elysium whose glory consisted in eternal drunkenness, that being their highest conception of bliss and glory. What can be more piteous than the contemplation of those barbarians whose existence here is so wretched that even their imagination and faith have lost all rebound, and who conceive of the land of souls only as poorer and harder than this, expecting to be tasked and beaten there by stronger spirits, and to have nothing to eat? The relation of master and servant, the tyranny of class, is reflected over into the other life in those aristocratic notions which break out frequently in the history of our subject. The Pharisees—some of them, at least—excluded the rabble from the resurrection. The Peruvians confined their heaven to the nobility. The New Zealanders said the souls of the Atuas, the nobles, were immortal, but the Cookees perished entirely. Meiners declares that the Russians, even so late as the times of Peter the Great, believed that only the Czar and the boyars could reach heaven. It was almost a universal custom among savage nations when a chieftain died to slay his wives and servants, that their ghosts might accompany his to paradise, to wait on him there as here. Even among the Greeks, as Bulwer has well remarked, "the Hades of the ancients was not for the many; and the dwellers of Elysium are chiefly confined to the oligarchy of earth."

The coarse and selfish assumption on the part of man of superiority over woman, based on his brawniness and tyranny, has sometimes appeared in the form of an assertion that women have no souls, or at least cannot attain to the highest heaven possible for man. The former statement has been vulgarly attributed to the Moslem creed, but with utter

falsity. A pious and aged female disciple once asked Mohammed concerning her future condition in heaven. The prophet replied, "There will not be any old women in heaven." She wept and bewailed her fate, but was comforted upon the gracious assurance from the prophet's lips, "They will all be young again when there." The Buddhists relate that Gótama once directed queen Prajápati, his foster-mother, to prove by a miracle the error of those who supposed it impossible for a woman to attain Nirwána. She immediately made as many repetitions of her own form as filled the skies of all the sakwalas, and, after performing various wonders, died and rose into Nirwána, leading after her five hundred virtuous princesses.[7]

How spontaneously the idiosyncrasies of men in the present are flung across the abysm into the future state is exhibited amusingly, and with a rough pathos, in an old tradition of a dialogue between Saint Patrick and Ossian. The bard contrasts the apostle's pitiful psalms with his own magnificent songs, and says that the virtuous Fingal is enjoying the rewards of his valor in the aerial existence. The saint rejoins, No matter for Fingal's worth; being a pagan, assuredly he roasts in hell. In hot wrath the honest Caledonian poet cries, "If the children of Morni and the tribes of the clan Ovi were alive, we would force brave Fingal out of hell, or the same habitation should be our own."[8]

Many of the most affecting facts and problems in human experience and destiny have found expression, hypothetic solution, in striking myths preserved in the popular traditions of nations. The mutual resemblances in these legends in some cases, though among far-separated peoples, are very significant and impressive. They denote that, moved by similar motives and exercised on the same soliciting themes, human desire and thought naturally find vent in similar theories, stories, and emblems. The imagination of man, as Gfrörer says, runs in ruts which not itself but nature has beaten.

The instinctive shrinking from death felt by man would, sooner or later, quite naturally suggest the idea that death was not an original feature in the divine plan of the world, but a retributive additional discord. Benignant nature meant her children should live on in happy contentment here forever; but sin and Satan came in, and death was the vengeance that followed their doings. The Persians fully developed this speculation. The Hebrews either also originated it, or borrowed it from the Persians; and afterwards the Christians adopted it. Traces of the same conception appear among the remotest and rudest nations. The Caribbeans have a myth to the effect that the whole race of men were doomed to be mortal because Carus, the first man, offended the great god Tiri. The Cherokees ascribe to the Great Spirit the intention of making men immortal on earth; but, they say, the sun when he passed over told them there was not room enough, and that people had better

[7] Hardy, Manual of Buddhism, p. 314.

[8] Logan, Scottish Gael, ch. xiv.

die! They also say that the Creator attempted to make the first man and woman out of two stones, but failed, and afterwards fashioned them of clay; and therefore it is that they are perishable.[9] The Indians of the Oronoco declare that the Great Spirit dwelt for a while, at first, among men. As he was leaving them, he turned around in his canoe and said, "Ye shall never die, but shall shed your skins." An old woman would not believe what he said; he therefore recalled his promise and vowed that they *should* die.

The thought of more than one death—that the composite man is simplified by a series of separating deaths—has repeatedly found place. The New Testament speaks of "the second death;" but that is a metaphorical phrase, descriptive, as there employed, of condemnation and suffering. It is a thought of Plato that the Deity put intellect in soul, and soul in a material envelope. Following this hint, Plutarch says, in his essay on the Face in the Moon, that the earth furnishes the body, the moon the soul, the sun the mind. The first death we die, he continues, makes us two from three; the second makes us one from two. The Feejees tell how one of their warriors, seeing the spectre of a recently-deceased enemy of his, threw his war-club at it and killed it. They believed the spirit itself was thus destroyed. There is something pathetic in this accumulation of dissolution upon dissolution, this pursuit of death after death. We seem to hear, in this thin succession of the ghosts of ghosts, the fainter-growing echoes of the body fade away.

Many narratives reveal the fond hovering of the human mind over the problem of avoiding death altogether. The Hebrew Scriptures have made us familiar with the translation of Enoch and the ascension of Elijah without tasting death. The Hindus tell of Divadassa, who, as a reward for his exceeding virtue and piety, was permitted to ascend to heaven alive.[10] They also say that the good Trisanku, having pleased a god, was elevated in his living body to heaven.[11] The Buddhists of Ceylon preserve a legend of the elevation of one of the royal descendants of Maha Sammata to the superior heavens without undergoing death.[12] There are Buddhist traditions, furthermore, of four other persons who were taken up to Indra's heaven in their bodies without tasting death,—namely, the musician Gattila, and the kings Sadhina, Nirni, and Mandhatu.[13] A beautiful myth of the translation of Cyrus is found in Firdousi's Shâh Nâmeh:—

> "Ky Khosru bow'd himself before his God:
> In the bright water he wash'd his head and his limbs;
> And he spake to himself the Zend-Avesta's prayers;
> And he turn'd to the friends of his life and exclaim'd,
> 'Fare ye well, fare ye well for evermore!

[9] Squier, Serpent-Symbol, p. 67, note c.
[10] Vans Kennedy, Ancient and Hindu Mythology, p. 431.
[11] Vishnu Purana, p. 371.
[12] Upham, Sacred Books of Ceylon, vol. i. Introduction, p. 17.
[13] Hardy, Manual of Buddhism, p. 25, note.

When to-morrow's sun lifts its blazing banner,
And the sea is gold, and the land is purple,
This world and I shall be parted forever.
Ye will never see me again, save in Memory's dreams.'
When the sun uplifted his head from the mountain,
The king had vanish'd from the eyes of his nobles.
They roam'd around in vain attempts to find him;
And every one, as he came back to the place,
Bade a long farewell to the king of the world.
Never hath any one seen such a marvel—
No, though he live long in the world—
That a man should go *alive* into the presence of God."

There is a Greek story that Empedocles, "after a sacred festival, was drawn up to heaven in a splendor of celestial effulgence."[14] Philostratus relates a tradition of the Cretans, affirming that, Apollonius having entered a temple to worship, a sound was heard as of a chorus of virgins singing, "Come from the earth; come into heaven; come." And he was taken up, never having been seen afterwards. Here may be cited also the exquisite fable of Endymion. Zeus promised to grant what he should request. He begged for immortality, eternal sleep, and never-fading youth. Accordingly, in all his surpassing beauty he slumbers on the summit of Latmus, where every night the enamored moon stoops to kiss his spotless forehead. One of the most remarkable fragments in the traditions of the American aborigines is that concerning the final departure of Tarenyawagon, a mythic chief of supernatural knowledge and power, who instructed and united the Iroquois. He sprang across vast chasms between the cliffs, and shot over the lakes with incredible speed, in a spotless white canoe. At last the Master of Breath summoned him. Suddenly the sky was filled with melody. While all eyes were turned up, Tarenyawagon was seen, seated in his snow-white canoe, in mid-air, rising with every burst of the heavenly music, till he vanished beyond the summer clouds, and all was still.[15]

Another mythological method of avoiding death is by bathing in some immortal fountain. The Greeks tell of Glaucus, who by chance discovered and plunged in a spring of this charmed virtue, but was so chagrined at being unable to point it out to others that he flung himself into the ocean. He could not die, and so became a marine deity, and was annually seen off the headlands sporting with whales. The search for the "Fountain of Youth" by the Spaniards who landed in Florida is well known. How with a vain eagerness did Ponce de Leon, the battered old warrior, seek after the magic wave beneath which he should sink to emerge free from scars and stains, as fresh and fair as when first he donned the knightly harness! Khizer, the Wandering Jew of the East, accompanied Iskander Zulkarnain (the Oriental name for Alexander the Great) in his celebrated expedition to find the fountain of

[14] Lewes, Biographical History of Philosophy, vol. i. p. 135, (1st Eng. edit.)
[15] Schoolcraft, Notes on the Iroquois, ch. ix.

life.[16] Zulkarnain, coming to a place where there were three hundred and sixty fountains, despatched three hundred and sixty men, ordering each man to select one of the fountains in which to wash a dry salted fish wherewith he was furnished. The instant Khizer's fish touched the water of the fountain which he had chosen, it sprang away, alive. Khizer leaped in after it and drank. Therefore he cannot die till the last trump sounds. Meanwhile, clad in a green garb, he roams through the world, a personified spring of the year.

The same influences which have caused death to be interpreted as a punitive after-piece in the creation, and which have invented cases wherein it was set aside, have also fabricated tales of returns from its shrouded realm. The Thracian lover's harp, "drawing iron tears down Pluto's cheek," won his mistress half-way to the upper light, and would have wholly redeemed her had he not in impatience looked back. The grim king of Hades, yielding to passionate entreaties, relented so far as to let the hapless Protesilaus return to his mourning Laodameia for three hours. At the swift end of this poor period he died again; and this time she died with him. Erus, who was killed in battle, and Timarchus, whose soul was rapt from him in the cave of Trophonius, both returned, as we read in Plato and Plutarch, to relate with circumstantial detail what they saw in the other world. Alcestis, who so nobly died to save her husband's life, was brought back from the region of the dead, by the interposition of Herakles, to spend happy years with her grateful Admetus. The cunning Sisyphus, who was so notorious for his treachery, by a shrewd plot obtained leave, after his death, to visit the earth again. Safely up in the light, he vowed he would stay; but old Hermes psychopompus forcibly dragged him down.

When Columbus landed at San Salvador, the natives thought he had descended from the sun, and by signs inquired if he had not. The Hawaiians took Captain Cook for the god Lono, who was once their king but was afterwards deified, and who had prophesied, as he was dying, that he should in after-times return. Te Wharewara, a New Zealand youth, relates a long account of the return of his aunt from the other world, with a minute description of her adventures and observations there.[17] Schoolcraft gives a picturesque narrative of a journey made by a Wyandot brave to and from the land of souls.[18]

There is a group of strangely-pleasing myths, closely allied to the two preceding classes, showing how the popular heart and imagination glorify their heroes, and, fondly believing them too godlike to die, fancy them only removed to some secret place, where they still live, and whence in the time of need they will come again to rescue or to bless their people. Greece dreamed that her swift-footed Achilles was yet alive in the White Island. Denmark long saw king Holger lingering on the old war-

[16] Adventures of Hatim Tâi, p. 125. [17] Shortland, Traditions of the New Zealanders, p. 128.
[18] History, &c. of Indian Tribes, part ii. p. 235.

rior-cairns of his country. Portugal trusted that her beauteous prince Sebastian had escaped from the fatal field to the East and would one day return to claim his usurped realm.[19] So, too, of Roderick the Goth, who fell in disastrous battle with the Arabs, the Visiogothic traditions and faith of the people long insisted that he would reappear. The Swiss herdsmen believe the founders of their confederacy still sleep in a cavern on the shores of Lucerne. When Switzerland is in peril, the Three Tells, slumbering there in their antique garb, will wake to save her. Sweetly and often, the ancient British lays allude to the puissant Arthur borne away to the mystic vales of Avalon, and yet to be hailed in his native kingdom, Excalibur once more gleaming in his hand. The strains of the Troubadours swell and ring as they tell of Charlemagne sleeping beneath the Untersberg, biding his appointed time to rise, resume his unrivalled sceptre, and glorify the Frank race. And what grand and weird ballads picture great Barbarossa seated in the vaults of Kyffhäuser, his beard grown through the stone table in front of him, tarrying till he may come forth, with his minstrels and knights around him, in the crisis-hour of Germany's fortunes! The Indians of Pecos, in New Mexico, still anxiously expect the return of Montezuma; while in San Domingo, on the Rio Grande, a sentinel every morning ascends to the top of the highest house, at sunrise, and looks out eastward for the coming of the great chief.[20] The peasants of Brittany maintain—as a recent traveller testifies—that Napoleon is still alive in concealment somewhere, and will one day be heard of or seen in pomp and victory. One other dead man there has been who was expected to return,—the hated Nero, the popular horror of whom shows itself in the shuddering belief—expressed in the Apocalypse and in the Sibylline Oracles—that he was still alive and would reappear.[21]

Ælian, in his Various History, recounts the following singular circumstances concerning the Meropes who inhabited the valley of Anostan.[22] It would seem to prove that no possible conceit of speculation pertaining to our subject has been unthought of. A river of grief and a river of pleasure, he says, lapsed through the valley, their banks covered with trees. If one ate of the fruit growing on the trees beside the former stream, he burst into a flood of tears and wept till he died. But if he partook of that hanging on the shore of the latter, his bliss was so great that he forgot all desires; and, strangest of all, he returned over the track of life to youth and infancy, and then gently expired. He turned

> "Into his yesterdays, and wander'd back
> To distant childhood, and went out to God
> By the gate of birth, not death."

Mohammed, during his night-journey, saw, in the lower heaven, Adam, the father of mankind, a majestic old man, with all his posterity who

[19] There is a fanatic sect of Sebastianists in Brazil now. See "Brazil and the Brazilians," by Kidder and Fletcher, pp. 519–521.

[20] Abbé Domenech's Seven Years' Residence in the Great Deserts of North America; Vol. I. ch. viii.

[21] Stuart, Commentary on the Apocalypse: Excursus upon ch. xiii. v. 18. [22] Lib. iii. cap. 18.

were destined for paradise on one side, and all who were destined for hell on the other. When he looked on the right he smiled and rejoiced, but as often as he looked on the left he mourned and wept. How finely this reveals the stupendous pathos there is in the theological conception of a Federal Head of humanity!

The idea of a great terminal crisis is met with so often in reviewing the history of human efforts to grasp and solve the problem of the world's destiny, that we must consider it a normal concomitant of such theorizings. The mind reels and loses itself in trying to conceive of the everlasting continuance of the present order, or of any one fixed course of things, but finds relief in the notion of a revolution, an end, and a fresh start. The Mexican Cataclysm or universal crash, the close of the Hindu Calpa, the Persian Resurrection, the Stoic Conflagration, the Scandinavian Ragnarökur, the Christian Day of Judgment, all embody this one thought. The Drama of Humanity is played out, the curtain falls, and when it rises again all is commenced afresh. The clock of creation runs down and has to be wound up anew. The Brahmans are now expecting the tenth avatar of Vishnu. The Parsees look for Sosiosch to come, to consummate the triumph of good, and to raise the dead upon a renewed earth. The Buddhists await the birth of Maitri Buddha, who is tarrying in the dewa-loka Tusita until the time of his advent upon earth. The Jews are praying for the appearance of the Messiah. And many Christians affirm that the second advent of Jesus draws nigh.

One more fact, even in a hasty survey of some of the most peculiar opinions current in bygone times as to a future life, can scarcely fail to attract notice. It is the so constant linking of the soul's fate with the skyey spaces and the stars, in fond explorings and astrologic dreams. Nowhere are the kingly greatness and the immortal aspiring of man more finely shown. The loadstone of his destiny and the prophetic gravitation of his thoughts are upward, into the eternal bosom of heaven's infinite hospitality.

> "Ye stars, which are the poetry of heaven!
> If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
> Of men and empires, 'tis to be forgiven,
> That, in our aspirations to be great,
> Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state
> And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
> A beauty and a mystery, and create
> In us such love and reverence from afar
> That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star."

What an immeasurable contrast between the dying Cherokee, who would leap into heaven with a war-whoop on his tongue and a string of scalps in his hand, and the dying Christian, who sublimely murmurs, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" What a sweep of thought, from the poor woman whose pious notion of heaven was that it was a place where she could sit all day in a clean white apron and sing psalms, to the far-seeing and sympathetic natural philo-

sopher whose loving faith embraces all ranks of creatures and who conceives of paradise as a spiritual concert of the combined worlds with all their inhabitants in presence of their Creator! Yet from the explanatory considerations which have been set forth we can understand the derivation of the multifarious swarm of notions afloat in the world,—as the fifteen hundred varieties of apple now known have all been derived from the solitary white crab. Differences of fancy and opinion among men are as natural as fancies and opinions are. The mind of a people grows from the earth of its deposited history, but breathes in the air of its living literature.[28] By his philosophic learning and poetic sympathy the cosmopolitan scholar wins the last victory of mind over matter, frees himself from local conditions and temporal tinges, and, under the light of universal truth, traces, through the causal influences of soil and clime and history, and the colored threads of great individualities, the formation of peculiar national creeds. Through sense the barbarian mind feeds on the raw pabulum furnished by the immediate phenomena of the world and of its own life. Through culture the civilized mind feeds on the elaborated substance of literature, science, and art. Plants eat inorganic, animals eat organized, material. The ignorant man lives on sensations obtained directly from nature; the educated man lives also on sensations obtained from the symbols of other people's sensations. The illiterate savage hunts for his mental living in the wild forest of consciousness; the erudite philosopher lives also on the psychical stores of foregone men.

[28] Schouw, Earth, Plants, and Man, ch. xxx.

PART THIRD.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHINGS CONCERNING A FUTURE LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

PETER'S DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

In entering upon an investigation of the thoughts of the New Testament writers concerning the fate of man after his bodily dissolution, we may commence by glancing at the various allusions contained in the record to opinions on this subject prevalent at the time of the Savior or immediately afterwards, but which formed no part of his religion, or were mixed with mistakes.

There are several incidents recorded in the Gospels which show that a belief in the transmigration of the soul was received among the Jews. As Jesus was passing near Siloam with his disciples, he saw a man who had been blind from his birth; and the disciples said to him, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" The drift of this question is, Did the parents of this man commit some great crime, for which they were punished by having their child born blind, or did he come into the world under this calamity in expiation of the iniquities of a previous life? Jesus denies the doctrine involved in this interrogation, —at least, as far as his reply touches it at all; for he rarely enters into any discussion or refutation of incidental errors. He says, Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents as the cause of his blindness; but the regular workings of the laws of God are made manifest in him: moreover, it is a providential occasion offered me that I should show the divinity of my mission by giving him sight.

When Herod heard of the miracles and the fame of Jesus, he said, This is John the Baptist, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works are wrought by him. This brief statement plainly shows that the belief in the reappearance of a departed spirit, in bodily form, to run another career, was extant in Judea at that period. The Evangelists relate another circumstance to the same effect. Jesus

asked his disciples who the people thought he was. And they replied, Some think that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and some Jeremiah or some other of the old prophets, a forerunner of the Messiah. Then Jesus asked, But who think ye that I am? And Simon Peter said, Thou art the promised Messiah himself. There was a prophetic tradition among the Jews, drawn from the words of Malachi, that before the Messiah was revealed Elias would appear and proclaim his coming. Therefore, when the disciples of Christ recognised him as the great Anointed, they were troubled about this prophecy, and said to their Master, Why do the Scribes say that Elias must first come? He replies to them, in substance, It is even so: the prophet's words shall not fail: they are already fulfilled. But you must interpret the prophecy aright. It does not mean that the ancient prophet himself, in physical form, shall come upon earth, but that one with his office, in his spirit and power, shall go before me. If ye are able to understand the true import of the promise, it has been realized. John the Baptist is the Elias which was to come. The New Testament, therefore, has allusions to the doctrine of transmigration, but gives it no warrant.

The Jewish expectations in regard to the Messiah, the nature of his kingdom, and the events which they supposed would attend his coming or transpire during his reign, were the source and foundation of the phraseology of a great many passages in the Christian Scriptures and of the sense of not a few. The national ideas and hopes of the Jews at that time were singularly intense and extensive. Their influence over the immediate disciples of Jesus and the authors of the New Testament is often very evident in the interpretations they put upon his teachings, and in their own words. Still, their intellectual and spiritual obtuseness to the true drift of their Master's thoughts was not so great, their mistakes are neither so numerous nor so gross, as it is frequently supposed they were. This is proved by the fact that when they use the language of the Messianic expectations of the Jews in their writings they often do it, not in the material, but in a spiritual sense. When they first came under the instruction of Jesus, they were fully imbued with the common notions of their nation and age. By his influence their ideas were slowly and with great difficulty spiritualized and made to approach his own in some degree. But it is unquestionably true that they never—not even after his death—arrived at a clear appreciation of the full sublimity, the pure spirituality, the ultimate significance, of his mission and his words. Still, they did cast off and rise above the grossly carnal expectations of their countrymen. Partially instructed in the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and partially biassed by their Jewish prepossessions, they interpreted a part of his language figuratively, according to his real meaning, and a part of it literally, according to their own notions. The result of this was several doctrines neither taught by Christ nor held by the Jews, but formed by conjoining and elaborating a portion of the conceptions of both. These doctrines are to be found in the New Testament; but it

should be distinctly understood that the religion of Christ is not responsible for them, is to be separated from them.

The fundamental and pervading aim of that epistle of Peter the genuineness of which is unquestioned—and the same is true in a great degree of his speeches recorded in the Acts of the Apostles—is to exhort the Christians to whom it is written to purify themselves by faith, love, and good works; to stand firmly amidst all their tribulations, supported by the expectations and prepared to meet the conditions of a glorious life in heaven at the close of this life. Eschatology,—the doctrine of the Last Things,—with its practical inferences, all inseparably interwoven with the mission of Christ, forms the basis and scope of the whole document.

Peter believed that when Christ had been put to death his spirit, surviving, descended into the separate state of departed souls. Having cited from the sixteenth Psalm the declaration, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in the under-world," he says it was a prophecy concerning Christ, which was fulfilled in his resurrection. "The soul of this Jesus was not left in the under-world, but God hath raised him up, whereof we all are witnesses." When it is written that his soul was not *left* in the subterranean abode of disembodied spirits, of course the inference cannot be avoided that it was supposed to have been there for a time.

In the next place, we are warranted by several considerations in asserting that Peter believed that down there, in the gloomy realm of shades, were gathered and detained the souls of all the dead generations. We attribute this view to Peter from the combined force of the following reasons: because such was, notoriously, the belief of his ancestral and contemporary countrymen; because he speaks of the resurrection of Jesus as if it were a wonderful prophecy or unparalleled miracle, a signal and most significant exception to the universal law; because he says expressly of David that "he is not yet ascended into the heavens,"—and if David was still retained below, undoubtedly all were; because the same doctrine is plainly inculcated by other of the New Testament writers; and, finally, because Peter himself, in another part of this epistle, declares, in unequivocal terms, that the soul of Christ went and preached to the souls confined in the under-world,—for such is the perspicuous meaning of the famous text, "being put to death in the body, but kept alive in the soul, in which also he went and preached [went as a herald] to the spirits in prison." The meaning we have attributed to this celebrated passage is the simple and consistent explanation of the words and the context, and is what must have been conveyed to those familiar with the received opinions of that time. Accordingly, we find that, with the exception of Augustine, it was so understood and interpreted by the whole body of the Fathers.[1] It is likewise so held now by an immense majority of the most authoritative modern commentators. Rosenmüller

[1] See, for example, Clem. Alex. Stromata, lib. vi.; Cyprian, Test. adv. Judæos, lib. ii. cap. 27; Lactantius, Divin. Instit. lib. vii. cap. 20.

says, in his commentary on this text, "That by the spirits in prison is meant souls of men separated from their bodies and detained as in custody in the under-world, which the Greeks call Hades, the Hebrews Sheol, can hardly be doubted," (*vix dubitari posse videtur.*) Such has ever been and still is the common conclusion of nearly all the best critical theologians, as volumes of citations might easily be made to show. The reasons which led Augustine to give a different exposition of the text before us are such as should make, in this case, even his great name have little or no weight. He firmly held, as revealed and unquestionable truth,[2] the whole doctrine which we maintain is implied in the present passage; but he was so perplexed by certain difficult queries[3] as to locality and method and circumstance, addressed to him with reference to this text, that he, waveringly, and at last, gave it an allegorical interpretation. His exegesis is not only arbitrary and opposed to the catholic doctrine of the Church; it is also so far-fetched and forced as to be destitute of plausibility. He says the spirits in prison may be the souls of men confined in their bodies here in this life, to preach to whom Christ came from heaven. But the careful reader will observe that Peter speaks as if the spirits were collected and kept in one common custody, refers to the spirits of a generation long ago departed to the dead, and represents the preaching as taking place in the interval between Christ's death and his resurrection. A glance from the eighteenth to the twenty-second verse inclusive shows indisputably that the order of events narrated by the apostle is this: First, Christ was put to death in the flesh, suffering for sins, the just for the unjust; secondly, he was quickened in the spirit; thirdly, he went and preached to the spirits in prison; fourthly, he rose from the dead; fifthly, he ascended into heaven. How is it possible for any one to doubt that the text under consideration teaches his subterranean mission during the period of his bodily burial?

In the exposition of the Apostles' Creed put forth by the Church of England under Edward VI., this text in Peter was referred to as an authoritative proof of the article on Christ's descent into the underworld; and when, some years later, that reference was stricken out, notoriously it was not because the Episcopal rulers were convinced of a mistake, but because they had become afraid of the associated Romish doctrine of purgatory.

If Peter believed—as he undoubtedly did—that Christ after his crucifixion descended to the place of departed spirits, what did he suppose was the object of that descent? Calvin's theory was that he went into hell in order that he might there suffer vicariously the accumulated agonies due to the Lost, thus placating the just wrath of the Father and purchasing the release of the elect. A sufficient refutation of that dogma, as to its philosophical basis, is found in its immorality, its forensic technicality. As a mode of explaining the Scriptures, it is refuted by the

[2] Epist. XCIX. [3] Ibid.

fact that it is nowhere plainly stated in the New Testament, but is arbitrarily constructed by forced and indirect inferences from various obscure texts, which texts can be perfectly explained without involving it at all. For what purpose, then, was it thought that Jesus went to the imprisoned souls of the under-world? The most natural supposition—the conception most in harmony with the character and details of the rest of the scheme and with the prevailing thought of the time—would be that he went there to rescue the captives from their sepulchral bondage, to conquer death and the devil in their own domain, open the doors, break the chains, proclaim good tidings of coming redemption to the spirits in prison, and, rising thence, to ascend to heaven, preparing the way for them to follow with him at his expected return. This, indeed, is the doctrine of the Judaizing apostles, the unbroken catholic doctrine of the Church. Paul writes to the Colossians, and to the Ephesians, that, when Christ "had spoiled the principalities and powers" of the world of the dead, "he ascended up on high, leading a multitude of captives." Peter himself declares, a little farther on in his epistle, "that the glad tidings were preached to the dead, that, though they had been persecuted and condemned in the flesh by the will of men, they might be blessed in the spirit by the will of God."[4] Christ fulfilled the law of death,[5] descending to the place of separate spirits, that he might declare deliverance to the quick and the dead by coming triumphantly back and going into heaven, an evident token of the removal of the penalty of sin which hitherto had fatally doomed all men to the under-world.[6]

Let us see if this will not enable us to explain Peter's language satisfactorily. Death, with the lower residence succeeding it, let it be remembered, was, according to the Jewish and apostolic belief, the fruit of sin,—the judgment pronounced on sin. But Christ, Peter says, was sinless. "He was a lamb without blemish and without spot." "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Therefore he was not exposed to death and the under-world on his own account. Consequently, when it is written that "he bore our sins in his own body on the tree," that "he suffered for sins, the just for the unjust," in order to give the words their clear, full meaning it is not necessary to attribute to them the sense of a vicarious sacrifice offered to quench the anger of God or to furnish compensation for a broken commandment; but this sense,—namely, that

[4] See Rosenmüller's explanation *in hoc loco*.

[5] See King's History of the Apostles' Creed, 3d ed., pp. 234–239. "The purpose of Christ's descent was to undergo the laws of death, pass through the whole experience of man, conquer the devil, break the fetters of the captives, and fix a time for their resurrection." To the same effect, old Hilary, Bishop of Poictiers, in his commentary on Psalm cxxxviii., says, "It is a law of human necessity that, the body being buried, the soul should descend *ad inferos*."

[6] Ambrose, De Fide, etc., lib. iv. cap. i, declares that "no one ascended to heaven until Christ, by the pledge of his resurrection, solved the chains of the under-world and translated the souls of the pious." Also Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, in his fourth catechetical lecture, sect. 11, affirms "that Christ descended into the under-world to deliver those who, from Adam downwards, had been imprisoned there."

although in his sinlessness he was exempt from death, yet he "suffered for us," he voluntarily died, thus undergoing for our sakes that which was to others the penalty of their sin. The object of his dying was not to conciliate the alienated Father or to adjust the unbalanced law: it was to descend into the realm of the dead, heralding God's pardon to the captives, and to return and rise into heaven, opening and showing to his disciples the way thither. For, owing to his moral sinlessness, or to his delegated omnipotence, if he were once in the abode of the dead, he *must return:* nothing could keep him there. Epiphanius describes the devil complaining, after Christ had burst through his nets and dungeons, "Miserable me! what shall I do? I did not know God was concealed in that body. The son of Mary has deceived me. I imagined he was a mere man."[7] In an apocryphal writing of very early date, which shows some of the opinions abroad at that time, one of the chief devils, after Christ had appeared in hell, cleaving its grisly prisons from top to bottom and releasing the captives, is represented upbraiding Satan in these terms:—"O prince of all evil, author of death, why didst thou crucify and bring down to our regions a person righteous and sinless? Thereby thou hast lost all the sinners of the world."[8] Again, in an ancient treatise on the Apostles' Creed, we read as follows:—"In the bait of Christ's flesh was secretly inserted the hook of his divinity. This the devil knew not, but, supposing he must stay when he was devoured, greedily swallowed the corpse, and the bolts of the nether world were wrenched asunder, and the ensnared dragon himself dragged from the abyss."[9] Peter himself explicitly declares, "It was not possible that he should be held by death." Theodoret says, "Whoever denies the resurrection of Christ rejects his death."[10] If he died, he must needs rise again. And his resurrection would demonstrate the forgiveness of sins, the opening of heaven to men, showing that the bond which had bound in despair the captives in the regions of death for so many voiceless ages was at last broken. Accordingly, "God, having loosed the chains of the under-world, raised him up and set him at his own right hand."[11]

And now the question, narrowed down to the smallest compass, is this:—What is the precise, real signification of the sacrificial and other connected terms employed by Peter,—those phrases which now, by the intense associations of a long time, convey so strong a Calvinistic sense to most readers? Peter says, "Ye know that ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ." If there were not so much indeterminateness of thought, so much unthinking reception of traditional, confused im-

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[7] In Assumptionem Christi.

[8] Evan. Nicodemi, cap. xviii.

[9] Ruffinus, Expos. in Symb. Apost.

[10] Comm. in 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[11] By a mistake and a false reading, the common version has "the pains of death," instead of "the chains of the under-world." The sense requires the latter. Besides, numerous manuscripts read ἅδου, not θανάτου. See, furthermore, Rosenmüller's thorough criticism *in loc.* Likewise see Robinson's New Testament Greek Lexicon, in ᾅδης.

pressions of Scripture texts, it would be superfluous to observe that by the word *blood* here, and in all parallel passages, is meant simply and literally death: the mere *blood*, the mere shedding of the *blood*, of Christ, of course, could have no virtue, no moral efficacy, of any sort. When the infuriated Jews cried, "His *blood* be on us, and on our children!" they meant, Let the responsibility of his death rest on us. When the English historian says, "Sidney gave his blood for the cause of civil liberty," the meaning is, he died for it. So, no one will deny, whenever the New Testament speaks in any way of redemption by the blood of the crucified Son of Man, the unquestionable meaning is, redemption by his death. What, then, does the phrase "redemption by the death of Christ" mean? Let it be noted here—let it be particularly noticed—that the New Testament nowhere in explicit terms *explains the meaning* of this and the kindred phrases: it simply uses the phrases without interpreting them. They are rhetorical figures of speech, necessarily, upon whatever theological system we regard them. No sinner is literally washed from his transgressions and guilt in the blood of the slaughtered Lamb. These expressions, then, are poetic images, meant to convey a truth in the language of association and feeling, the traditionary language of imagination. The determination of their precise significance *is wholly a matter of fallible human construction and inference*, and not a matter of inspired statement or divine revelation. This is so, beyond a question, because, we repeat, they are *figures of speech*, having no direct explanation in the records where they occur. The Calvinistic view of the atonement was a theory devised to explain this scriptural language. It was devised without sufficient consideration of the peculiar notions and spirit, the peculiar grade of culture, and the time, from which that language sprang. We freely admit the inadequacy of the Unitarian doctrine of the atonement to explain the figures of speech in which the apostles declare their doctrine. But, since the Calvinistic scheme was devised by human thought to explain the New Testament language, any scheme which explains that language as well has equal Scripture claims to credence; any which better explains it, with sharper, broader meaning and fewer difficulties, has superior claims to be received.

We are now prepared to state what we believe was the meaning originally associated with, and meant to be conveyed by, the phrases equivalent to "*redemption by the death of Christ.*" In consequence of sin, the souls of all mankind, after leaving the body, were shut up in the oblivious gloom of the under-world. Christ alone, by virtue of his perfect holiness, was not subject to any part of this fate. But, in fulfilment of the Father's gracious designs, he willingly submitted, upon leaving the body, to go among the dead, that he might declare the good tidings to them, and burst the bars of darkness, and return to life, and rise into heaven as a pledge of the future translation of the faithful to that celestial world, instead of their banishment into the dismal bondage below, as

hitherto. The death of Christ, then, was the redemption of sinners, in that his death implied his ascent,—"because it was not possible that he should be holden of death;" and his ascension visibly demonstrated the truth that God had forgiven men their sins and would receive their souls to his own abode on high.

Three very strong confirmations of the correctness of this interpretation are afforded in the declarations of Peter. First, he never even hints, in the faintest manner, that the death of Christ was to have any effect on God, any power to change his feeling or his government. It was not to make a purchasing expiation for sins and thus to reconcile God to us; but it was, by a revelation of the Father's freely pardoning love, to give us penitence, purification, confidence, and a regenerating piety, and so to reconcile us to God. He says in one place, in emphatic words, that the express purpose of Christ's death was simply "that he might lead us to God." In the same strain, in another place, he defines the object of Christ's death to be "that we, being delivered from sins, should live unto righteousness." It is plain that in literal reality he refers our marvellous salvation to the voluntary goodness of God, and not to any vicarious ransom paid in the sacrifice of Christ, when he says, "The God of all grace hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ." The death of Christ was not, then, to appease the fierce justice of God by rectifying the claims of his inexorable law, but it was to call out and establish in men all moral virtues by the power of faith in the sure gift of eternal life sealed to them through the ascension of the Savior.

For, secondly, the practical inferences drawn by Peter from the death of Christ, and the exhortations founded upon it, are inconsistent with the prevailing theory of the atonement. Upon that view the apostle would have said, "Christ has paid the debt and secured a seat in heaven for you, elected ones: therefore believe in the sufficiency of his offerings, and exult." But not so. He calls on us in this wise:—"Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us, arm yourselves with the same mind." "Christ suffered for you, leaving an example that ye should follow his steps." The whole burden of his practical argument based on the mission of Christ is, the obligation of a religious spirit and of pure morals. He does not speak, as many modern sectarists have spoken, of the "filthy rags of righteousness;" but he says, "Live no longer in sins," "have a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price," "be ye holy in all manner of conversation," "purify your souls by obedience to the truth," "be ye a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices," "have a good conscience," "avoid evil and do good," "above all, have fervent love, for love will cover a multitude of sins." No candid person can peruse the epistle and not see that the great moral deduced in it from the mission of Christ is this:—Since heaven is offered you, strive by personal virtue to be prepared for it at the judgment which shall soon come. The disciple is not told to trust in the merits of Jesus; but he

is urged to "abstain from evil," and "sanctify the Lord God in his heart," and "love the brethren," and "obey the laws," and "do well," "girding up the loins of his mind in sobriety and hope." This is not Calvinism. Nor Bible

The third fortification of this exposition is furnished by the following fact. According to our view, the *death* of Christ is emphasized, not on account of any importance in itself, but as the necessary condition preliminary to his *resurrection*, the humiliating prelude to his glorious ascent into heaven. The really essential, significant thing is not his suffering, vicarious death, but his triumphing, typical ascension. Now, the plain, repeated statements of Peter strikingly coincide with this representation. He says, "God *raised Christ up from the dead*, and gave him glory, [that is, received him into heaven,] that your faith and hope might be in God." Again he writes, "Blessed be God, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ* from the dead unto an incorruptible inheritance in heaven." Still again, he declares that "the figure of baptism, signifying thereby the answer of a good conscience toward God, saves us *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ*, who is gone into heaven." According to the commonly-received doctrine, instead of these last words the apostle ought to have said, "saves us by the death of him who suffered in expiation of our sins." He does not say so. Finally, in the intrepid speech that Peter made before the Jewish council, referring to their wicked crucifixion of Jesus, he says, "'Him hath God raised up to his own right hand, to be a Leader and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." How plainly remission of sins is here predicated, not through Christ's ignominious suffering, but through his heavenly exaltation! That exaltation showed in dramatic proof that by God's grace the dominion of the lower world was about to be broken and an access to the celestial world to be vouchsafed.

If Christ bought off our merited punishment and earned our acceptance, then salvation can no more be "reckoned of grace, but of debt." But the whole New Testament doctrine is, "that sinners are justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." "The redemption that is in Christ"! Take these words literally, and they yield no intelligible meaning. The sense intended to be conveyed or suggested by them depends on interpretation; and here disagreement arises. The Calvinist says they mean the redemption undertaken, achieved, by Christ. We say they mean the redemption proclaimed, brought to light, by Christ. The latter explanation is as close to the language as the former. Neither is unequivocally established by the statement itself. We ought therefore to adopt the one which is at once most rational and plausible in itself, and most in harmony with the peculiar opinions and culture of the person by whom, and of the time when, the document was written. All these considerations, historical, philosophical, and moral, undeniably favor our interpretation, leaving nothing to support the other save the popular

theological belief of modern Protestant Christendom,—a belief which is the gradual product of a few great, mistaken teachers like Augustine and Calvin.

We do not find the slightest difficulty in explaining sharply and broadly, with all its niceties of phraseology, each one of the texts urged in behalf of the prevalent doctrine of the atonement, without involving the essential features of that doctrine. Three demonstrable assertions of fact afford us all the requisite materials. First, it was a prevalent belief with the Jews, that, since death was the penalty of sin, the suffering of death was in itself expiatory of the sins of the dying man.[12] Lightfoot says, "It is a common and most known doctrine of the Talmudists, that repentance and ritual sacrifice expiate some sins, death the rest. Death wipes off all unexpiated sins."[13] Tholuck says, "It was a Jewish opinion that the death of the just atoned for the people."[14] He quotes from the Talmud an explicit assertion to that effect, and refers to several learned authorities for further citations and confirmations.

Secondly, the apostles conceived Christ to be sinless, and consequently not on his own account exposed to death and subject to Hades. If, then, death was an atonement for sins, and he was sinless, his voluntary death was expiatory for the sins of the world; not in an arbitrary and unheard-of way, according to the Calvinistic scheme, but in the common way, according to a Pharisaic notion. And thirdly, it was partly a Jewish expectation concerning the Messiah that he would,[15] and partly an apostolic conviction concerning Christ that he did, break the bolts of the old Hadean prison and open the way for human ascent to heaven. As Jerome says, "Before Christ *Abraham* was in hell, after Christ the crucified *thief* was in paradise;"[16] for "until the advent of Christ all alike went down into the under-world, heaven being shut until Christ threw aside the flaming sword that turned every way."[17]

These three thoughts—that death is the expiatory penalty of sin, that Christ was himself sinless, that he died as God's envoy to release the prisoners of gloom and be their pioneer to bliss—leave nothing to be desired in explaining the sacrificial terms and kindred phrases employed by the apostles in reference to his mission.

Without question, Peter, like his companions, looked for the speedy return of Christ from heaven to judge all, and to save the worthy. Indications of this belief are numerously afforded in his words. "The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer." "You shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the

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[12] Witsius, Dissertatio de Seculo hoc et futuro, sect. 8.

[13] Lightfoot on Matt. xii. 32.

[14] Comm. on John i. 29.

[15] "God shall liberate the Israelites from the under-world." Bertholdt's Christologia Judæorum, sect. xxxiv., (De descensu Messiæ ad Inferos,) note 2. "The captives shall ascend from the under-world, Shechinah at their head." Schoettgen de Messia, lib. vi. cap. 5, sect. 1.

[16] See his Letter to Heliodorus, Epist. XXXV., Benedict. ed.

[17] Comm. in Eccles. cap. iii. 21, et cap. ix.

dead." Here the common idea of that time—namely, that the resurrection of the captives of the under-world would occur at the return of Christ—is undoubtedly implied. "Salvation is now ready to be revealed in the last time." "That your faith may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." "Be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "Be ye examples to the flock, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive an unfading crown of glory." "God shall send Jesus Christ, . . . whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things." It is evident that the author of these passages expected the second coming of the Lord Jesus to consummate the affairs of his kingdom.

If the apostle had formed definite conclusions as to the final fate of unbelieving, wicked, reprobate men, he has not stated them. He undeniably implies certain general facts upon the subject, but leaves all the details in obscurity. He adjures his readers—with exceeding earnestness he over and over again adjures them—to forsake every manner of sinful life, to strive for every kind of righteous conversation, that by faith and goodness they may receive the salvation of their souls. He must have supposed an opposite fate in some sort to impend over those who did otherwise, rejecting Christ, "revelling in lasciviousness and idolatry." Everywhere he makes the distinction between the faithful and the wicked prominent, and presents the idea that Christ shall come to judge them both, and shall reward the former with gladness, crowns, and glory; while it is just as clearly implied as if he had said it that the latter shall be condemned and punished. When a judge sits in trial on the good and the bad, and accepts those, plainly the inference is that he rejects these, unless the contrary be stated. What their doom is in its nature, what in its duration, is neither declared, nor inferrible from what is declared. All that the writer says on this point is substantially repeated or contained in the fourth chapter of his epistle, from verses 12 to 19. A slight explanatory paraphrase of it will make the position clear so far as it can be made clear. "Christian believers, in the fiery trials which are to try you, stand firm, even rejoicing that you are fellow-sufferers with Christ,—a pledge that when his glory is revealed you shall partake of it with him. See to it that you are free from crime, free from sins for which you ought to suffer; then, if persecuted and slain for your Christian profession and virtues, falter not. The terrible time preceding the second advent of your Master is at hand. The sufferings of that time will begin with the Christian household; but how much more dreadful will be the sufferings of the close of that time among the disobedient that spurn the gospel of God! If the righteous shall with great difficulty be snatched from the perils and woes encompassing that time, surely it will happen very much worse with ungodly sinners. Therefore let all who suffer in obedience to God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing."

The souls of men were confined in the under-world for sin. Christ came to turn men from sin and despair to holiness and a reconciling faith in God. He went to the dead to declare to them the good tidings of pardon and approaching deliverance through the free grace of God. He rose into heaven to demonstrate and visibly exhibit the redemption of men from the under-world doom of sinners. He was soon to return to the earth to complete the unfinished work of his commissioned kingdom. His accepted ones should then be taken to glory and reward. The rejected ones should —— Their fate is left in gloom, without a definite clew.

CHAPTER II.

DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

The Epistle to the Hebrews was written by some person who was originally a Jew, afterwards a zealous Christian. He was unquestionably a man of remarkable talent and eloquence and of lofty religious views and feelings. He lived in the time of the immediate followers of Jesus, and apparently was acquainted with them. The individual authorship it is now impossible to determine with certainty. Many of the most learned, unprejudiced, and able critics have ascribed it to Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew, a compeer of Paul and a fellow-citizen of Philo. This opinion is more probable than any other. Indeed, so numerous are the resemblances of thoughts and words in the writings of Philo to those in this epistle, that even the wild conjecture has been hazarded that Philo himself at last became a Christian and wrote to his Hebrew countrymen the essay which has since commonly passed for Paul's. No one can examine the hundreds of illustrations of the epistle gathered from Philo by Carpzov, in his learned but ill-reasoned work, without being greatly impressed. The supposition which has repeatedly been accepted and urged, that this composition was first written in Hebrew, and afterwards translated into Greek by another person, is absurd, in view of the masterly skill and eloquence, critical niceties, and felicities in the use of language, displayed in it. We could easily fill a paragraph with the names of those eminent in the Church—such as Tertullian, Hippolytus, Erasmus, Luther, Le Clerc, and Neander—who have concluded that, whoever the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was, he was not Paul. The list of those names would reach from the Egyptian Origen, whose candor and erudition were without parallel in his age, to the German Bleek, whose masterly and exhaustive work is a monument of united talent and

toil, leaving little to be desired. It is not within our present aim to argue this point: we will therefore simply refer the reader to the thorough and unanswerable discussion and settlement of it by Norton.[1]

The general object of the composition is, by showing the superiority of the Christian system to the Hebrew, to arm the converts from Judaism—to whom it is addressed—against the temptations to desert the fulfilling faith of Christ and to return to the emblematic faith of their fathers. This aim gives a pervading cast and color to the entire treatment—to the reasoning and especially to the chosen imagery—of the epistle. Omitting, for the most part, whatever is not essentially interwoven with the subject of death, the resurrection, and future existence, and with the mission of Christ in relation to those subjects, we advance to the consideration of the views which the epistle presents or implies concerning those points. It is to be premised that we are forced to construct from fragments and hints the theological fabric that stood in the mind of the writer. The suggestion also is quite obvious that, since the letter is addressed solely to the Hebrews and describes Christianity as the completion of Judaism, an acquaintance with the characteristic Hebrew opinions and hopes at that time may be indispensable for a full comprehension of its contents.

The view of the intrinsic nature and rank of Christ on which the epistle rests seems very plainly to be that great Logos-doctrine which floated in the philosophy of the apostolic age and is so fully developed in the Gospel of John:—"The Logos of God, alive, energetic, irresistibly piercing, to whose eyes all things are bare and open;" "first-begotten of God;" "faithful to Him that made him;" inferior to God, superior to all beside; "by whom God made the worlds;" whose seat is at the right hand of God, the angels looking up to him, and "the world to come put in subjection to him." The author, thus assuming the immensely superhuman rank and the pre-existence of Christ, teaches that, by the good will of God, he descended to the world in the form of a man, to save them that were without faith and in fear,—them that were lost through sin. God "bringeth in the first-begotten into the world." "When he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared for me." "Jesus was made a little while inferior to the angels." "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise partook of the same;" that is, in order to pass through an experience like that of those whom he wished to deliver, he assumed their nature. "He taketh not hold of angels, but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham:" in other words, he aimed not to assist angels, but men. These passages, taken in connection with the whole scope and drift of the document in which they are found, declare that Jesus was a spirit in heaven, but came to the earth, taking upon him a mortal frame of flesh and blood.

[1] Christian Examiner, vols. for 1827–29.

Why he did this is the question that naturally arises next. We do not see how it is possible for any person to read the epistle through intelligently, in the light of an adequate knowledge of contemporary Hebrew opinions, and not perceive that the author's answer to that inquiry is, that Christ assumed the guise and fate of humanity in order to die; and died in order to rise from the dead; and rose from the dead in order to ascend to heaven; and ascended to heaven in order to reveal the grace of God opening the way for the celestial exaltation and blessedness of the souls of faithful men. We will commence the proof and illustration of these statements by bringing together some of the principal passages in the epistle which involve the objects of the mission of Christ, and then stating the thought that chiefly underlies and explains them.

"We see Jesus—who was made a little while inferior to the angels, in order that by the kindness of God he might taste death for every man—through the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor." With the best critics, we have altered the arrangement of the clauses in the foregoing verse, to make the sense clearer. The exact meaning is, that the exaltation of Christ to heaven after his death authenticated his mission, showed that his death had a divine meaning for men; that is, showed that they also should rise to heaven. "When he had by himself made a purification of our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." "For this cause he is the Mediator of the new covenant, that, his death having occurred, (for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant,) they which are called might enter upon possession of the promised eternal inheritance." The force of this last passage, with its context, turns on the double sense of the Greek word for *covenant*, which likewise means *a will*. Several statements in the epistle show the author's belief that the subjects of the old dispensation had the *promise* of immortal life in heaven, but had never realized the thing itself.[2] Now, he maintains the purpose of the new dispensation to be the actual revelation and bestowment of the reality which anciently was only promised and typically foreshadowed; and in the passage before us he figures Christ—the author of the Christian covenant—as the maker of a will by which believers are appointed heirs of a heavenly immortality. He then—following the analogy of testamentary legacies and legatees—describes those heirs as "entering on possession of that eternal inheritance" "by the death of the Testator." He was led to employ precisely this language by two obvious reasons: first, for the sake of that *paronomasia* of which he was evidently fond; secondly, by the fact that it really was the death of Christ, with the succeeding resurrection and ascension, which demonstrated both the reality of the thing promised in the will and the authority of the Testator to bestow it.

[2] xi. 13, 16, *et al.* See chap. x. 36, where *to receive the promise* most plainly means to obtain the thing promised, as it does several times in the epistle. So Paul, in his speech at Antioch, (Acts xiii. 32, 33,) says, "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath *raised up Jesus again*."

All the expressions thus far cited, and kindred ones scattered through the work, convey a clear and consistent meaning, with sharp outlines and coherent details, if we suppose their author entertained the following general theory; and otherwise they cannot be satisfactorily explained. A dreadful fear of death, introduced by sin, was tyrannizing over men. In consequence of conscious alienation from God through transgressions, they shuddered at death. The writer does not say what there was in death that made it so feared; but we know that the prevailing Hebrew conception was, that death led the naked soul into the silent, dark, and dreary region of the under-world,—a doleful fate, from which they shrank with sadness at the best, guilt converting that natural melancholy into dread foreboding. In the absence of any evidence or presumption whatever to the contrary, we are authorized, nay, rather forced, to conclude that such a conception is implied in the passages we are considering. Now, the mission of Jesus was to deliver men from that fear and bondage, by assuring them that God would forgive sin and annul its consequence. Instead of banishing their disembodied spirits into the sepulchral Sheol, he would take them to himself into the glory above the firmament. This aim Christ accomplished by literally exemplifying the truths it implies; that is, by personally assuming the lot of man, dying, rising from among the spirits of the dead, and ascending beyond the veil into heaven. By his death and victorious ascent "he purged our sins," "redeemed transgressions," "overthrew him that has the power of death," in the sense that he thereby, as the writer thought, swept away the supposed train of evils caused by sin,—namely, all the concomitants of a banishment after death into the cheerless subterranean empire.

It will be well now to notice more fully, in the author's scheme, the idea that Christ did locally ascend into the heavens, "into the presence of God," "where he ever liveth," and that by this ascent he for the first time opened the way for others to ascend to him where he is, avoiding the doom of Hades. "We have a great High-Priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God." "Christ is not entered into the most holy place, made with hands, the figure of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Indeed, that Jesus, in a material and local sense, rose to heaven, is a conception fundamental to the epistle and prominent on all its face. It is much more necessary for us to show that the author believed that the men who had previously died had *not* risen thither, but that it was the Savior's mission to open the way for their ascension.

It is extremely significant, in the outset, that Jesus is called "the first leader and the bringer to the end of our faith;" for the words in this clause which the common version renders "author" and "finisher"[3] mean, from their literal force and the latent figure they contain, "a guide who runs through the course to the goal so as to win and receive the

[3] Robinson's Lexicon, first edition, under τελειόω and τελειωτής; also see Philo, cited there.

prize, bringing us after him to the same consummation." Still more striking is the passage we shall next adduce. Having enumerated a long list of the choicest worthies of the Old Testament, the writer adds, "These all, having obtained testimony through faith, did not realize the promise,[4] God having provided a better thing *for us*, that *they* without *us* should not be perfected,"—should not be brought to the end,—the end of human destiny,—that is, exaltation to heaven. Undoubtedly the author here means to say that the faithful servants of God under the Mosaic dispensation were reserved in the under-world until the ascension of the Messiah. Augustine so explains the text in hand, declaring that Christ was the first that ever rose from the under-world.[5] The same exposition is given by Origen,[6] and indeed by nearly every one of the Fathers who has undertaken to give a critical interpretation of the passage. This doctrine itself was held by Catholic Christendom for a thousand years; is now held by the Roman, Greek, and English Churches; but is, for the most part, rejected or forgotten by the dissenting sects, from two causes. It has so generally sunk out of sight among us, first, from ignorance,—ignorance of the ancient learning and opinions on which it rested and of which it was the *necessary* completion; secondly, from rationalistic speculations, which, leading men to discredit the truth of the doctrine, led them arbitrarily to deny its existence in the Scripture, making them perversely force the texts that state it and wilfully blink the texts that hint it. Whether this be a proper and sound method of proceeding in critical investigations any one may judge. To us it seems equally unmanly and immoral. We know of but one justifiable course, and that is, with patience, with earnestness, and with all possible aids, to labor to discern the real and full meaning of the words according to the understanding and intention of the author. We do so elsewhere, regardless of consequences. No other method, in the case of the Scriptures, is exempt from guilt.

The meaning (namely, *to bring to the end*) which we have above attributed to the word τελειόω (translated in the common version *to make perfect*) is the first meaning and the etymological force of the word. That we do not refine upon it over-nicely in the present instance, the following examples from various parts of the epistle unimpeachably witness. "For it was proper that God, in bringing many sons unto glory, should make him who was the first leader of their salvation perfect [reach the end] through sufferings;" that is, should raise him to heaven after he had passed through death, that he, having himself arrived at the glorious heavenly goal of human destiny, might bring others to it. "Christ, being made perfect," (brought through all the intermediate steps to the end,) "became the cause of eternal salvation to all them that obey him; called of God an high-priest." The context, and the after-assertion of the writer that the priesthood of Jesus is exercised in heaven, show that the

[4] Ch. x. 36. [5] Epist. CLXIV. sect. ix., ed. Benedictinæ. [6] De Principiis, lib. ii. cap. 2.

word "perfected," as employed here, signifies exalted to the right hand of God. "Perfection" (bringing unto the end) "was not by the Levitical priesthood." "The law perfected nothing, but it was the additional introduction of a better hope by which we draw near unto God." "The law maketh men high-priests which have infirmity, which are not suffered to continue, by reason of death; but the word of the oath after the law maketh the Son perfect for evermore,"—bringeth him to the end,—namely, an everlasting priesthood in the heavens. That Christian believers are not under the first covenant, whereby, through sin, men—commencing with the blood of Abel, the first death—were doomed to the lower world, but are under the second covenant, whereby, through the gracious purpose of God, taking effect in the blood of Christ, the first resurrection, they are already by faith, in imagination, translated to heaven,—this is plainly what the author teaches in the following words: —"Ye are not come to the palpable mount that burneth with fire, and to blackness and tempest, where so terrible was the sight that Moses exceedingly trembled, but ye are come to Mount Zion, to the *heavenly* Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of *angels*, and to *God*, and to the *spirits of the perfected just*, and to *Jesus*, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the lustral blood which speaks better things than that of Abel." The connection here demonstrates that the souls of the righteous are called "perfected," as having arrived at the goal of their destiny in heaven. Again, the author, when speaking of the sure and steadfast hope of eternal life, distinguishes Jesus as a πρόδρομος, one who runs before as a scout or leader: "the Forerunner, who for us has entered within the veil," that is, has passed beyond the firmament into the presence of God. The Jews called the outward or lowermost heaven the veil.[1] But the most conclusive consideration upon the opinion we are arguing for—and it must be entirely convincing—is to be drawn from the first half of the ninth chapter. To appreciate it, it is requisite to remember that the Rabbins—with whose notions our author was familiar and some of which he adopts in his reasoning—were accustomed to compare the Jewish temple and city with the temple and city of Jehovah above the sky, considering the former as miniature types of the latter. This mode of thought was originally learned by philosophical Rabbins from the Platonic doctrine of ideas, without doubt, and was entertained figuratively, spiritually; but in the unreflecting, popular mind the Hebraic views to which it gave rise were soon grossly materialized and located. They also derived the same conception from God's command to Moses when he was about to build the tabernacle:—"See thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." They refined upon these words with many conceits. They compared the three divisions of the temple to the three heavens: the outer Court of the Gentiles corresponded with the first heaven, the Court of the Israelites with the

[1] Schoettgen, Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ in 2 Cor. xii. 2.

second heaven, and the Holy of Holies represented the third heaven or the very abode of God. Josephus writes, "The temple has three compartments: the first two for men, the third for God, because heaven is inaccessible to men."[8] Now, our author says, referring to this triple symbolic arrangement of the temple, "The priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service, but into the second went the high-priest alone, once every year, not without blood; this, which was a figure for the time then present, signifying that the way into the holiest of all[9] was not yet laid open; but Christ being come, an high-priest of the future good things, by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal deliverance." The points of the comparison here instituted are these: On the great annual day of atonement, after the death of the victim, the Hebrew high-priest went into the adytum of the earthly temple, but none could follow; Jesus, the Christian high-priest, went after his own death into the adytum of the heavenly temple, and enabled the faithful to enter there after him. Imagery like the foregoing, which implies a *Sanctum Sanctorum* above, the glorious prototype of that below, is frequent in the Talmud.[10] To remove all uncertainty from the exposition thus presented, if any doubt linger, it is only necessary to cite one more passage from the epistle. "We have, therefore, brethren, by the blood of Jesus, leading into the holiest, a free road, a new and blessed road, which he hath inaugurated for us through the veil, that is to say, through his flesh." As there was no entrance for the priest into the holiest of the temple save by the removal of the veil, so Christ could not enter heaven except by the removal of his body. The blood of Jesus here, as in most cases in the New Testament, means the death of Jesus, involving his ascension. Chrysostom, commenting on these verses, says, in explanation of the word ἐγκαινίζω, "Christ laid out the road and was the first to go over it. The first way was of death, leading [*ad inferos*] to the under-world; the other is of life," leading to heaven. The interpretation we have given of these passages reconciles and blends that part of the known contemporary opinions which applies to them, and explains and justifies the natural force of the imagery and words employed. Its accuracy seems to us unquestionable by any candid person who is competently acquainted with the subject. The substance of it is, that Jesus came from God to the earth as a man, laid down his life that he might rise from the dead into heaven again, into the real *Sanctum Sanctorum* of the universe, thereby proving that faithful believers also shall rise thither, being thus delivered, after the pattern of his evident deliverance, from the imprisonment of the realm of death below.

We now proceed to quote and unfold five distinct passages, not yet

[8] Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 6, sect. 4; ibid. cap. 7, sect. 7.

[9] Philo declares, "The whole universe is one temple of God, in which the holiest of all is heaven."—De Monarchia, p. 222, ed. Mangey.

[10] Schoettgen, Dissertatio de Hierosolyma Coelesti, cap. 2, sect. 9.

brought forward, from the epistle, each of which proves that we are not mistaken in attributing to the writer of it the above-stated general theory. In the first verse which we shall adduce it is certain that the word "death" *includes* the entrance of the soul into the subterranean kingdom of ghosts. It is written of Christ that, "in the days of his flesh, when he had earnestly prayed to Him that was able to do it,—*to save him from death*,—he was heard," and was advanced to be a high-priest in the heavens,—"was made higher than the heavens." Now, obviously, God did not rescue Christ from dying, but he raised him, ἐκ νεκρῶν, from the world of the dead. So Chrysostom declares, referring to this very text, "Not to be retained in the region of the dead, but to be delivered from it, is virtually not to die."[11] Moreover, the phrase above translated "to save him from death" may be translated, with equal propriety, "to bring him back safe from death." The Greek verb σώζειν, *to save*, is often so used to denote the safe restoration of a warrior from an incursion into an enemy's domain. The same use made here by our author of the term "death" we have also found made by Philo Judæus. "The wise," Philo says, "inherit the Olympic and heavenly region to dwell in, always studying to go above; the bad inherit the innermost parts of the under-world, always laboring to die."[12] The antithesis between going above and dying, and the mention of the under-world in connection with the latter, prove that *to die* here means, or at least includes, going below after death.

The Septuagint version of the Old Testament twice translates Sheol by the word "death."[13] The Hebrew word for death, *mâveth*, is repeatedly used for the abode of the dead.[14] And the nail of the interpretation we are urging is clenched by this sentence from Origen:—"The under-world, in which souls are detained by death, is called death."[15] Bretschneider cites nearly a dozen passages from the New Testament where, in his judgment, death is used to denote Hades.

Again: we read that Christ took human nature upon him "in order that by means of [his own] death he might render him that has the power of death—that is, the devil—idle, and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." It is apparent at once that the mere *death* of Christ, so far from ending the sway of Death, would be giving the grim monster a new victory, incomparably the most important he had ever achieved. Therefore, the only way to make adequate sense of the passage is to join with the Savior's death what followed it,—namely, his resurrection and ascension. It was the Hebrew belief that sin, introduced by the fraud of the devil, was the cause of death, and the doomer of the disembodied spirits of men to the lower caverns of darkness and rest. They personified Death as a gloomy

[11] Homil. Epist. ad Heb. in hoc loc.

[12] Quod a Deo mitt. Somn., p. 643, ed. Mangey.

[13] 2 Sam. xxii. 6; Prov. xxiii. 14.

[14] Ps. ix. 13. Prov. vii, 27.

[15] Comm. in Epist. ad Rom., lib. vi. cap. 6, sect. 6.: "Inferni locus in quo animæ detinebantur a morte mors appellatur."

king, tyrannising over mankind; and, unless in severe affliction, they dreaded the hour when they must lie down under his sceptre and sink into his voiceless kingdom of shadows. Christ broke the power of Satan, closed his busy reign, rescued the captive souls, and relieved the timorous hearts of the faithful, by rising triumphantly from the long-bound dominion of the grave, and ascending in a new path of light, *pioneering* the saints to immortal glory.

In another part of the epistle, the writer, having previously explained that as the high-priest after the death of the expiatory goat entered the typical holy place in the temple, so Christ after his own death entered the true holy place in the heavens, goes on—to guard against the analogy being forced any further—to deny the necessity of Christ's service being repeated, as the priest's was annually repeated, saying, "For then he must have died many times since the foundation of the world; but, on the contrary, [it suffices that] once, at the close of the ages, through the sacrifice of himself he hath appeared [in heaven] for the abrogation of sin."[16] The rendering and explanation we give of this language are those adopted by the most distinguished commentators, and must be justified by any one who examines the proper punctuation of the clauses and studies the context. The simple idea is, that, by the sacrifice of his body through death, Christ rose and showed himself in the presence of God. The author adds that this was done "unto the annulling of sin." It is with reference to these last words principally that we have cited the passage. What do they mean? In what sense can the passing of Christ's soul into heaven after death be said to have done away with sin? In the first place, the open manifestation of Christ's disenthralled and risen soul in the supernal presence of God did not in any sense abrogate sin itself, literally considered, because all kinds of sin that ever were upon the earth among men before have been ever since, and are now. In the second place, that miraculous event did not annul and remove human guilt, the consciousness of sin and responsibility for it, because, in fact, men feel the sting and load of guilt now as badly as ever; and the very epistle before us, as well as the whole New Testament, addresses Christians as being exposed to constant and varied danger of incurring guilt and woe. But, in the third place, the ascension of Jesus did show very plainly to the apostles and first Christians that what they supposed to be the great outward penalty of sin was annulled; that it was no longer a necessity for the spirit to descend to the lower world after death; that that fatal doom, entailed on the generations of humanity by sin, was now abrogated for all who were worthy. Such, we have not a doubt, is the true meaning of the declaration under review.

This exposition is powerfully confirmed by the two succeeding verses, which we will next pass to examine. "As it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ, having been offered

[16] Griesbach *in loc.*; and Rosenmüller.

once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, without sin, for salvation unto those expecting him." Man dies once, and then passes into that state of separate existence in the under-world which is the legal judgment for sin. Christ, taking upon himself, with the nature of man, the burden of man's lot and doom, died once, and then rose from the dead by the gracious power of the Father, bearing away the outward penalty of sin. He will come again into the world, uninvolved,—the next time, with any of the accompaniments or consequences of sin,—to save them that look for him, and victoriously lead them into heaven with him. In this instance, as all through the writings of the apostles, sin, death, and the under-world are three segments of a circle, each necessarily implying the others. The same remark is to be made of the contrasted terms righteousness, grace, immortal life above the sky;[17] the former being traced from the sinful and fallen Adam, the latter from the righteous and risen Christ.

The author says, "If the blood of bulls and goats sanctifies unto the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who having[18] an eternal spirit offered himself faultless to God, cleanse your consciousness!" The argument, fully expressed, is, if the blood of perishable brutes cleanses the body, the blood of the immortal Christ cleanses the soul. The implied inference is, that as the former fitted the outward man for the ritual privileges of the temple, so the latter fitted the inward man for the spiritual privileges of heaven. This appears clearly from what follows in the next chapter, where the writer says, in effect, that "it is not possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins, however often it is offered, but that Christ, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down at the right hand of God." The reason given for the efficacy of Christ's offering is that he sat down at the right hand of God. When the chosen animals were sacrificed for sins, they utterly perished, and there was an end. But when Christ was offered, his soul survived and rose into heaven,—an evident sign that the penalty of sin, whereby men were doomed to the under-world after death, was abolished. This perfectly explains the language; and nothing else, it seems to us, can perfectly explain it.

That Christ would speedily reappear from heaven in triumph, to judge his foes and save his disciples, was a fundamental article in the primitive Church scheme of the last things. There are unmistakable evidences of such a belief in our author. "For yet a little while, and the coming one will come, and will not delay." "Provoke one another unto love and good works, . . . so much the more as ye see the day drawing near." There is another reference to this approaching advent, which, though obscure, affords important testimony. Jesus, when he had ascended, "sat down at the right hand of God, henceforward waiting till his enemies be

[17] Neander, Planting and Training of the Church, Ryland's trans. p. 298.

[18] Διά is often used in the sense of *with*, or possessing. See Wahl's New Testament Lexicon.

made his footstool." That is to say, he is tarrying in heaven for the appointed time to arrive when he shall come into the world again to consummate the full and final purposes of his mission. We may leave this division of the subject established beyond all question, by citing a text which explicitly states the idea in so many words:—"Unto them that look for him he shall appear the second time." That expectation of the speedy second coming of the Messiah which haunted the early Christians, therefore, unquestionably occupied the mind of the composer of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

If the writer of this epistolary essay had a firm and detailed opinion as to the exact fate to be allotted to wicked and persistent unbelievers, his allusions to that opinion are too few and vague for us to determine precisely what it was. We will briefly quote the substance of what he says upon the subject, and add a word in regard to the inferences it does, or it does not, warrant. "If under the Mosaic dispensation every transgression received a just recompense, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, first proclaimed by the Lord?" "As the Israelites that were led out of Egypt by Moses, on account of their unbelief and provocations, were not permitted to enter the promised land, but perished in the wilderness, so let us fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Christ "became the cause of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." "He hath brought unto the end forever them that are sanctified." It will be observed that these last specifications are partial, and that nothing is said of the fate of those not included under them. "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, . . . if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance. . . . But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, even things that accompany salvation." "We are not of them who draw back unto the destruction, but of them who believe unto the preservation, of the soul." "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there is no longer left a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment, and of fiery indignation to devour the adversaries." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "If they escaped not who refused him that spoke on earth, [Moses,] much more we shall not escape if we turn away from him that speaks from heaven," (Christ.) In view of the foregoing passages, which represent the entire teaching of the epistle in relation to the ultimate destination of sinners, we must assert as follows. First, the author gives no hint of the doctrine of literal *torments* in a local hell. Secondly, he is still further from favoring—nay, he unequivocally denies—the doctrine of unconditional, universal salvation. Thirdly, he either expected that the reprobate would be absolutely destroyed at the second coming of Christ,—which does not seem to be declared; or that they would be exiled forever from the kingdom of glory into the sad and slumberous under-world,—which is not clearly implied; or that they would be punished according to their evil, and then, restored to Divine

favor, be exalted into heaven with the original elect,—which is not written in the record; or, lastly, that they would be disposed of in some way unknown to him,—which he does not avow. He makes no allusion to such a terrific conception as is expressed by our modern use of the word *hell:* he emphatically predicates conditionality of salvation, he threatens sinners in general terms with severe judgment. Further than this he has neglected to state his faith. If it reached any further, he has preferred to leave the statement of it in vague and impressive gloom.

Let us stop a moment and epitomize the steps we have taken. Jesus, the Son of God, was a spirit in heaven. He came upon the earth in the guise of humanity to undergo its whole experience and to be its redeemer. He died, passed through the vanquished kingdom of the grave, and rose into heaven again, to exemplify to men that through the grace of God a way was opened to escape the under-world, the great external penalty of sin, and reach a better country, even a heavenly. From his seat at God's right hand, he should ere long descend to complete God's designs in his mission,—judge his enemies and lead his accepted followers to heaven. The all-important thought running through the length and breadth of the treatise is the ascension of Christ from the midst of the dead (ἐκ νεκρῶν) into the celestial presence, as the pledge of our ascent. "Among the things of which we are speaking, this is the capital consideration, [κεφάλαιον,]"—the most essential point,—"that we have such a high-priest, who hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Neander says, though apparently without perceiving the extent of its ulterior significance, "The conception of the *resurrection* in relation to the whole Christian system lies at the basis of this epistle."

A brief sketch and exposition of the scope of the epistle in general will cast light and confirmation upon the interpretation we have given of its doctrine of a future life in particular. The one comprehensive design of the writer, it is perfectly clear, is to prove to the Christian converts from the Hebrews the superiority of Christianity to Judaism, and thus to arm them against apostasy from the new covenant to the ancient one. He begins by showing that Christ, the bringer of the gospel, is greater than the angels, by whom the law was given,[19] and consequently that his word is to be reverenced still more than theirs.[20] Next he argues that Jesus, the Christian Mediator, as the *Son* of God, is crowned with more authority and is worthy of more glory than Moses, the Jewish mediator, as the *servant* of God; and that as Moses led his people towards the rest of Canaan, so Christ leads his people towards the far better rest of heaven. He then advances to demonstrate the superiority of Christ to the Levitical priesthood. This he establishes by pointing out the facts that the Levitical priest had a transient honor, being after the law of a carnal commandment, his offerings referring to the flesh, while

[19] Heb. i. 4-14, ii. 2; Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 20.

[20] Heb. ii. 1-3.

Christ has an unchangeable priesthood, being after the power of an endless life, his offering referring to the soul; that the Levitical priest once a year went into the symbolic holy place in the temple, unable to admit others, but Jesus rose into the real holy place itself above, opening a way for all faithful disciples to follow; and that the Hebrew temple and ceremonies were but the small type and shadow of the grand archetypal temple in heaven, where Christ is the immortal High-Priest, fulfilling in the presence of God the completed reality of what Judaism merely *miniatured*, an emblematic pattern that could make nothing perfect. "By him therefore let us continually offer to God the sacrifice of praise." The author intersperses, and closes with, exhortations to steadfast faith, pure morals, and fervent piety.

There is one point in this epistle which deserves, in its essential connection with the doctrine of the future life, a separate treatment. It is the subject of the Atonement. The correspondence between the sacrifices in the Hebrew ritual and the sufferings and death of Christ would, from the nature of the case, irresistibly suggest the sacrificial terms and metaphors which our author uses in a large part of his argument. Moreover, his precise aim in writing compelled him to make these resemblances as prominent, as significant, and as effective as possible. Griesbach says well, in his learned and able essay, "When it was impossible for the Jews, lately brought to the Christian faith, to tear away the attractive associations of their ancestral religion, which were twined among the very roots of their minds, and they were consequently in danger of falling away from Christ, the most ingenious author of this epistle met the case by a masterly expedient. He instituted a careful comparison, showing the superiority of Christianity to Judaism even in regard to the very point where the latter seemed so much more glorious, —namely, in priesthoods, temples, altars, victims, lustrations, and kindred things."[n] That these comparisons are sometimes used by the writer analogically, figuratively, imaginatively, for the sake of practical illustration and impression, not literally as logical expressions and proofs of a dogmatic theory of atonement, is made sufficiently plain by the following quotations. "The bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high-priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." Every one will at once perceive that these sentences are not critical statements of theological truths, but are imaginative expressions of practical lessons, spiritual exhortations. Again, we read, "It was necessary that the *patterns* of the heavenly things should be purified with sacrificed animals, but the heavenly things *themselves* with better sacrifices than these." Certainly it is only by an exercise of the imagination, for spiritual impression, not for philosophical argu-

[n] Opuscula: De Imaginibus Judaicis in Epist. ad Hebræos.

ment, that heaven can be said to be defiled by the sins of men on earth so as to need cleansing by the lustral blood of Christ. The writer also appeals to his readers in these terms:—"To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." The purely practical aim and rhetorical method with which the sacrificial language is employed here are evident enough. We believe it is used in the same way wherever it occurs in the epistle.

The considerations which have convinced us, and which we think ought to convince every unprejudiced mind, that the Calvinistic scheme of a substitutional expiation for sin, a placation of Divine wrath by the offering of Divine blood, was not in the mind of the author, and does not inform his expressions when they are rightly understood, may be briefly presented. First, the notion that the suffering of Christ in itself ransomed lost souls, bought the withheld grace and pardon of God for us, is confessedly foreign and repulsive to the instinctive moral sense and to natural reason, but is supposed to rest on the authority of revelation. Secondly, that doctrine is nowhere specifically stated in the epistle, but is assumed, or inferred, to explain language which to a superficial look seems to imply it,—perhaps even seems to be inexplicable without it;[22] but in reality such a view is inconsistent with that language when it is accurately studied. For example, notice the following passage:—"When Christ cometh into the world," he is represented as saying, "I come to do thy will, O God." "By the which will," the writer continues, "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus." That is, the death of Christ, involving his resurrection and ascension into heaven, fulfils and exemplifies the gracious purpose of God, not purchases for us an otherwise impossible benignity. The above-cited explicit declaration is irreconcilable with the thought that Christ came into the world to die that he might appease the flaming justice and anger of God, and by vicarious agony buy the remission of human sins: it conveys the idea, on the contrary, that God sent Christ to prove and illustrate to men the free fulness of his forgiving love. Thirdly, the idea, which we think was the idea of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that Christ, by his death, resurrection, and ascent, demonstrated to the faith of men God's merciful removal of the supposed outward penalty of sin, namely, the banishment of souls after death to the under-world, and led the way, as their forerunner, into heaven,—this idea, which is not shocking to the moral sense nor plainly absurd to the moral reason, as the Augustinian dogma is, not only yields a more sharply-defined, consistent, and satisfactory explanation of all the related lan-

[22] That these texts were not originally understood as implying any vicarious efficacy in Christ's painful death, but as attributing a typical power to his triumphant resurrection, his glorious return from the world of the dead into heaven, appears very plainly in the following instance. Theodoret, one of the earliest explanatory writers on the New Testament, says, while expressly speaking of Christ's death, the sufferings through which he was perfected, "His resurrection certified a resurrection for us all."—*Comm. in Epist. ad Heb.* cap. 2, v. 10.

guage of the epistle, but is also—which cannot be said of the other doctrine—in harmony with the contemporary opinions of the Hebrews, and would be the natural and almost inevitable development from them and complement of them in the mind of a Pharisee, who, convinced of the death and ascension of the sinless Jesus, the appointed Messiah, had become a Christian.

In support of the last assertion, which is the only one that needs further proof, we submit the following considerations. In the first place, every one familiar with the eschatology of the Hebrews knows that at the time of Christ the belief prevailed that the sin of Adam was the cause of death among men. In the second place, it is equally well known that they believed the destination of souls upon leaving the body to be the under-world. Therefore—does it not follow by all the necessities of logic? —they believed that sin was the cause of the descent of disembodied spirits to the dreary lower realm. In the third place, it is notorious and undoubted that the Jews of that age expected that, when the Messiah should appear, the dead of their nation, or at least a portion of them, would be raised from the under-world and be reclothed with bodies, and would reign with him for a period on earth and then ascend to heaven. Now, what could be more natural than that a person holding this creed, who should be brought to believe that Jesus was the true Messiah and after his death had risen from among the dead into heaven, should immediately conclude that this was a pledge or illustration of the abrogation of the gloomy penalty of sin, the deliverance of souls from the subterranean prison, and their admission to the presence of God beyond the sky? We deem this an impregnable position. Every relevant text that we consider in its light additionally fortifies it by the striking manner in which such a conception fits, fills, and explains the words. To justify these interpretations, and to sustain particular features of the doctrine which they express, almost any amount of evidence may be summoned from the writings both of the most authoritative and of the simplest Fathers of the Church, beginning with Justin Martyr,[23] philosopher of Neapolis, at the close of the apostolic age, and ending with John Hobart,[24] Bishop of New York, in the early part of the nineteenth century. We refrain from adducing the throng of such authorities here, because they will be more appropriately brought forward in future chapters.

The intelligent reader will observe that the essential point of difference distinguishing our exposition of the fundamental doctrine of the composition in review, on the one hand, from the Calvinistic interpretation of it, and, on the other hand, from the Unitarian explanation of it, is this. Calvinism says that Christ, by his death, his vicarious pains, appeased the wrath of God, satisfied the claims of justice, and purchased the salvation of souls from an agonizing and endless hell. Unitarianism says that Christ, by his teachings, spirit, life, and miracles, revealed the

[23] Dial. cum Tryph. cap. v. et cap. lxxx. [24] State of the Departed.

character of the Father, set an example for man, gave certainty to great truths, and exerted moral influences to regenerate men, redeem them from sin, and fit them for the blessed kingdom of immortality. We understand the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews really to say—in subtraction from what the Calvinist, in addition to what the Unitarian, says—that Christ, by his resurrection from the tyrannous realm of death, and ascent into the unbarred heaven, demonstrated the fact that God, in his sovereign grace, in his free and wondrous love, would forgive mankind their sins, remove the ancient penalty of transgression, no more dooming their disembodied spirits to the noiseless and everlasting gloom of the under-world, but admitting them to his own presence, above the firmamental floor, where the beams of his chambers are laid, and where he reigneth forever, covered with light as with a garment.

CHAPTER III.

DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE IN THE APOCALYPSE.

Before attempting to exhibit the doctrine of a future life contained in the Apocalypse, we propose to give a brief account of what is contained, relating to this subject, in the Epistle of James, the Epistle of Jude, and the (so-called) Second Epistle of Peter.

The references made by James to the group of points included under the general theme of the Future Life are so few and indirect, or vague, that it is impossible to construct any thing like a complete doctrine from them, save by somewhat arbitrary and uncertain suppositions. His purpose in writing, evidently, was practical exhortation, not dogmatic instruction. His epistle contains no expository outline of a system; but it has allusions and hints which plainly imply some partial views belonging to a system, while the other parts of it are left obscure. He says that "evil desire brings forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death." But whether he intended this text as a moral metaphor to convey a spiritual meaning, or as a literal statement of a physical fact, or as a comprehensive enunciation including both these ideas, there is nothing in the context positively to determine. He offers not the faintest clew to his conception of the purpose of the death and resurrection of Christ. He uses the word for the Jewish hell but once, and then, undeniably, in a figurative sense, saying that a "curbless and defiling tongue is set on fire of Gehenna." He appears to adopt the common notion of his contemporary countrymen in regard to demoniacal existences, when he declares that "the devils believe there is one God, and tremble," and when he exclaims, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." He insists on

the necessity of a faith that evinces itself in good works and in all the virtues, as the means of acceptance with God. He compares life to a vanishing vapor, denounces terribly the wicked and dissolute rich men who wanton in crimes and oppress the poor. Then he calls on the suffering brethren to be patient under their afflictions "until the coming of the Lord;" to abstain from oaths, be fervent in prayer, and establish their hearts, "for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the Judge standeth before the door." Here the return of Christ, to finish his work, sit in judgment, accept some, and reject others, is clearly implied. And if James held this element of the general scheme of eschatology held by the other apostles as shown in their epistles, it is altogether probable that he also embraced the rest of that scheme. There are no means of definitely ascertaining whether he did or did not; though, according to a very learned and acute theologian, another fundamental part of that general system of doctrine is to be found in the last verse of the epistle, where James says that "he who converts a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins." Bretschneider thinks that saving a soul from death here means rescuing it from a descent into the under-world, the word *death* being often used in the New Testament—as by the Rabbins—to denote the subterranean abode of the dead.[1] This interpretation may seem forced to an unlearned reader, who examines the text for personal profit, but will not seem at all improbable to one who, to learn its historic meaning, reads the text in the lighted foreground of a mind over whose background lies a fitly-arranged knowledge of all the materials requisite for an adequate criticism. For such a man was Bretschneider himself.

The eschatological implications and references in the Epistle of Jude are of pretty much the same character and extent as those which we have just considered. A thorough study and analysis of this brief document will show that it may be fairly divided into three heads and be regarded as having three objects. First, the writer exhorts his readers "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," "to remember the words of Christ's apostles," "to keep themselves in the love of God, looking for eternal life." He desires to stir them up to diligence in efforts to preserve their doctrinal purity and their personal virtue. Secondly, he warns them of the fearful danger of depravity, pride, and lasciviousness. This warning he enforces by several examples of the terrible judgments of God on the rebellious and wicked in other times. Among these instances is the case of the Cities of the Plain, eternally destroyed by a storm of fire for their uncleanness; also the example of the fallen angels, "who kept not their first estate, but left their proper habitation, and are reserved in everlasting chains and darkness unto the judgment of the great day." The writer here adopts the doctrine of

[1] Bretschneider, Religiöse Glaubenslehre, sect. 59.

fallen angels, and the connected views, as then commonly received among the Jews. This doctrine is not of Christian origin, but was drawn from Persian and other Oriental sources, as is abundantly shown, with details, in almost every history of Jewish opinions, in almost every Biblical commentary.[2] In this connection Jude cites a legend from an apocryphal book, called the "Ascension of Moses," of which Origen gives an account.[3] The substance of the tradition is, that, at the decease of Moses, Michael and Satan contended whether the body should be given over to death or be taken up to heaven. The appositeness of this allusion is, that, while in this strife the archangel dared not rail against Satan, yet the wicked men whom Jude is denouncing do not hesitate to blaspheme the angels and to speak evil of the things which they know not. "Woe unto such ungodly men: gluttonous spots, dewless clouds, fruitless trees plucked up and twice dead, they are ordained to condemnation." Thirdly, the epistle announces the second coming of Christ, in the last time, to establish his tribunal. The Prophecy of Enoch—an apocryphal book, recovered during the present century—is quoted as saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict the ungodly of their ungodly deeds."[4] Jude, then, anticipated the return of the Lord, at "the judgment of the great day," to judge the world; considered the under-world, or abode of the dead, not as a region of fire, but a place of imprisoning gloom, wherein "to defiled and blaspheming dreamers is reserved the blackness of darkness forever;" thought it imminently necessary for men to be diligent in striving to secure their salvation, because "all sensual mockers, not having the spirit, but walking after their own ungodly lusts," would be lost. He probably expected that, when all free contingencies were past and Christ had pronounced sentence, the condemned would be doomed eternally into the black abyss, and the accepted would rise into the immortal glory of heaven. He closes his letter with these significant words, which plainly imply much of what we have just been setting forth:—"Everlasting honor and power, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be unto God, who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the face of his glory with exceeding joy."[5]

The first chapter of the so-called Second Epistle of Peter is not occupied with theological propositions, but with historical, ethical, and practical statements and exhortations. These are, indeed, of such a character, and so expressed, that they clearly presuppose certain opinions in the mind of the writer. First, he evidently believed that a merciful and holy message had been sent from God to men by Jesus Christ,

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[2] E.g. Stuart's Dissertation on the Angelology of the Scriptures, published in vol. i. of the Bibliotheca Sacra.

[3] De Principiis, lib. iii. cap 2. See, also, in Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament, sect. 4 of the chapter on Jude.

[4] Book of Enoch, translated by Dr. R. Laurence, cap. ii.

[5] Griesbach's reading of the 25th verse of Jude.

whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." The substance of these promises was "a call to escape the corruption of the world, and enter into glory and be partakers of the Divine nature." By partaking of the Divine nature, we understand the writer to mean entering the Divine abode and condition, ascending into the safe and eternal joy of the celestial prerogatives. That the author here denotes heaven by the term *glory*, as the other New Testament writers frequently do, appears distinctly from the seventeenth and eighteenth verses of the chapter, where, referring to the incident at the baptism of Jesus, he declares, "There came a voice from the excellent *glory*, saying, 'This is my beloved Son;' and this voice, which came from *heaven*, we heard." Secondly, our author regarded this glorious promise as contingent on the fulfilment of certain conditions. It was to be realized by means of "faith, courage, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, kindness, and love." "He that hath these things shall never fall," "but an entrance shall be ministered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." The writer furnishes us no clew to his idea of the particular part performed by Christ in our salvation. He says not a word concerning the sufferings or death of the Savior; and the extremely scanty and indefinite allusions made to the relation in which Christ was supposed to stand between God and men, and the redemption and reconciliation of men with God, do not enable us to draw any dogmatic conclusions. He speaks of "false teachers, who shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them." But whether by this last phrase he means to imply a ransom of imprisoned souls from the under-world by Christ's descent thither and victory over its powers, or a purchased exemption of sinners from their merited doom by the vicarious sufferings of Christ's death, or a practical regenerative redemption of disciples from their sins by the moral influences of his mission, his teachings, example, and character, there is nothing in the epistle clearly to decide; though, forming our judgment by the aid of other sources of information, we should conclude in favor of the first of these three conceptions as most probably expressing the writer's thought.

The second chapter of the epistle is almost an exact parallel with the Epistle of Jude: in many verses it is the same, word for word. It threatens "unclean, self-willed, unjust, and blaspheming men," that they shall "be reserved unto the day of judgment, to be punished." It warns such persons by citing the example of the rebellious "angels, who were thrust down into Tartarus, and fastened in chains of darkness until the judgment." It speaks of "cursed children, to whom is reserved the mist of darkness forever." Herein, plainly enough, is betrayed the common notion of the Jews of that time,—the conception of a dismal under-world, containing the evil angels of the Persian theology, and where the wicked were to be remanded after judgment and eternally imprisoned.

The third and last chapter is taken up with the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. "Be mindful of the words of the prophets and apostles, knowing this first, that in the last days there shall be scoffers, who will say, 'Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as from the beginning.'" The writer meets this skeptical assertion with denial, and points to the Deluge, "whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." His argument is, the world was thus destroyed once, therefore it may be destroyed again. He then goes on to assert positively—relying for authority on old traditions and current dogmas—that "the heavens and the earth which are now are kept by the word of God in store to be destroyed by fire in the day of judgment, when the perdition of ungodly men shall be sealed." "The delay of the Lord to fulfil his promise is not from procrastination, but from his long-suffering who is not willing that any should perish." He waits "that all may come to repentance." But his patience will end, and "the day of God come as a thief in the night, when the heavens, being on fire, shall pass away with a crash, and the elements melt with fervent heat." There are two ways in which these declarations may be explained,—though in either case the events they refer to are to occur in connection with the physical reappearance of Christ. First, they may be taken in a highly-figurative sense, as meaning the moral overthrow of evil and the establishment of righteousness in the world. Similar expressions were often used thus by the ancient Hebrew prophets, who describe the triumphs of Israel and the destruction of their enemies, the Edomites or the Assyrians, by the interposition of Jehovah's arm, in such phrases as these. "The mountains melt, the valleys cleave asunder like wax before a fire, like waters poured over a precipice." "The heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll, all their hosts shall melt away and fall down; for Jehovah holdeth a great slaughter in the land of Edom: her streams shall be turned into pitch, and her dust into brimstone, and her whole land shall become burning pitch." The suppression of Satan's power and the setting up of the Messiah's kingdom might, according to the prophetic idiom, be expressed in awful images of fire and woe, the destruction of the old, and the creation of a new, heaven and earth. But, secondly, this phraseology, as used by the writer of the epistle before us, may have a literal significance,—may have been intended to predict strictly that the world shall be burned and purged by fire at the second coming of the Lord. That such a catastrophe would take place in the last day, or occurred periodically, was notoriously the doctrine of the Persians and of the Stoics.[6] For our own part, we are convinced that the latter is the real meaning of the writer. This seems to be shown alike by the connection of his argument, by the prosaic literality of detail with which he speaks, and by the earnest exhortations he

[6] Cicero de Nat. Deorum, lib. ii. cap. 46. Also Ovid, Minucius Felix, Seneca, and other authorities, as quoted by Rosenmüller on 2 Peter iii. 7.

immediately bases on the declaration he has made. He reasons that, since the world was destroyed once by water, it may be again by fire. The deluge he certainly regarded as literal: was not, then, in his conception, the fire, too, literal? He says, with calm, prosaic precision, "The earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holiness, looking for a new heaven and a new earth, and striving that ye may be found by him in peace, without spot, and blameless!" We do not suppose this writer expected the annihilation of the physical creation, but only that the fire would destroy all unransomed creatures from its surface, and thoroughly purify its frame, and make it clean and fit for a new race of sinless and immortal men.

> "Tears shall not break from their full source,
> Nor Anguish stray from her Tartarean den,
> The golden years maintain a course
> Not undiversified, though smooth and even,
> We not be mock'd with glimpse and shadow then,
> Bright seraphs mix familiarly with men,
> And earth and sky compose a universal heaven."

We have now arrived at the threshold of the last book in the New Testament,—that book which, in the words of Lücke, "lies like a Sphinx at the lofty outgate of the Bible." There are three modes of interpreting the Apocalypse, each of which has had numerous and distinguished advocates. First, it may be regarded as a congeries of inspired prophecies,—a scenic unfolding, with infallible foresight, of the chief events of Christian history from the first century till now, and onwards. This view the combined effect of the facts in the case and of all the just considerations appropriate to the subject compels us to reject. There is no evidence to support it; the application of it is crowded with egregious follies and absurdities. We thus simply state the result of our best investigation and judgment, for there is no space here to discuss it in detail. Secondly, the book may be taken as a symbolic exhibition of the transitional crises, exposures, struggles, and triumphs of the individual soul, a description of personal experience, a picture of the inner life of the Christian in a hostile world. The contents of it can be made to answer to such a characterization only by the determined exercise of an unrestrained fancy, or by the theory of a double sense, as the Swedenborgians expound it. This method of interpreting the Revelation is adopted, not by scholarly thinkers, who, by the light of learning and common sense, seek to discern what the writer meant to express, but by those persons who go to the obscure document, with traditional superstition and lawless imaginations, to see what lessons they can find there for their experimental guidance and edification. We suppose that every intelligent and informed student who has examined the subject with candid independence holds it as an exegetical axiom that the Apocalypse is neither a pure prophecy, blazing full illumination from Patmos along the track of the coming centuries, nor an exhaustive vision of the experience of the faithful

Christian disciple. We are thus brought to the third and, as we think, the correct mode of considering this remarkable work. It is an outburst from the commingled and seething mass of opinions, persecutions, hopes, general experience, and expectation of the time when it was written. This is the view which would naturally arise in the mind of an impartial student from the nature of the case, and from contemplating the fervid faith, suffering, lowering elements, and thick-coming events of the apostolic age. It also strikingly corresponds with numerous express statements and with the whole obvious spirit and plan of the work; for its descriptions and appeals have the vivid colors, the thrilling tones, the significantly-detailed allusions to experiences and opinions and anticipations notoriously existing at the time, which belong to present or immediately-impending scenes. This way of considering the Apocalypse likewise enables one who is acquainted with the early Jewish-Christian doctrines, legends, and hopes, to explain clearly a large number of passages in it whose obscurity has puzzled many a commentator. We should be glad to give various illustrations of this, if our limits did not confine us strictly to the one class of texts belonging to the doctrine of a future life. Furthermore, nearly all the most gifted critics, such as Ewald, Bleek, Lücke, De Wette,—those whose words on such matters as these are weightiest,—now agree in concluding that the Revelation of John was a product springing out of the intense Jewish-Christian belief and experience of the age, and referring, in its dramatic scenery and predictions, to occurrences supposed to be then transpiring or very close at hand. Finally, this view in regard to the Apocalypse is strongly confirmed by a comparison of that production with the several other works similar to it in character and nearly contemporaneous in origin. These apocryphal productions were written or compiled—according to the pretty general agreement of the great scholars who have criticized them —somewhere between the beginning of the first century before, and the middle of the second century after, Christ. We merely propose here, in the briefest manner, to indicate the doctrine of a future life contained in them, as an introduction to an exposition of that contained in the New Testament Apocalypse.

In the TESTAMENT OF THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS it is written that "the under-world shall be spoiled through the death of the Most Exalted."[7] Again, we read, "The Lord shall make battle against the devil, and conquer him, and rescue from him the captive souls of the righteous. The just shall rejoice in Jerusalem, where the Lord shall reign himself, and every one that believes in him shall reign in truth in the heavens."[8] Farther on the writer says of the Lord, after giving an account of his crucifixion, "He shall rise up from the under-world and ascend into heaven."[9] These extracts seem to imply the common doctrine of that

[7] See this book in Fabricii Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti, Test. Lev. sect. iv.
[8] Ibid. Test. Dan. sect. v. [9] Ibid. Test. Benj. sect. ix.

time, that Christ descended into the under-world, freed the captive saints, and rose into heaven, and would soon return to establish his throne in Jerusalem, to reign there for a time with his accepted followers.

The FOURTH BOOK OF EZRA contains scattered declarations and hints of the same nature.[10] It describes a vision of the Messiah, on Mount Zion, distributing crowns to those confessors of his name who had died in their fidelity.[11] The world is said to be full of sorrows and oppressions; and as the souls of the just ask when the harvest shall come,[12] for the good to be rewarded and the wicked to be punished, they are told that the day of liberation is not far distant, though terrible trials and scourges must yet precede it. "My Son Jesus shall be revealed." "My Son the Christ shall die; and then a new age shall come, the earth shall give up the dead, sinners shall be plunged into the bottomless abyss, and Paradise shall appear in all its glory."[13] The "Son of God will come and consume his enemies with fire; but the elect will be protected and made happy."[14]

The ASCENSION OF ISAIAH is principally occupied with an account of the rapture of the soul of that prophet through the seven heavens, and of what he there saw and learned. It describes the descent of Christ, the beloved Son of God, through all the heavens, to the earth; his death; his resurrection after three days; his victory over Satan and his angels, who dwell in the welkin or higher region of the air; and his return to the right hand of God.[15] It predicts great apostasy and sin among the disciples of the apostles, and much dissension respecting the nearness of the second advent of Christ.[16] It emphatically declares that "Christ shall come with his angels, and shall drag Satan and his powers into Gehenna. Then all the saints shall descend from heaven in their heavenly clothing, and dwell in this world; while the saints who had not died shall be similarly clothed, and after a time leave their bodies here, that they may assume their station in heaven. The general resurrection and judgment will follow, when the ungodly will be devoured by fire."[17] The author—as Gesenius, with almost all the rest of the critics, says—was unquestionably a Jewish Christian, and his principal design was to set forth the speedy second coming of Christ, and the glorious triumph of the saints that would follow with the condign punishment of the wicked.

The first book of the SIBYLLINE ORACLES contains a statement that in the golden age the souls of all men passed peacefully into the under-world, to tarry there until the judgment; a prediction of a future Messiah; and an account of his death, resurrection, and ascension. The second book begins with a description of the horrors that will precede the last time, threats against the persecuting tyrants, and promises to the faithful,—especially to the martyrs,—and closes with an account of

[10] See the abstract of it given in section vi. of Stuart's Commentary on the Apocalypse.
[11] Cap. ii. [12] Cap. iv. [13] Cap. v., vii. [14] Cap. xiii., xvi.
[15] Ascensio Isaiæ Vatis, a Ricardo Laurence, cap. ix., x., xi. [16] Ibid. cap. ii., iii.
[17] Ibid. cap. iv. 13–18.

the general judgment, when Elijah shall come from heaven, consuming flames break out, all souls be summoned to the tribunal of God at whose right hand Christ will sit, the bodies of the dead be raised, the righteous be purified, and the wicked be plunged into final ruin.

The fundamental thought and aim of the apocryphal BOOK OF ENOCH are the second coming of Christ to judge the world, the encouragement of the Christians, and the warning of their oppressors by declarations of approaching deliverance to those and vengeance to these. This is transparent at frequent intervals through the whole book.[18] "Ye righteous, wait with patient hope: your cries have cried for judgment, and it shall come, and the gates of heaven shall be opened to you." "Woe to you, powerful oppressors, false witnesses! for you shall suddenly perish." "The voices of slain saints accusing their murderers, the oppressors of their brethren, reach to heaven with interceding cries for swift justice."[19] When that justice comes, "the horse shall wade up to his breast, and the chariot shall sink to its axle, in the blood of sinners."[20] The author teaches that the souls of men at death go into the under-world, "a place deep and dark, where all souls shall be collected;" "where they shall remain in darkness till the day of judgment,"—the spirits of the righteous being in peace and joy, separated from the tormented spirits of the wicked, who have spurned the Messiah and persecuted his disciples.[21] A day of judgment is at hand. "Behold, he cometh, with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment." Then the righteous shall rise from the under-world, be approved, become as angels, and ascend to heaven. But the wicked shall not rise: they remain imprisoned below forever.[22] The angels descend to earth to dwell with men, and the saints ascend to heaven to dwell with angels.[23] "From beginning to end, like the Apocalypse, the book is filled," says Professor Stuart, (and the most careless reader must remark it,) "with threats for the wicked persecutors and consolations for the suffering pious." A great number of remarkable correspondences between passages in this book and passages in the Apocalypse solicit a notice which our present single object will not allow us to give them here. An under-world divided into two parts, a happy for the good, a wretched for the bad; temporary woes prevailing on the earth; the speedy advent of Christ for a vindication of his power and his servants; the resurrection of the dead; the final translation of the accepted into heaven, and the hopeless dooming of the rejected into the abyss,—these are the features in the book before us which we are now to remember.

There is one other extant apocryphal book whose contents are strictly appropriate to the subject we have in hand,—namely, the APOCALYPSE

[18] Book of Enoch, translated into English by Dr. R. Laurence. See particularly the following places: i. 1–5; lii. 7; liv. 12; lxi. 15; lxii. 14, 15; xciv.; xcv.; civ.

[19] Ibid. cap. ix. 9–11; xxii. 5–8; xlvii. 1–4.

[20] Ibid. cap. xcviii. 3.

[21] Ibid. cap. x. 6–9, 15, 16; xxii. 2–5, 11–13; cii. 6; ciii. 5.

[22] Ibid. cap. xxii. 14, 15; xlv. 2; xlvi. 4; l. 1–4.

cap. xxxviii.–xl.

OF JOHN.[24] It claims to be the work of the Apostle John himself. It represents John as going to Mount Tabor after the ascension of Christ, and there praying that it may be revealed to him when the second coming of Christ will occur, and what will be the consequences of it. In answer to his request, a long and minute disclosure is made. The substance of it is, that, after famines and woes, Antichrist will appear and reign three years. Then Enoch and Elijah will come to expose him; but they will die, and all men with them. The earth will be purified with fire, the dead will rise, Christ will descend in pomp, with myriads of angels, and the judgment will follow. The spirits of Antichrist will be hurled into a gulf of outer darkness, so deep that a heavy stone would not plunge to the bottom in three years. Unbelievers, sinners, hypocrites, will be cast into the under-world; while true Christians are placed at the right hand of Christ, all radiant with glory. The good and accepted will then dwell in an earthly paradise, with angels, and be free from all evils.

In addition to these still extant Apocalypses, we have references in the works of the Fathers to a great many others long since perished; especially the Apocalypses of Adam, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Hystaspes, Paul, Peter, Thomas, Cerinthus, and Stephen. So far as we have any clew, by preserved quotations or otherwise, to the contents of these lost productions, they seem to have been much occupied with the topics of the avenging and redeeming advent of the Messiah, the final judgment of mankind, the supernal and subterranean localities, the resurrection of the dead, the inauguration of an earthly paradise, the condemnation of the reprobate to the abyss beneath, the translation of the elect to the angelic realm on high. These works, all taken together, were plainly the offspring of the mingled mass of glowing faiths, sufferings, fears, and hopes, of the age they belonged to. An acquaintance with them will help us to appreciate and explain many things in our somewhat kindred New Testament Apocalypse, by placing us partially in the circumstances and mental attitude of the writer and of those for whom it was written.

The Persian-Jewish and Jewish-Christian notions and characteristics of the Book of Revelation are marked and prevailing, as every prepared reader must perceive. The threefold division of the universe into the upper world of the angels, the middle world of men, and the under-world of the dead; the keys of the bottomless pit; the abode of Satan, the accuser, in heaven; his revolt; the war in the sky between his seduced host and the angelic army under Michael, and the thrusting down of the former; the banquet of birds on the flesh of kings, mighty men, and horses; the battle of Gog and Magog; the tarrying of souls under the altar of God; the temple in heaven containing the ark of the covenant, and the scene of a various ritual service; the twelve gates of the celestial city bearing the names of the twelve tribes of the children

[24] See the abstract of it given in Lücke's Einleit. in die Offenbar. Joh., cap. 2, sect. 17.

of Israel, and the twelve foundations of the walls having the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb; the bodily resurrection and general judgment, and the details of its sequel,—all these doctrines and specimens of imagery, with a hundred others, carry us at once into the Zend-Avesta, the Talmud, and the Ebionitish documents of the earliest Christians, who mixed their interpretations of the mission and teaching of Christ with the poetic visions of Zoroaster and the cabalistic dogmatics of the Pharisees.[25]

It is astonishing that any intelligent person can peruse the Apocalypse and still suppose that it is occupied with prophecies of remote events, events to transpire successively in distant ages and various lands. Immediateness, imminency, hazardous urgency, swiftness, alarms, are written all over the book. A suspense, frightfully thrilling, fills it, as if the world were holding its breath in view of the universal crash that was coming with electric velocity. Four words compose the key to the Apocalypse:—Rescue, Reward, Overthrow, Vengeance. The followers of Christ are now persecuted and slain by the tyrannical rulers of the earth. Let them be of good cheer: they shall speedily be delivered. Their tyrants shall be trampled down in "blood flowing up to the horse-bridles," and they shall reign in glory. "Here is the faith and the patience of the saints," trusting that, if "true unto death, they shall have a crown of life," and "shall not be hurt of the second death," but shall soon rejoice over the triumphant establishment of the Messiah's kingdom and the condign punishment of his enemies who are now "making themselves drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." The Beast, described in the thirteenth chapter, is unquestionably Nero; and this fact shows the expected immediateness of the events pictured in connection with the rise and destruction of that monstrous despot.[26] The truth of this representation is sealed by the very first verses of the book, indicating the nature of its contents and the period to which they refer:—"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass: Blessed are they who hear the words of this prophecy and keep them; for the time is at hand."

This rescue and reward of the faithful, this overthrow and punishment of the wicked, were to be effected by the agency of a unique and sublime personage, who was expected very soon to appear, with an army of angels from heaven, for this purpose. The conception of the nature, rank, and offices of Jesus Christ which existed in the mind of the writer of the Apocalypse is in some respects but obscurely hinted in the words he employs; yet the relationship of those words to other and fuller sources of

[25] See, e. g., Corrodi, Kritische Geschichte des Chiliasmus, band ii. th. 3–7; Gfrörer, Geschichte Urchristenthums, abth. ii. kap. 8–10; Schöttgen in Apoc. xii. 6–9; ibid. in 2 Cor. v. 2.

[26] See the excursus by Stuart in his Commentary on the Apoc. xiii. 18, which conclusively shows that the Beast could be no other than Nero.

information in the contemporaneous notions of his countrymen is such as to give us great help in arriving at his ideas. He represents Christ as distinct from and subordinate to God. He makes Christ say, "To him that overcometh I will give power over the nations, even as I received of my Father." He characterizes him as "the beginning of the creation of God," and describes him as "mounted on a white horse, leading the heavenly armies to war, and his name is called the Logos of God." These terms evidently correspond to the phrases in the introduction to the Gospel of John, and in the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon, where are unfolded some portions of that great doctrine, so prevalent among the early Fathers, which was borrowed and adapted by them from the Persian Honover, the Hebrew Wisdom, and the Platonic Logos.[27] "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and all things were made by him; . . . and the Logos was made flesh and dwelt among us."[28] "God of our fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things by thy Logos."[29] "Thine almighty Logos leaped down from heaven from his royal throne, a fierce warrior, into the midst of a land of destruction."[30] Plainly enough, the Apocalyptic view of Christ is based on that profound Logos-doctrine so copiously developed in the writings of Philo Judæus and so distinctly endorsed in numerous passages of the New Testament. First, there is the absolute God. Next, there is the Logos, the first-begotten Son and representative image of God, the instrumental cause of the creation, the head of all created beings. This Logos, born into our world as a man, is Christ. Around him are clustered all the features and actions that compose the doctrine of the last things. The vast work of redemption and judgment laid upon him has in part been already executed, and in part remains yet to be done.

We are first to inquire, then, into the significance of what the writer of the Apocalypse supposes has already been effected by Christ in his official relations between God and men, so far as regards the general subject of a life beyond the grave. A few brief and vague but comprehensive expressions include all that he has written which furnishes us a guide to his thoughts on this particular. He describes Jesus, when advanced to his native supereminent dignity in heaven, as the "Logos, clothed in a vesture dipped in blood," and also as "the Lamb that was slain," to whom the celestial throng sing a new song, saying, "Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood." Christ, he says, "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." He represents the risen Savior as declaring, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of the under-world and of death." "Jesus Christ," again he writes, "is the faithful witness, the first-begotten from the dead." What, now, is the real meaning of these

[27] Lücke, Einleitung in das Evang. Joh.
[28] Evang. Joh. i. 1, 3, 14.
[29] Wisdom of Solomon, ix. 1, 2.
[30] Ibid. xviii. 15.

pregnant phrases? What is the complete doctrine to which fragmentary references are here made? We are confident that it is this. Mankind, in consequence of sin, were alienated from God, and banished, after death, to Hades, the subterranean empire of shadows. Christ, leaving his exalted state in heaven, was born into the world as a messenger, or "faithful witness," of surprising grace to them from God, and died that he might fulfil his mission as the agent of their redemption, by descending into the great prison-realm of the dead, and, exerting his irresistible power, return thence to light and life, and ascend into heaven as the forerunner and pledge of the deliverance and ascension of others. Moses Stuart, commenting on the clause "first-begotten from the dead," says, "Christ was in fact the first who enjoyed the privilege of a resurrection to eternal glory and he was constituted the leader of all who should afterwards be thus raised from the dead."[31] All who had died, with the sole exception of Christ, were yet in the under-world. He, since his triumphant subdual of its power and return to heaven, possessed authority over it, and would ere long summon its hosts to resurrection, as he declares:—"I was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of the under-world." The figure is that of a conqueror, who, returning from a captured and subdued city, bears the key of it with him, a trophy of his triumph and a pledge of its submission. The text "Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood" is not received in an absolutely literal sense by any theological sect whatever. The severest Calvinist does not suppose that the physical blood shed on the cross is meant; but he explains it as denoting the atoning efficacy of the vicarious sufferings of Christ. But this interpretation is as forced and constructive an exposition as the one we have given, and is not warranted by the theological opinions of the apostolic age, which do, on the contrary, support and necessitate the other. The direct statement is, that men were redeemed unto God by the blood of Christ. All agree that in the word "blood" is wrapped up a figurative meaning. The Calvinistic dogma makes it denote the satisfaction of the law of retributive justice by a substitutional anguish. We maintain that a true historical exegesis, with far less violence to the use of language, and consistently with known contemporaneous ideas, makes it denote the death of Christ, and the events which were supposed to have followed his death, namely, his appearance among the dead, and his ascent to heaven, preparatory to their ascent, when they should no longer be exiled in Hades, but should dwell with God. Out of an abundance of illustrative authorities we will cite a few.

Augustine describes "the ancient saints" as being "in the under-world, in places most remote from the tortures of the impious, waiting for Christ's blood and descent to deliver them."[32] Epiphanius says, "Christ

[31] Stuart, Comm. in Apoc. i. 5.

[32] De Civitate Dei, lib. xx. cap. 15.

was the first that rose from the under-world to heaven from the time of the creation."[33] Lactantius affirms, "Christ's descent into the under-world and ascent into heaven were necessary to give man the hope of a heavenly immortality."[34] Hilary of Poictiers says, "Christ went down into Hades for two reasons: first, to fulfil the law imposed on mankind that every soul on leaving the body shall descend into the under-world, and, secondly, to preach the Christian religion to the dead."[35] Chrysostom writes, "When the Son of God cometh, the earth shall burst open, and all the men that ever were born, from Adam's birth up to that day, shall rise up out of the earth."[36] Irenæus testifies, "I have heard from a certain presbyter, who heard it from those who had seen the apostles and received their instructions, that Christ descended into the under-world, and preached the gospel and his own advent to the souls there, and remitted the sins of those who believed on him."[37] Eusebius records that, "after the ascension of Jesus, Thomas sent Thaddeus, one of the Seventy, to Abgarus, King of Edessa. This disciple told the king how that Jesus, having been crucified, descended into the under-world, and burst the bars which had never before been broken, and rose again, and also raised with himself the dead that had slept for ages; and how he descended alone, but ascended with a great multitude to his Father; and how he was about to come again to judge the living and the dead."[38] Finally, we cite the following undeniable statement from Daillé's famous work on the "Right Use of the Fathers:"—"That heaven shall not be opened till the second coming of Christ and the day of judgment,—that during this time the souls of all men, with a few exceptions, are shut up in the under-world,—was held by Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Augustine, Origen, Lactantius, Victorinus, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Œcumenius, Aretas, Prudentius, Theophylact, Bernard, and many others, as is confessed by all. This doctrine is literally held by the whole Greek Church at the present day. Nor did any of the Latins expressly deny any part of it until the Council of Florence, in the year of our Lord 1439."[39]

In view of these quotations, and of volumes of similar ones which might be adduced, we submit to the candid reader that the meaning most probably in the mind of the writer of the Apocalypse when he wrote the words "redemption by the Blood of Christ" was this,—the rescue certified to men by the commissioned power and devoted self-sacrifice of Christ in dying, going down to the mighty congregation of the dead, proclaiming good tidings, breaking the hopeless bondage of death and Hades, and ascending as the pioneer of a new way to God. If before his death all men were supposed to go down to helpless con-

[33] In Resurrectionem Christi.
[34] Divin. Instit. lib. iv. cap. 19, 20.
[35] Hilary in Ps. cxviii. et cxix.
[36] Homil. in Rom. viii. 25.
[37] Adv. Hæres. lib. iv. sect. 45.
[38] Eccl. Hist. lib. i. cap. 13.
[39] Lib. ii. cap. 4, pp. 272, 273 of the English translation.

finement in the under-world on account of sin, but after his resurrection the promise of an ascension to heaven was made to them through his gospel and exemplification, then well might the grateful believers, fixing their hearts on his willing martyrdom in their behalf, exclaim, "He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God." It is certainly far more natural, far more reasonable, to suppose that the scriptural phrase "the blood of Christ" means "the death of Christ," with its historical consequences, than to imagine that it signifies a complicated and mysterious scheme of sacerdotal or ethical expiation,—especially when that scheme is unrelated to contemporaneous opinion, irreconcilable with morality, and confessedly nowhere plainly stated in Scripture, but a matter of late and laborious construction and inference. We have not spoken of the strictly moral and subjective mission and work of Christ, as conceived by the author of the Apocalypse,—his influences to cleanse the springs of character, purify and inspire the heart, rectify and elevate the motives, regenerate and sanctify the soul and the life,—because all this is plain and unquestioned. But he also believed in something additional to this,—an objective function: and what that was we think is correctly explained above.

We are next to inquire more immediately into the closing parts of the doctrine of the last things. Christ has appeared, declared the tidings of grace, died, visited the dead, risen victoriously, and gone back to heaven, where he now tarries. But there remain many things for him, as the eschatological King, yet to do. What are they? and what details are connected with them? First of all, he is soon to return from heaven, visiting the earth a second time. The first chapter of the book begins by declaring that it is "a revelation of things which must shortly come to pass," and "blessed is he that readeth; for the time is at hand." The last chapter is full of such repetitions as these: "things which must shortly be done;" "Behold, I come quickly;" "The time is at hand;" "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still;" "Surely I come quickly;" "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Herder says, in his acute and eloquent work on the Apocalypse, "There is but one voice in it, through all its epistles, seals, trumpets, signs, and plagues,—namely, THE LORD IS COMING!" The souls of the martyrs, impatiently waiting, under the altar, the completion of the great drama, cry, "How long, O Lord, dost thou delay to avenge our blood?" and they are told that "they shall rest only for a little season." Tertullian writes, without a trace of doubt, "Is not Christ quickly to come from heaven with a quaking of the whole universe, with a shuddering of the world, amidst the wailings of all men save the Christians?" The Apocalyptic seer makes Christ say, "Behold, I come as a thief in the night: blessed is he that watcheth." Accordingly, "a sentinel gazed wherever a Christian prayed, and, though all the watchmen died without the sight," the expectation lingered for centuries. The Christians of the New Testament time—to borrow the words

of one of the most competent of living scholars—"carried forward to the account of Christ in years to come the visions which his stay, as they supposed, was too short to realize, and assigned to him a quick return to finish what was yet unfulfilled. The suffering, the scorn, the rejection of men, the crown of thorns, were over and gone; the diadem, the clarion, the flash of glory, the troop of angels, were ready to burst upon the world, and might be looked for at midnight or at noon."[40]

Secondly, when Christ returned, he was to avenge the sufferings and reward the fidelity of his followers, tread the heathen tyrants in the wine-press of his wrath, and crown the persecuted saints with a participation in his glory. When "the time of his wrath is come, he shall give reward to the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear his name, and shall destroy them that destroy the earth." "The kings, captains, mighty men, rich men, bondmen, and freemen, shall cry to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb." "To him that overcometh, and doeth my works, I will give power over the Gentiles;" "I will give him the morning star;" "I will grant him to sit with me on my throne." Independently, moreover, of these distinct texts, the whole book is pervaded with the thought that, at the speedy second advent of the Messiah, all his enemies shall be fearfully punished, his servants eminently compensated and glorified.[41]

Thirdly, the writer of the Apocalypse expected—in accordance with that Jewish anticipation of an earthly Messianic kingdom which was adopted with some modifications by the earliest Christians—that Jesus, on his return, having subdued his foes, would reign for a season, in great glory, on the earth, surrounded by the saints. "A door was opened in heaven," and the seer looked in, and saw a vision of the redeemed around the throne, and heard them "singing a new song unto the Lamb that was slain," in the course of which, particularizing the favors obtained for them by him, they say, "We shall reign upon the earth." Again, the writer says that "the worshippers of the beast and of his image shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." Now, the lake of sulphurous fire into which the reprobate were to be thrust was located, not in the sky, but under the surface of the earth. The foregoing statement, therefore, implies that Christ and his angels would be tarrying on the earth when the final woe of the condemned was inflicted. But we need not rely on indirect arguments. The writer explicitly declares that, in his vision of what was to take place, the Christian martyrs, "those who were slain for the witness of Jesus, lived and reigned with

[40] Martineau, Sermon, "The God of Revelation his own Interpreter."

[41] It seems to have been a Jewish expectation that when the Messiah should appear he would thrust his enemies into Hades. In a passage of the Talmud Satan is represented as seeing the Messiah under the Throne of Glory: he falls on his face at the sight, exclaiming, "This is the Messiah, who will precipitate me and all the Gentiles into the under-world."—Bertholdt, Christologia, sect. 36.

Christ a thousand years, while the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Then Satan was loosed out of his prison, and gathered the hosts of Gog and Magog to battle, and went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and fire came down out of heaven and devoured them." It seems impossible to avoid seeing in this passage a plain statement of the millennial reign of Christ on the earth with his risen martyrs.

Fourthly, at the termination of the period just referred to, the author of the Apocalypse thought all the dead would be raised and the tribunal of the general judgment held. As Lactantius says, "All souls are detained in custody in the under-world until the last day; then the just shall rise and reign; afterwards there will be another resurrection of the wicked."[42] "The time of the dead is come, that they should be judged." "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and the under-world delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged, every man according to his works." "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and reign with him a thousand years." This text, with its dark and tacit reference by contrast to those who have no lot in the millennial kingdom, brings us to the next step in our exposition.

For, fifthly, after the general resurrection and judgment at the close of the thousand years, the sentence of a hopeless doom to hell is to be executed on the condemned. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." The "second death" is a term used by Onkelos in his Targum,[43] and sometimes in the Talmud, and by the Rabbins generally. It denotes, as employed by them, the return of the wicked into hell after their summons thence for judgment.[44] In the Apocalypse, its relative meaning is this. The martyrs, who were slain for their allegiance to the gospel, died *once*, and descended into the under-world, the common realm of death. At the coming of Christ they were to rise and join him, and to die no more. This was the first resurrection. At the close of the millennium, all the rest of the dead were to rise and be judged, and the rejected portion of them were to be thrust back again below. This was a *second* death for them,—a fate from which the righteous were exempt. There was a differ-

[42] Divin. Instit. lib. vii. cap. 20, 21, 26. [43] On Deut. xxxiii. 6.
[44] Gfrörer, Geschichte des Urchristenthums, kap. 10. s. 289.

ence, greatly for the worse in the latter, between their condition in the two deaths. In the former they descended to the dark under-world, the silent and temporary abode of the universal dead; but in the latter they went down "into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the devil and the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." For "Death and Hades, having delivered up the dead which were in them, were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." It is plain that here the common locality of departed souls is personified as two demons, Death and Hades, and the real thought meant to be conveyed is, that this region is to be sunk beneath a "Tartarean drench," which shall henceforth roll in burning billows over its victims there,—"the smoke of their torment ascending up for ever and ever." This awful imagery of a lake of flaming sulphur, in which the damned were plunged, was of comparatively late origin—or adoption—among the Jews, from whom the Christians received it. The native Hebrew conception of the state of the dead was that of the voiceless gloom and dismal slumber of Sheol, whither all alike went. The notion of fiery tortures inflicted there on the wicked was either conceived by the Pharisees from the loathed horrors of the filth-fire kept in the vale of Hinnom, outside of Jerusalem, (which is the opinion of most commentators,) or was imagined from the sea of burning brimstone that showered from heaven and submerged Sodom and Gomorrah in a vast fire-pool, (which is maintained by Bretschneider and others,) or was derived from the Egyptians, or the Persians, or the Hindus, or the Greeks,—all of whom had lakes and rivers of fire in their theological hells, long before history reveals the existence of such a belief among the Jews, (which is the conclusion of many learned authors and critics.)

We have now reached the last feature in the scheme of eschatology shadowed forth in the Apocalypse, the most obscure and difficult point of all,—namely, the locality and the principal elements of the final felicity of the saved. The difficulty of clearly settling this question is twofold, arising, first, from the swift and partial glimpses which are all that the writer yields us on the subject, and, secondly, from the impossibility of deciding with precision how much of his language is to be regarded as figurative and how much as literal,—where the poetic presentation of symbol ends and where the direct statement of fact begins. A large part of the book is certainly written in prophetic figures and images, spiritual visions, never meant to be accepted in a prosaic sense with severe detail. And yet, at the same time, all these imaginative emblems were, unquestionably, intended to foreshadow, in various kinds and degrees, doctrinal conceptions, hopes, fears, threats, promises, historical realities; past, present, or future. But to separate sharply the dress and the substance, the superimposed symbols and the underlying realities, is always an arduous, often an impossible, achievement. The writer of the Apocalypse plainly believed that the souls of all, except the martyrs, at death descended to the under-world, and would remain

there till after the second coming of Christ. But whether he thought that the martyrs were excepted, and would at death immediately rise into heaven and there await the fulfilment of time, is a disputed point. For our own part, we think it extremely doubtful, and should rather decide in the negative. In the first place, his expressions on this subject seem essentially figurative. He describes the prayers of the saints as being poured out from golden vials and burned as incense on a golden altar in heaven before the throne of God. "Under that altar," he says, "I saw the souls of them that were slain for the word of God." If the souls of the martyrs, in his belief, were really admitted into heaven, would he have conceived of them as huddled under the altar and not walking at liberty? Does not the whole idea appear rather like a rhetorical image than like a sober theological doctrine? True, the scene is pictured in heaven; but then it is a picture, and not a conclusion. With De Wette, we regard it, not as a dogmatic, but as a poetical and prophetic, representation. And in regard to the seer's vision of the innumerable company of the redeemed in heaven, surrounding the throne and celebrating the praises of God and the Lamb, surely it is obvious enough that this, like the other affiliated visions, is a vision, by inspired insight, in the present tense, of what is yet to occur in the successive unfolding of the rapid scenes in the great drama of Christ's redemptive work,—a prophetic vision of the future, not of what already is. We know that in Tertullian's time the idea was entertained by some that Christian martyrs, as a special allotment, should pass at once from their sufferings to heaven, without going, as all others must, into the under-world; but the evidence preponderates with us, upon the whole, that no such doctrine is really implied in the Apocalypse. In the fourteenth chapter, the author describes the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from among men, as standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion and hearing a voice from heaven singing a new song, which no man, save the hundred and forty-four thousand, could learn. The probabilities are certainly strongest that this great company of the selected "first-fruits unto God and the Lamb," now standing on the earth, had not yet been in heaven; for they only learn the heavenly song which is sung before the throne by hearing it chanted down from heaven in a voice like multitudinous thunders.

Finally, the most convincing proof that the writer did not suppose that the martyrs entered heaven before the second advent of Christ—a proof which, taken by itself, would seem to leave no doubt on the subject—is this. In the famous scene detailed in the twentieth chapter—usually called by commentators the martyr-scene—it is said that "the souls of them that were beheaded for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection." Now, is it not certain that if the writer supposed these souls had never been in the under-world, but in heaven, he could not have designated their preliminary descent from above as "the

first resurrection," the first rising up? That phrase implies, we think, that all the dead were below: the faithful and chosen ones were to rise first to reign a while with Jesus, and after that the rest should rise to be judged. After that judgment, which was expected to be on earth in presence of the descended Lamb and his angels, the lost were to be plunged, as we have already seen, into the subterranean pit of torture, the unquenchable lake of fire. But what was to become of the righteous and redeemed? Whether, by the Apocalyptic representation, they were to remain forever on earth, or to ascend into heaven, is a question which has been zealously debated for over sixteen hundred years, and in some theological circles is still warmly discussed. Were the angels who came down to the earth with Christ to the judgment never to return to their native seats? Were they permanently to transfer their deathless citizenship from the sky to Judea? Were the constitution of human nature and the essence of human society to be abrogated, and the members of the human family to cease enlarging, lest they should overflow the borders of the world? Was God himself literally to desert his ancient abode, and, with the celestial city and all its angelic hierarchy, float from the desolated firmament to Mount Zion, there to set up the central eternity of his throne. We cannot believe that such is the meaning which the seer of the Apocalypse wished to convey by his symbolic visions and pictures, any more than we can believe that he means literally to say that he saw "a woman in heaven clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," or that there were actually "armies in heaven, seated on white horses and clothed in fine linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints." Our conviction is that he expected the Savior would ascend with his angels and the redeemed into heaven, the glorious habitation of God above the sky. He speaks in one place of the "temple of God in heaven, into which no man could enter until the seven plagues were fulfilled," and in another place says that the "great multitude of the redeemed are before the throne of God in heaven, and serve him day and night in his temple;" and in still another place he describes two prophets, messengers of God, who had been slain, as coming to life, "and hearing a great voice from heaven saying to them, 'Come up hither;' and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them." De Wette writes, "It is certain that an abstract conception of heavenly blessedness with God duskily hovers over the New Testament eschatology." We think this is true of the Book of Revelation.

It was a Persian-Jewish idea that the original destination of man, had he not sinned, was heaven. The apostles thought it was a part of the mission of Christ to restore that lost privilege. We think the writer of the Apocalypse shared in that belief. His allusions to a new heaven and a new earth, and to the descent of a New Jerusalem from heaven, and other related particulars, are symbols neither novel nor violent to Jewish minds, but both familiar and expressive, to denote a purifying glorifica-

tion of the world, the installation of a divine kingdom, and the brilliant reign of universal righteousness and happiness among men, as if under the very eyes of the Messiah and the very sceptre of God. The Christians shall reign in Jerusalem, which shall be adorned with indescribable splendors and shall be the centre of a world-wide dominion, the saved nations of the earth surrounding it and "walking in the light of it, their kings bringing their glory and honor into it." "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death." That is, upon the whole,—as we understand the scattered hints relevant to the subject to imply,—when Christ returns to the Father with his chosen, he will leave a regenerated earth, with Jerusalem for its golden and peerless capital, peopled, and to be peopled, with rejoicing and immortal men, who will keep the commandments, be exempt from ancient evils, hold intimate communion with God and the Lamb, and, from generation to generation, pass up to heaven through that swift and painless change, alluded to by Paul, whereby it was intended at the first that sinless man, his corruptible and mortal putting on incorruption and immortality, should be fitted for the companionship of angels in the pure radiance of the celestial world, and should be translated thither without tasting the bitterness of death,—which was supposed to be the subterranean banishment of the disembodied ghost.

CHAPTER IV.

PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

THE principal difficulty in arriving at the system of thought and faith in the mind of Paul arises from the fragmentary character of his extant writings. They are not complete treatises drawn out in independent statements, but special letters full of latent implications. They were written to meet particular emergencies,—to give advice, to convey or ask information and sympathy, to argue or decide concerning various matters to a considerable extent of a personal or local and temporal nature. Obviously their author never suspected they would be the permanent and immensely influential documents they have since become. They were not composed as orderly developments or full presentations of a creed, but rather as supplements to more adequate oral instruction previously imparted. He says to the Thessalonians, "Brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or by our epistle." Several of his letters also—perhaps many—have been lost. He exhorts the Colossians to "read likewise the epistle from Lao-

dicea." In his present First Epistle to the Corinthians he intimates that he had previously corresponded with them, in the words, "I wrote to you in a letter." There are good reasons, too, for supposing that he transmitted other epistles of which we have now no account. Owing, therefore, to the facts that his principal instructions were given by word of mouth, and that his surviving writings set forth no systematic array of doctrines, we have no choice left, if we desire to know what his opinions concerning the future life were, when deduced and arranged, but to exercise our learning and our faculties upon the imperfect discussions and the significant hints and clews in his extant epistles. Bringing these together, in the light of contemporary Pharisaic and Christian conceptions and opinions, we may construct a system from them which will represent his theory; somewhat as the naturalist from a few fragmentary bones describes the entire skeleton to which they belonged. As we proceed to follow this process, we must particularly remember the leading notions in the doctrinal belief of the Jews at that period, and the fact that Paul himself was "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel," "after the most straitest order of the sect, a Pharisee." When on trial at Jerusalem, he cried, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am called in question." We can hardly suppose that he would entirely throw off the influence and form of the Pharisaic dogmas and grasp Christianity in its pure spirituality. It is most reasonable to expect—what we shall find actually the fact—that he would mix the doctrinal and emotional results of his Pharisaic training with the teachings of Christ, thus forming a composite system considerably modified from any then existing. Indeed, a great many obscure texts in Paul may be made perspicuous by citations from the old Talmudists. Considering the value and the importance of this means of illustrating the New Testament, it is neglected by modern commentators in a very remarkable manner.

In common with his countrymen and the Gentiles, Paul undoubtedly believed in a world of light and bliss situated over the sky, where the Deity, surrounded by his angels, reigns in immortal splendor. According to the Greeks, Zeus and the other gods, with a few select heroes, there lived an imperishable life. According to the Hebrews, there was "the house of Jehovah," "the habitation of eternity," "the world of holy angels." The Old Testament contains many sublime allusions to this place. Jacob in his dream saw a ladder set up that reached unto heaven, and the angels were ascending and descending upon it. Fixing his eyes upon the summit, the patriarch exclaimed,—not referring, as is commonly supposed, to the ground on which he lay, but to the opening in the sky through which the angels were passing and repassing,—"Surely this is the house of God and this the gate of heaven." Jehovah is described as "riding over the heaven of heavens;" as "treading upon the arch of the sky." The firmament is spoken of as the solid floor of his abode, where "he layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters,"—the

"waters above," which the Book of Genesis says were "divided from the waters beneath." Though this divine world on high was in the early ages almost universally regarded as a local reality, it was not conceived by Jews or Gentiles to be the destined abode of human souls. It was thought to be exclusively occupied by Jehovah and his angels, or by the gods and their messengers. Only here and there were scattered a few dim traditions, or poetic myths, of a prophet, a hero, a god-descended man, who, as a special favor, had been taken up to the supernal mansions. The common destination of the disembodied spirits of men was the dark, stupendous realms of the under-world. As Augustine observes, "Christ died after many; he rose before any: by dying he suffered what many had suffered before; by rising he did what no one had ever done before."[1] These ideas of the celestial and the infernal localities and of the fate of man were of course entertained by Paul when he became a Christian. A few texts by way of evidence of this fact will here suffice. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and those on earth, and those under the earth." "He that descended first into the lower parts of the earth is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens." The untenableness of that explanation which makes the descent into the lower parts of the earth refer to Christ's descent to earth from his pre-existent state in heaven must be evident, as it seems to us, to every mind. Irenæus, discussing this very text from Ephesians, exposes the absurdity and stigmatizes the *heresy* of those who say that the infernal world is this earth, ("*qui dicunt inferos quidem esse hunc mundum.*")[2] "I knew a man caught up to the third heaven, . . . caught up into paradise." The threefold heaven of the Jews, here alluded to, was, first, the region of the air, supposed to be inhabited by evil spirits. Paul repeatedly expresses this idea,—as when he speaks of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience," and when he says, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness, against wicked spirits in heavenly places." The second heaven comprised the region of the planetary bodies. The third lay beyond the firmament, and was the actual residence of God and the angelic hosts. These quotations, sustained as they are by the well-known previous opinions of the Jews, as well as by numerous unequivocal texts in the writings of the other apostles and by many additional ones in those of Paul, are conclusive evidence that he believed in the received heaven above the blue ether and stellar dome, and in the received Hadean abyss beneath the earth. In the absence of all evidence to the contrary, every presumption justifies the supposition that he also believed—as we know all his orthodox contemporaries did—that that under-world was the abode of all men after death, and that that over-world was solely the dwelling-place of God and the angels. Nay, we

[1] Enarratio in Psalmum XC.

[2] Adv. Hæres. lib. v. cap. 31.

are not left to conjecture; for he expressly declares of God that he "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto." This conclusion will be abundantly established in the course of the following exposition.

With these preliminaries, we are prepared to see what was Paul's doctrine of death and of salvation. There are two prevalent theories on this subject, both of which we deem partly scriptural, neither of them wholly so. On the one extreme, the consistent disciple of Augustine—the historic Calvinist—attributes to the apostle the belief that the sin of Adam was the sole cause of literal death,—that but for Adam's fall men would have lived on the earth forever or else have been translated bodily to heaven without any previous process of death. That such really was not the view held by Paul we are convinced. Indeed, there is one prominent feature in his faith which by itself proves that the disengagement of the soul from the material frame did not seem to him an abnormal event caused by the contingency of sin. We refer to his doctrine of two bodies, the "outward man" and the "inward man," the "earthly house" and the "heavenly house," the "natural body" and the "spiritual body." Neander says this is "an express assertion" of Paul's belief, that man was not literally made mortal by sin, but was naturally destined to emerge from the flesh into a higher form of life.[3] Paul thought that, in the original plan of God, man was intended to drop his gross, corruptible body and put on an incorruptible one, like the "glorious body" of the risen Christ. He distinctly declares, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Therefore, we cannot interpret the word "death" to mean *merely* the separation of the soul from its present tabernacle, when he says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." On the other extreme, the fully-developed Pelagian—the common Unitarian—holds that the word "death" is always used in the arguments of Paul in a spiritual or figurative sense, *merely* meaning moral alienation from God in guilt, misery, and despair. Undoubtedly it is used thus in many instances,—as when it is written, "I was alive without the law once; but, when the commandment came, sin rose to life, and I died." But in still more numerous cases it means something more than the consciousness of sin and the resulting wretchedness in the breast, and implies something external, mechanical, visible, as it were. For example, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Any one who reads the context of this sentence may see that the terms "death" and "resurrection" antithetically balance each other, and refer not to an inward experience, but to an outward event,—not to a moral change, but to the physical descent and resurrection. It is certain that here the words are not employed in a moral sense. The phraseology Paul uses in stating the connection of the sin of Adam with death, the connection of the

[3] Planting and Training, Ryland's trans. p. 240.

resurrection of Christ with immortal life, is too peculiar, emphatic, and extensive not to be loaded with a more general and vivid significance than the simple unhappiness of a sense of guilt, the simple peace and joy of a reconciled conscience. The advocates, then, of both theories—the Calvinist asserting that Paul supposed sin to be the only reason why we do not live eternally in the world with our present organization, and the Rationalist asserting that the apostle never employs the word "death" except with a purely interior signification—are alike beset by insuperable difficulties, perplexed by passages which defy their fair analysis and force them either to use a violent interpretation or to confess their ignorance.

We must therefore seek out some third view, which, rejecting the errors, shall combine the truths and supply the defects of the two former. We have now to present such a view,—a theory of the Pauline doctrine of the last things which obviously explains and fills out all the related language of the epistles. We suppose he unfolded it fully in his preaching, while in his supplementary and personal letters he only alludes to such disconnected parts of it as then rose upon his thoughts. A systematic development of it as a whole, with copious allusions and labored defences, was not needed then, as it might seem to us to have been. For the fundamental notions on which it rested were the common belief of the nation and age. Geology and astronomy had not disturbed the credit of a definitely-located Hades and heaven, nor had free metaphysics sharpened the common mind to skeptical queries. The view itself, as we conceive it occupied the mind of Paul, is this. Death was a part of the creative plan for us from the first, simply loosing the spirit from its corruptible body, clothing it with an ethereal vehicle, and immediately translating it to heaven. Sin marred this plan, alienated us from the Divine favor, introduced all misery, physical and moral, and doomed the soul, upon the fall of its earthly house, to descend into the slumberous gloom of the under-world. Thus death was changed from a pleasant organic fulfilment and deliverance, spiritual investiture and heavenly ascent, to a painful punishment condemning the naked ghost to a residence below the grave. As Ewald says, through Adam's sin "death acquired its significance as pain and punishment."[4] Herein is the explanation of the word "death" as used by Paul in reference to the consequence of Adam's offence. Christ came to reveal the free grace and gift of God in redeeming us from our doom and restoring our heavenly destiny. This he exemplified, in accordance with the Father's will, by dying, descending into the dreary world of the dead, vanquishing the forces there, rising thence, and ascending to the right hand of the throne of heaven as our forerunner. On the very verge of the theory just stated as Paul's, Neander hovers in his exposition of the apostle's views, but fails to grasp its theological scope and consequences. Krabbe

[4] Sendschreiben des Apostels Paulus, s. 210.

declares that "death did not arise from the native perishableness of the body, but from sin."[5] This statement Neander controverts, maintaining that "sin introduced no essential change in the physical organization of man, but merely in the manner in which his earthly existence terminates. Had it not been for sin, death would have been only the form of a higher development of life."[6] Exactly so. With innocence, the soul at death would have ascended pleasantly, in a new body, to heaven; but sin compelled it to descend painfully, without any body, to Hades. We will cite a few of the principal texts from which this general outline has been inferred and constructed.

The substance of the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans may be thus stated. As by the offence of one, sin entered into the world, and the judgment of the law came upon all men in a sentence of condemnation unto death, so by the righteousness of one, the free gift of God came upon all men in a sentence of justification unto life; that as sin, by Adam's offence, hath reigned unto death, so grace, by Christ's righteousness, might reign unto eternal life. Now, we maintain that the words "death" and "life" cannot in the present instance be entirely explained, in a spiritual sense, as signifying disturbance and woe in the breast, or peace and bliss there, because the whole connected discourse is not upon the internal contingent experience of individuals, but upon the common necessity of the race,—an objective sentence passed upon humanity, followed by a public gift of reversal and annulment. So, too, we deny that the words can be justly taken, in their strictly literal sense, as meaning cessation or continuance of physical existence on the earth, because, in the first place, that would be inconsistent with the doctrine of a spiritual body within the fleshly one and of a glorious inheritance reserved in heaven,—a doctrine by which Paul plainly shows that he recognised a natural organic provision, irrespective of sin, for a change in the form and locality of human existence. Secondly, we submit that death and life here cannot mean departure from the body or continuance in it, because that is a matter with which Christ's mission did in no way interfere, but left exactly as it was before; whereas, in the thing really meant by Paul, Christ is represented as standing, at least partially, in the same relation between life and men that Adam stands in between death and men. The reply to the question, What is that relation? will at once define the genuine signification of the terms "death" and "life" in the instance under review. And thus it is to be answered. The death brought on mankind by Adam was not only internal wretchedness, but also the condemnation of the disembodied soul to the under-world; the life they were assured of by Christ was not only internal blessedness, but also the deliverance of the soul from its subterranean prison and its reception into heaven in a "body celestial,"

[5] Die Lehre von der Sünde und vom Tode, cap. xi. s. 192.
[6] Neander's Planting and Training, book vi. ch. 1.

according to its original destiny had sin not befallen. This interpretation is explicitly put forth by Theodoret in his comments on this same passage, (Rom. v. 15–18.) He says, "There must be a correspondence between the disease and the remedy. Adam's sin subjected him to the power of death and the tyranny of the devil. In the same manner that Adam was compelled to descend into the under-world, we all are associates in his fate. Thus, when Christ rose, the whole humankind partook in his vivification."[7] Origen also—and who, after the apostles themselves, knew their thoughts and their use of language better than he?—emphatically declares—in exposition of the expression of Paul, "the wages of sin is death"—that "the under-world in which souls are detained is called death."[8]

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." These words cannot be explained, "As in Adam the necessity of physical death came on all, so in Christ that necessity shall be removed," because Christ's mission did not touch physical death, which was still reigning as ever, before Paul's eyes. Neither can the passage signify, "As through Adam wretchedness is the portion of every heart of man, so through Christ blessedness shall be given to every heart," because, while the language itself does not hint that thought, the context demonstrates that the real reference is not to an inward experience, but to an outward event,—not to the personal regeneration of the soul, but to a general resurrection of the dead. The time referred to is the second coming of Christ; and the force of the text must be this:—As by our bodily likeness to the first man and genetic connection with him through sin we all die like him,—that is, leave the body and go into the under-world, and remain there,—so by our spiritual likeness to the second man and redeeming connection with him through the free grace of God we shall all rise thence like him, revived and restored. Adam was the head of a condemned race, doomed to Hades by the visible occurrence of death in lineal descent from him; Christ is the head of a pardoned race, destined for heaven in consonance with the plain token of his resurrection and ascension. Again, the apostle writes, "In the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (who are then living) shall be changed; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory?'" The writer evidently exults in the thought that, at the second coming of Christ, death shall lose its retributive character and the under-world be baffled of its

[7] Impatib., dialogue iii. pp. 132, 133, ed. Sirmondi.

[8] Comm. in Epist. ad Rom. lib. vi. cap. 6, sect. 6. Also see Jerome, Comm. in Ecc. iii. 21. Professor Mau, in his able treatise "Von dem Tode dem Solde der Sünden, und der Aufhebung desselben durch die Auferstehung Christi," cogently argues, against Krabbe, that death as the punishment of sin is not bodily dissolution, but wretchedness and condemnation to the under-world, (*amandatio Orcum.*) In Pelt's Theologische Mitarbeiten, 1838, heft ii. ss. 107–108.

expected prisoners, because the living shall instantly experience the change of bodies fitting them to ascend to heaven with the returning and triumphant Lord. Paul also announces that "Jesus Christ hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light." The word "death" here cannot mean physical dissolution, because Christ did not abolish that. It cannot denote personal sin and unhappiness, because that would not correspond with and sustain the obvious meaning of the contrasted member of the sentence. Its adequate and consistent sense is this. God intended that man should pass from a preliminary existence on earth to an eternal life in heaven; but sin thwarted this glorious design and altered our fate to a banishment into the cheerless under-world. But now, by the teachings and resurrection of Christ, we are assured that God of his infinite goodness has determined freely to forgive us and restore our original destination. Our descent and abode below are abolished and our heavenly immortality made clear. "We earnestly desire to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that, being clothed, we shall not be found naked. Not that we desire to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life." In these remarkable words the apostle expresses several particulars of what we have already presented as his general doctrine. He states his conviction that, when his "earthly house of this tabernacle" dissolves, there is a "divinely-constructed, heavenly, and eternal house" prepared for him. He expresses his desire at the coming of the Lord not to be dead, but still living, and then to be divested of his earthly body and invested with the heavenly body, that thus, being fitted for translation to the incorruptible kingdom of God, he might not be found a naked shadow or ghost in the under-world. Rückert says, in his commentary, —and the best critics agree with him,—"Paul herein desires to become immortal without passing the gates of death." Language similar to the foregoing in its peculiar phrases is found in the Jewish Cabbala. The Zohar describes the ascent of the soul to heaven clothed with splendor, and afterwards illustrates its meaning in these terms:—"As there is given to the soul a garment with which she is clothed in order to establish her in this world, so there is given her a garment of heavenly splendor in order to establish her in that world."[9] So in the "Ascension of Isaiah the Prophet"—an apocryphal book written by some Jewish Christian as early, without doubt, as the close of the second century—the following passages occur. Speaking of what was revealed to him in heaven, the prophet says, "There I saw all the saints, from Adam, without the clothing of the flesh: I viewed them in their heavenly clothing like the angels who stood there in great splendor." Again he says, "All the saints from heaven in their heavenly clothing shall descend with the Lord and dwell in this world, while the saints who have not died shall be clothed like those who come from heaven. Then the general resur-

[9] Laurence, Ascensio Isaiæ Vatis, appendix, p. 168.

rection will take place and they will ascend together to heaven."[10] Schoettgen, commenting on this text, (2 Cor. v. 2,) likewise quotes a large number of examples of like phraseology from Rabbinical writers. The statements thus far made and proofs offered will be amply illustrated and confirmed as we go on to consider the chief component parts of the Pauline scheme of the last things. For, having presented the general outline, it will be useful, in treating so complex and difficult a theme, to analyze it by details.

We are met upon the threshold of our inquiry by the essential question, What, according to Paul, was the mission of Christ? What did he accomplish? A clear reply to this question comprises three distinct propositions. First, the apostle plainly represents the resurrection, and not the crucifixion, as the efficacious feature in Christ's work of redemption. When we recollect the almost universal prevalence of the opposite notion among existing sects, it is astonishing how clear it is that Paul generally dwells upon the dying of Christ solely as the necessary preliminary to his rising. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also is vain: ye are yet in your sins." These words are irreconcilable with that doctrine which connects our "justification" with the atoning death, and not with the typical resurrection, of Christ. "That Christ died for our sins, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day." To place a vicarious stress upon the first clause of this text is as arbitrary as it would be to place it upon the second; but naturally emphasize the third clause, and all is clear. The inferences and exhortations drawn from the mission of Christ are not usually connected in any essential manner with his painful death, but directly with his glorious resurrection out from among the dead unto the heavenly blessedness. "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Sinking into the water, when "buried by baptism into the death of Christ," was, to those initiated into the Christian religion, a symbol of the descent of Christ among the dead; rising out of the water was a symbol of the ascent of Christ into heaven. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." When Paul cries, exultingly, "Thanks be to God, who through Christ giveth us the victory over the sting of death and the strength of sin," Jerome says, "We cannot and dare not interpret this victory otherwise than by the *resurrection* of the Lord."[11] Commenting on the text "To this end Christ both died and lived again, that he might reign both over the dead and the living," Theodoret says that Christ, going through all these events, "promised a resurrection to us all." Paul makes no appeal to us to believe in the death of Christ, to believe in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, but he unequivocally affirms, "*If thou shalt believe in thine*

[10] Laurence, Ascensio Isaiæ atis, cap. 9, v. 7, 9; cap. 4.
[11] Comm. in Osee, lib. iii. cap. 13.

heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Paul conceived that Christ died in order to rise again and convince men that the Father would freely deliver them from the bondage of death in the under-world. All this took place on account of sin, was only made requisite by sin, one of whose consequences was the subterranean confinement of the soul, which otherwise, upon deserting its clayey tent, would immediately have been clothed with a spiritual body and have ascended to heaven. That is to say, Christ "was delivered because of our offences and was raised again because of our justification." In Romans viii. 10 the preposition διά occurs twice in exactly the same construction as in the text just quoted. In the latter case the authors of the common version have rendered it "because of." They should have done so in the other instance, in accordance with the natural force and established usage of the word in this connection. The meaning is, Our offences had been committed, therefore Christ was delivered into Hades; our pardon had been decreed, therefore Christ was raised into heaven. Such as we have now stated is the real material which has been distorted and exaggerated into the prevalent doctrine of the vicarious atonement, with all its dread concomitants.[12] The believers of that doctrine suppose themselves obliged to accept it by the language of the epistles. But the view above maintained as that of Paul solves every difficulty and gives an intelligent and consistent meaning to all the phrases usually thought to legitimate the Calvinistic scheme of redemption. While we deny the correctness of the Calvinistic interpretation of those passages in which occur such expressions as "Christ gave himself for us," "died for our sins," we also affirm the inadequacy of the explanations of them proposed by Unitarians, and assert that their genuine force is this. Christ died and rose that we might be freed through faith from the great entailed consequence of sin, the bondage of the under-world; beholding, through his ascension, our heavenly destination restored. "God made him, who knew no sin, to be sin on our account, that we might become the righteousness of God in him,"—might through faith in him be assured of salvation. In other words, Christ, who was not exposed to the evils brought on men by sin, did not think his divine estate a thing eagerly to be retained, but descended to the estate of man, underwent the penalties of sin as if he were himself a sinner, and then rose to the right hand of God, by this token to assure men of God's gracious determination to forgive them and reinstate them in their forfeited primal privileges. "If we be reconciled by his death, much more shall we be saved by his life." That is, if Christ's coming from heaven as an ambassador from God to die convinces us of God's pardoning good will towards us, much more does his

[12] Die Lehre von Christi Höllenfahrt nach der Heil. Schrift, der ältesten Kirche, den Christlichen Symbolen, und nach ihrer unendlichen Wichtigkeit und vielumfassenden Bedeutung dargestellt, von Joh. Ludwig König. The author presents in this work an irresistible array of citations and authorities. In an appendix he gives a list of a hundred authors on the theme of Christ's descent into hell.

rising again into heaven, where he now lives, deliver us from the fear of the under-world condemnation and assure us of the heavenly salvation. Except in the light and with the aid of the theory we have been urging, a large number of texts like the foregoing cannot, as we think, be interpreted without constructive violence, and even with that violence cannot convey their full point and power.

Secondly, in Paul's doctrine of the redeeming work of Christ we recognise something distinct from any subjective effect in animating and purifying the hearts and lives of men. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." "In Christ we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Nothing but the most desperate exegesis can make these and many similar texts signify simply the purging of individual breasts from their offences and guilt. Seeking the genuine meaning of Paul, we are forced to agree with the overwhelming majority of the critics and believers of all Christendom, from the very times of the apostles till now, and declare that these passages refer to an outward deliverance of men by Christ, the removal by him of a common doom resting on the race in consequence of sin. What Paul supposed that doom was, and how he thought it was removed, let us try to see. It is necessary to premise that in Paul's writings the phrase "the righteousness of God" is often used by metonymy to mean God's mode of accounting sinners righteous, and is equivalent to "the Christian method of salvation." "By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified; but the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, freely justifying them through the redemption that is in Christ." How evidently in this verse "the righteousness of God" denotes God's method of justifying the guilty by a free pardon proclaimed through Christ! The apostle employs the word "faith" in a kindred technical manner, sometimes meaning by it "promise," sometimes the whole evangelic apparatus used to establish faith or prove the realization of the promise. "What if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" Evidently by "faith" is intended "promise" or "purpose." "Is the law against the promises of God? God forbid! But before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Here "faith" plainly means the object of faith, the manifested fulfilment of the promises: it means the gospel. Again, "Whereof he hath offered faith to all, in that he hath raised him from the dead." "Hath offered faith" here signifies, unquestionably, as the common version well expresses it, "hath given assurance," or hath exemplified the proof. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." In this instance "faith" certainly means Christianity, in contradistinction to Judaism, and "justification by faith" is equivalent to "salvation by the grace of God, shown through the mission of Christ." It is not so much internal and individual in its reference as it is public and general. We believe that no man, sacredly

resolved to admit the truth, can study—with a purposed reference to this point—all the passages in Paul's epistles where the word "faith" occurs, without being convinced that for the most part it is used in an objective sense, in contradistinction to the law, as synonymous with the gospel, the new dispensation of grace. Therefore "justification by faith" does not usually mean salvation through personal belief, either in the merits of the Redeemer or in any thing else, but it means salvation by the plan revealed in the gospel, the free remission of sins by the forbearance of God. In those instances where "faith" is used in a subjective sense for personal belief, it is never described as the effectual *cause* of salvation, but as the condition of personal *assurance* of salvation. Grace has outwardly come to all; but only the believers inwardly know it. This Pauline use of terms in technical senses lies broadly on the face of the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians. New Testament lexicons and commentaries, by the best scholars of every denomination, acknowledge it and illustrate it. Mark now these texts. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." "To declare his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." "What things were gain to me [under Judaism] I counted loss in comparison with Christ, that I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God through faith in Christ." "By the deeds of the law no man can be justified,"—"but ye are saved through faith." We submit that these passages, and many others in the epistles, find a perfect explanation in the following outline of faith, commenced in the mind of Paul while he was a Pharisee, completed when he was a Christian. The righteousness of the law, the method of salvation by keeping the law, is impossible. The sin of the first man broke that whole plan and doomed all souls helplessly to the under-world. If a man now should keep every tittle of the law without reservation, it would not release him from the bondage below and secure for him an ascent to heaven. But what the law could not do is done for us in Christ. Sin having destroyed the righteousness of the law,—that is, the fatal penalty of Hades having rendered salvation by the law impossible,—the righteousness of God, that is, a new method of salvation, has been brought to light. God has sent his Son to die, descend into the under-world, rise again, and return to heaven, to proclaim to men the glorious tidings of justification by faith,—that is, a dispensation of grace freely annulling the great consequence of sin and inviting them to heaven in the Redeemer's footsteps. Paul unequivocally declares that Christ broke up the bondage of the under-world by his irresistible entrance and exit, in the following text:—"When he had descended first into the lower parts of the earth, he ascended up on high, leading a multitude of captives." What can be plainer than that? The same thought is also contained in another passage,—a passage which was the source of those tremendous pictures so frequent in the cathedrals of

the Middle Age,—*Christus spoliat Infernum*:—"God hath forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and took it away, nailing it to Christ's cross; and, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them, openly triumphing over them in Christ." The entire theory which underlies the exposition we have just set forth is stated in so many words in the passage we next cite. For the word "righteousness"—in order to make the meaning more perspicuous—we simply substitute "method of salvation," which is unquestionably its signification here. "They [the Jews] being ignorant of God's method of salvation, and going about to establish their own method, have not submitted themselves unto God's. For Christ is the end of the law for a way of salvation to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the method of salvation which is of the law, that the man who *doeth* these things shall be blessed in them. But the method of salvation which is of faith ["faith" here means the gospel, Christianity] speaketh on this wise:—Say not in thy heart, 'Who shall ascend into heaven?' that is, to bring Christ down; or, 'Who shall descend into the underworld?' that is, to bring up Christ again from among the dead." This has been done already, once for all. "And if thou shalt believe in thine heart that God *hath* raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The apostle avows that his "heart's desire and his prayer unto God for Israel is, that they may be saved;" and he asserts that they cannot be saved by the law of Moses, but only by the gospel of Christ; that is, "faith;" that is, "the dispensation of grace."

Paul's conception of the foremost feature in Christ's mission is precisely this. He came to deliver men from the stern law of Judaism, which could not wipe away their transgressions nor save them from Hades, and to establish them in the free grace of Christianity, which justifies them from all past sin and seals them for heaven. What could be a more explicit declaration of this than the following? "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son to redeem them that were under the law." Herein is the explanation of that perilous combat which Paul waged so many years, and in which he proved victorious,—the great battle between the Gentile Christians and the Judaizing Christians; a subject of altogether singular importance, without a minute acquaintance with which a large part of the New Testament cannot be understood. "Christ gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God." Now, the Hebrew terms corresponding with the English terms "present world" and "future world" were used by the Jews to denote the Mosaic and the Messianic dispensations. We believe—with Schoettgen and other good authorities—that such is the sense of the phrase "present world" in the instance before us. Not only is that interpretation sustained by the *usus loquendi*, it is also the only defensible meaning; for the effect of the establishment of the gospel was not to deliver men from the present world, though it did deliver them from the hopeless bondage of Juda-

ism, wherein salvation was by Christians considered impossible. And that is precisely the argument of the Epistle to the Galatians, in which the text occurs. In a succeeding chapter, while speaking expressly of the external forms of the Jewish law, Paul says, "By the cross of Christ the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world;" and he instantly adds, by way of explanation, "for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision." Undeniably, "world" here means "Judaism;" as Rosenmüller phrases it, *Judaica vanitas*. In another epistle, while expostulating with his readers on the folly of subjecting themselves to observances "in meat and drink, and new moons and sabbaths," after "the handwriting of ordinances that was against them had been blotted out, taken away, nailed to the cross," Paul remonstrates with them in these words:—"Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" We should suppose that no intelligent person could question that this means, "Now that by the gospel of Christ ye are emancipated from the technical requisitions of Judaism, why are ye subject to its ordinances, as if ye were still living under its rule?"—as many of the best commentators agree in saying, "*tanquam viventes adhuc in Judaismo.*" From these collective passages, and from others like them, we draw the conclusion, in Paul's own words, that, "When we were children, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the world," "the weak and beggarly elements" of Judaism; but, now that "the fulness of the time has come, and God has sent forth his Son to redeem us," we are called "to receive the adoption of sons" and "become heirs of God," inheritors of a heavenly destiny.

We think that the intelligent and candid reader, who is familiar with Paul's epistles, will recognise the following features in his belief and teaching. First, all mankind alike were under sin and condemnation. "Jews and Gentiles all are under sin." "All the world is subject to the sentence of God." And we maintain that that condemning sentence consisted, partly at least, in the banishment of their disembodied souls to Hades. Secondly, "a promise was given to Abraham," before the introduction of the Mosaic dispensation, "that in his seed [that is, in Christ] all the nations of the earth should be blessed." When Paul speaks, as he does in numerous instances, of "the hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began," "the promise given before the foundation of the world," "the promise made of God unto the fathers, that God would raise the dead," the date referred to is not when the decree was formed in the eternal counsels of God, previous to the origin of the earth, but when the covenant was made with Abraham, before the establishment of the Jewish dispensation. The thing promised plainly was, according to Paul's idea, a redemption from Hades and an ascension to heaven; for this is fully implied in his "expectation of the resurrection of the dead" from the intermediate state, and their being "clothed in celestial bodies." This promise made unto Abraham

by God, to be fulfilled by Christ, "the law, which was four hundred and thirty years afterwards, could not disannul." That is,—as any one may see by the context,—the law could not secure the inheritance of the thing promised, but was only a temporary arrangement on account of transgressions, "until the seed should come to whom the promise was made." In other words, there was "no mode of salvation by the law;" "the law could not give life;" for if it could it would have "superseded the promise," made it without effect, whereas the inviolable promise of God was, that in the one seed of Abraham—that is, in Christ—alone should salvation be preached to all that believed. "For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made useless, and the promise is made useless." In the mean time, until Christ be come, all are shut up under sin. Thirdly, the special "advantage of the Jews was, that unto them this promise of God was committed," as the chosen covenant people. The Gentiles, groaning under the universal sentence of sin, were ignorant of the sure promise of a common salvation yet to be brought. While the Jews indulged in glowing and exclusive expectations of the Messiah who was gloriously to redeem them, the Gentiles were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." Fourthly, in the fulness of time—long after "the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen, had preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed"—"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing promised to Abraham might come upon the Gentiles." It was the precise mission of Christ to realize and exemplify and publish to the whole world the fulfilment of that promise. The promise itself was, that men should be released from the under-world through the imputation of righteousness by grace—that is, through free forgiveness—and rise to heaven as accredited sons and heirs of God. This aim and purpose of Christ's coming were effected in his resurrection. But how did the Gentiles enter into belief and participation of the glad tidings? Thus, according to Paul: The death, descent, resurrection, and ascent of Jesus, and his residence in heaven in a spiritual form, divested him of his nationality.[23] He was "then to be known no more after the flesh." He was no longer an earthly Jew, addressing Jews, but a heavenly spirit and son of God, a glorified likeness of the spirits of all who were adopted as sons of God, appealing to them all as joint heirs with himself of heaven. He has risen into universality, and is accessible to the soul of every one that believeth. "In him there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." The experience resulting in a heart raised into fellowship with him in heaven is the inward seal assuring us that our faith is not vain. "Ye Gentiles, who formerly were afar off, are now made nigh by the blood of Christ; for he

[23] Martineau, Liverpool Controversy: Inconsistency of the Scheme of Vicarious Redemption.

hath broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, namely, the law of commandments in ordinances, in order to make in himself of twain one new man. For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God." Circumcision was of the flesh; and the vain hope of salvation by it was confined to the Jews. Grace was of the spirit; and the revealed assurance of salvation by it was given to the Gentiles too, when Christ died to the nationalizing flesh, rose in the universalizing spirit, and from heaven impartially exhibited himself, through the preaching of the gospel, to the appropriating faith of all.

The foregoing positions might be further substantiated by applying the general theory they contain to the explication of scores of individual texts which it fits and unfolds, and which, we think, cannot upon any other view be interpreted without forced constructions unwarranted by a thorough acquaintance with the mind of Paul and with the mind of his age. But we must be content with one or two such applications as specimens. The word "mystery" often occurs in the letters of Paul. Its current meaning in his time was "something concealed," something into which one must be initiated in order to understand it. The Eleusinian Mysteries, for instance, were not necessarily any thing intrinsically dark and hard to be comprehended, but things hidden from public gaze and only to be known by initiation into them. Paul uses the term in a similar way to denote the peculiar scheme of grace, which "had been kept secret from the beginning of the world," "hidden from ages and generations, but now made manifest." No one denies that Paul means by "this mystery" the very heart and essence of the gospel, precisely that which distinguishes it from the law and makes it a universal method of salvation, a wondrous system of grace. So much is irresistibly evident from the way and the connection in which he uses the term. He writes thus in explanation of the great mystery as it was dramatically revealed through Christ:—"Who was manifested in the flesh, [*i.e.* seen in the body during his life on earth,] justified in the spirit, [*i.e.* freed after death from the necessity of imprisonment in Hades,] seen of angels, [*i.e.* in their fellowship after his resurrection,] preached unto the Gentiles, [*i.e.* after the gift of tongues on Pentecost-day,] believed on in the world, [*i.e.* his gospel widely accepted through the labors of his disciples,] received up into glory, [*i.e.* taken into heaven to the presence of God.]" "The revelation of the mystery" means, then, the visible enactment and exhibition, through the resurrection of Christ, of God's free forgiveness of men, redeeming them from the Hadean gloom to the heavenly glory. The word "glory" in the New Testament confessedly often signifies the illumination of heaven, the defined abode of God and his angels. Robinson collects, in his Lexicon, numerous examples wherein he says it means "that state

which is the portion of those who dwell with God in heaven." Now, Paul repeatedly speaks of the calling of believers to glory as one of the chief blessings and new prerogatives of the gospel. "Being justified by faith, we rejoice in hope of the glory of God." "Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his glory." "We speak wisdom to the initiates, the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery, which before the world [the Jewish dispensation] God ordained for our glory." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: behold, I show you a mystery: we shall all be changed in a moment, and put on immortality." In the first chapter of the letter to the Colossians, Paul speaks of "the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye have heard in the gospel;" also of "the inheritance of the saints in light:" then he says, "God would now make known among the Gentiles the mystery, which is, Christ among you, the hope of glory." In the light of what has gone before, how significant and how clear is this declaration! "All have sinned, and failed to attain unto the glory of God; but now, through the faith of Jesus Christ, [through the dispensation brought to light by Christ,] the righteousness of God [God's method of salvation] is unto all that believe." That is, by the law all were shut up in Hades, but by grace they are now ransomed and to be received to heaven. The same thought or scheme is contained in that remarkable passage in the Epistle to the Galatians where Paul says the free Isaac and the bond-woman Hagar were an allegory, teaching that there were two covenants, one by Abraham, the other by Moses. The Mosaic covenant of the law "answers to the Jerusalem which is on earth, and is in bondage with her children," and belongs only to the Jews. The Abrahamic covenant of promise answers to "the Jerusalem which is above, and is free, and is the mother of us all." In the former, we were "begotten unto bondage." In the latter, "Christ hath made us free."

We will notice but one more text in passing: it is, of all the proof-texts of the doctrine of a substitutional expiation, the one which has ever been regarded as the very Achilles. And yet it can be made to support that doctrine only by the aid of arbitrary assumptions and mistranslations, while by its very terms it perfectly coincides with—nay, expressly declares—the theory which we have been advocating as the genuine interpretation of Paul. The usual commentators, in their treatment of this passage, have exhibited a long-continued series of perversions and sophisms, affording a strong example of unconscious prejudice. The correct Greek reading of the text is justly rendered thus:—"Whom God set forth, a mercy-seat through the faith in his blood, to exhibit his righteousness through the remission of former sins by the forbearance of God." For rendering *ἱλαστήριον* "mercy-seat," the *usus loquendi* and the internal harmony of meaning are in our favor, and also the weight of many orthodox authorities, such as Theodoret, Origen, Theophylact, Œcumenius, Erasmus, Luther, and Olshausen, to say nothing of the army of more liberal critics, from Pelagius to Bushnell. Still, we

are willing to admit the rendering of it by "sin-offering." That makes no important difference in the result. Christ was a sin-offering, in the conception of Paul, in this sense:—that when he was not himself subject to death, which was the penalty of sin, he yet died in order to show God's purpose of removing that penalty of sin through his resurrection. For rendering διά "through," no defence is needed: the only wonder is, how it ever could have been here translated "for." Now, let two or three facts be noticed. First, the New Testament phrase "the faith of Christ," "the faith of Jesus," is—very unfairly and unwarrantably—made to mean an internal affection towards Christ, a belief of men in him. Its genuine meaning is the same as "the gospel of Christ," or the religion of Christ, the system of grace which he brought.[14] Who can doubt that such is the meaning of the word in these instances? "Contend for the faith once delivered to the saints;" "Greet them that love us in the faith;" "Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons." So, in the text now under our notice, "the faith which is in his blood" means the dispensation of pardon and justification, the system of faith, which was confirmed and exemplified to us in his death and resurrection. Secondly, "the righteousness of God," which is here said to be "pointed out" by Christ's death, denotes simply, in Professor Stuart's words, "God's pardoning mercy," or "acquittal," or "gratuitous justification,"—"in which sense," he says truly, "it is almost always used in Paul's epistles."[15] It signifies neither more nor less than God's method of salvation by freely forgiving sins and treating the sinner as if he were righteous,—the method of salvation now carried into effect and revealed in the gospel brought by Christ, and dramatically enacted in his passion and ascension. Furthermore, we ask attention to the fact that the ordinary interpreter, hard pressed by his unscriptural creed, interpolates a disjunctive conjunction in the opposing teeth of Paul's plain statement. Paul says, as the common version has it, God is "just, and [*i.e.* even] the justifier." The creed-bound commentators read it, "just and *yet* the justifier." We will now present the true meaning of the whole passage, in our view of it, according to Paul's own use of language. To establish a conviction of the correctness of the exposition, we only ask the ingenuous reader carefully to study the clauses of the Greek text and recollect the foregoing data. "God has set Christ forth, to be to us a sure sign that we have been forgiven and redeemed through the faith that was proved by his triumphant return from death, the dispensation of grace inaugurated by him. Herein God has exhibited his method of saving sinners, which is by the free remission of their sins through his kindness. Thus God is proved to be disposed to save, and to be saving, by the system of grace shown through Jesus, him that believeth." In consequence of sin, men

[14] Robinson has gathered a great number of instances in his Lexicon, under the word "Faith," wherein it can only mean, as he says, "the system of Christian doctrines, the gospel."

[15] Stuart's Romans i. 17, iii. 25, 26, &c.

were under sentence of condemnation to the under-world. In the fulness of time God fulfilled his ancient promise to Abraham. He freely justified men,—that is, forgave them, redeemed them from their doom, and would soon open the sky for their abode with him. This scheme of redemption was carried out by Christ. That is to say, God proclaimed it to men, and asked their belief in it, by "setting forth Christ" to die, descend among the dead, rise thence, and ascend into heaven, as an exemplifying certification of the truth of the glad tidings.

Thirdly, Paul teaches that one aim of Christ's mission was to purify, animate, and exalt the moral characters of men, and rectify their conduct,—to produce a subjective sanctification in them, and so prepare them for judgment and fit them for heaven. The establishment of this proposition will conclude the present part of our subject. He writes, "Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." In various ways he often represents the fact that believers have been saved by grace through Christ as the very reason, the intensified motive, why they should scrupulously keep every tittle of the moral law and abstain even from the appearance of evil, walking worthy of their high vocation. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us that, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Bad men, "that obey not the gospel of Christ,"—such characters as "thieves, extortioners, drunkards, adulterers,—shall not inherit the kingdom of God." He proclaims, in unmistakable terms, "God will render to every man according to his deeds,—wrath and tribulation to the evil-doer, honor and peace to the well-doer, whether Jew or Gentile." The conclusion to be drawn from these and other like declarations is unavoidable. It is that "every one, Jew and Gentile, shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ and receive according to the deeds done in the body; for there is no respect of persons." And one part of Christ's mission was to exert a hallowing moral influence on men, to make them righteous, that they might pass the bar with acquittal. But the reader who recollects the class of texts adduced a little while since will remember that an opposite conclusion was as unequivocally drawn from them. Then Paul said, "By faith ye are justified, without the deeds of the law." Now he says, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Is there a contradiction, then, in Paul? Only in appearance. Let us distinguish and explain. In the two quotations above, the apostle is referring to two different things. First, he would say, By the faith of Christ, the free grace of God declared in the gospel of Christ, ye are justified, gratuitously delivered from that necessity of imprisonment in Hades which is the penalty of sin doomed upon the whole race from Adam, and from which no amount

of personal virtue could avail to save men. Secondly, when he exclaims, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" his thought is of a spiritual qualification of character, indispensable for positive admission among the blest in heaven. That is to say, the impartial penalty of primeval sin consigned all men to Hades. They could not by their own efforts escape thence and win heaven. That fated inability God has removed, and through Christ revealed its removal; but, that one should actually obtain the offered and possible prize of heaven, personal purity, faith, obedience, holiness, are necessary. In Paul's conception of the scheme of Christian salvation, then, there were two distinct parts: one, what God had done for all; the other, what each man was to do for himself. And the two great classes of seemingly hostile texts filling his epistles, which have puzzled so many readers, become clear and harmonious when we perceive and remember that by "righteousness" and its kindred terms he sometimes means the external and fulfilled method of redeeming men from the transmitted necessity of bondage in the under-world, and sometimes means the internal and contingent qualifications for actually realizing that redemption. In the former instance he refers to the objective mode of salvation and the revelation of it in Christ. In the latter, he refers to the subjective fitness for that salvation and the certitude of it in the believer. So, too, the words "death" and "life," in Paul's writings, are generally charged, by a *constructio prægnans*, with a double sense,—one spiritual, individual, contingent, the other mechanical, common, absolute. Death, in its full Pauline force, includes inward guilt, condemnation, and misery, and outward descent into the under-world. Life, in its full Pauline force, includes inward rectitude, peace, and joy, and outward ascent into the upper-world. Holiness is necessary, "for without it no one can see the Lord;" yet by itself it can secure only inward life: it is ineffectual to win heaven. Grace by itself merely exempts from the fatality of the condemnation to Hades: it offers eternal life in heaven only upon condition of "patient continuance in well-doing" by "faith, obedience to the truth, and sanctification of the spirit." But God's free grace and man's diligent fidelity, combined, give the full fruition of blessedness in the heart and of glory and immortality in the sky.

Such, as we have set forth in the foregoing three divisions, was Paul's view of the mission of Christ and of the method of salvation. It has been for centuries perverted and mutilated. The toil now is by unprejudiced inspection to bring it forward in its genuine completeness, as it stood in Paul's own mind and in the minds of his contemporaries. The essential view, epitomized in a single sentence, is this. The independent grace of God has interfered, first, to save man from Hades, and secondly, to enable him, by the co-operation of his own virtue, to get to heaven. Here are two separate means conjoined to effect the end,—salvation. Now, compare, in the light of this statement, the three great theological theories of Christendom. The UNITARIAN, overlooking the

objective justification, or offered redemption from the death-realm to the sky-home, which—whether it be a truth or an error—is surely in the epistles, makes the subjective sanctification all in all. The CALVINIST, in his theory, comparatively scorns the subjective sanctification, which Paul insists on as a necessity for entering the kingdom of God, and, having perverted the objective justification from its real historic meaning, exaggerates it into the all in all. The ROMAN CATHOLIC holds that Christ simply removed the load of original sin and its entailed doom, and left each person to stand or fall by his own merits, in the helping communion of the Church. He also maintains that a part of Christ's office was to exert an influence for the moral improvement and consecration of human character. His error, as an interpreter of Paul's thought, is, that he, like the Calvinist, attributes to Christ's death a vicarious efficacy by suffering the pangs of mankind's guilt to buy their ransom from the inexorable justice of God; whereas the apostle really represents Christ's redeeming mission as consisting simply in a dramatic exemplification of the Father's spontaneous love and purpose to pardon past offences, unbolt the gates of Hades, and receive the worthy to heaven. Moreover, while Paul describes the heavenly salvation as an undeserved gift from the grace of God, the Catholic often seems to make it a prize to be earned, under the Christian dispensation, by good works which may fairly challenge that reward. However, we have little doubt that this apparent opposition is rather in the practical mode of exhortation than in any interior difference of dogma; for Paul himself makes personal salvation hinge on personal conditions, the province of grace being seen in the new extension to man of the opportunity and invitation to secure his own acceptance. And so the Roman Catholic exposition of Paul's doctrine is much more nearly correct than any other interpretation now prevalent. We should expect, *à priori*, that it would be, since that Church, containing two-thirds of Christendom, is the most intimately connected, by its scholars, members, and traditions, with the apostolic age.

A prominent feature in the belief of Paul, and one deserving distinct notice as necessarily involving a considerable part of the theory which we have attributed to him, is the supposition that Christ was the first person, clothed with humanity and experiencing death, admitted into heaven. Of all the hosts who had lived and died, every soul had gone down into the dusky under-world. There they all were held in durance, waiting for the Great Deliverer. In the splendors of the realm over the sky, God and his angels dwelt alone. That we do not err in ascribing this belief to Paul we might summon the whole body of the Fathers to testify in almost unbroken phalanx, from Polycarp to St. Bernard. The Roman, Greek, and English Churches still maintain the same dogma. But the apostle's own plain words will be sufficient for our purpose. "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from among the dead." "Now is Christ risen from among the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept." "He is the beginning,

the first-born from among the dead, that among all he might have the pre-eminence." "God raised Christ from among the dead, and set him at his own right hand[16] in the heavenly places, far above every principality, and power, and might, and dominion." The last words refer to different orders of spirits, supposed by the Jews to people the aerial region below the heaven of God. "God hath" (already in our anticipating faith) "raised us up together with Christ and made us sit in heavenly places with him." These testimonies are enough to show that Paul believed Jesus to have been raised up to the abode of God, the first man ever exalted thither, and that this was done as a pledge and illustration of the same exaltation awaiting those who believe. "If we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him." And the apostle teaches that we are not only connected with Christ's resurrection by the outward order and sequence of events, but also by an inward gift of the spirit. He says that to every obedient believer is given an experimental "knowledge of the power of the resurrection of Christ," which is the seal of God within him, the pledge of his own celestial destination. "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." The office of this gift of the spirit is to awaken in the believing Christian a vivid realization of the things in store for him, and a perfect conviction that he shall yet possess them in the unclouded presence of God, beyond the canopy of azure and the stars. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But he hath revealed them unto us; for we have received his spirit, that we might know them." "The spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are children and heirs of God, even joint heirs with Christ, that we may be glorified [*i.e.* advanced into heaven] with him."

We will leave this topic with a brief paraphrase of the celebrated passage in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. "Not only do the generality of mankind groan in pain in this decaying state, under the bondage of perishable elements, travailing for emancipation from the flesh into the liberty of the heavenly glory appointed for the sons and heirs of God, but even we, who have the first-fruits of the spirit, [*i.e.* the assurance springing from the resurrection of Christ,] we too wait, painfully longing for the adoption,—that is, our redemption from the body." By longing for the adoption, or filiation, is meant impatient desire to be received into heaven as children to the enjoyment of the privileges of their Father's house. "God predetermined that those called should be conformed to the image of his Son, [*i.e.* should pass through the same course with Christ and reach the heavenly goal,] that he might be the first-born among many brethren." To the securing of

[16] Griesbach argues at length, and shows unanswerably, that this passage cannot bear a moral interpretation, but necessarily has a physical and local sense. Griesbachii Opuscula Academica, ed. Gabler, vol. ii. pp. 145–149.

this end, "whom he called, them he also justified, [*i.e.* ransomed from Hades;[17]] and whom he justified, them he also glorified," (*i.e.* advanced to the glory of heaven.)

It is evident that Paul looked for the speedy second-coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven, with angels and power and glory. He expected that at that time all enemies would be overthrown and punished, the dead would be raised, the living would be changed, and all that were Christ's would be translated to heaven.[18] "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of Christ." "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, at the last trump." "We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall not anticipate those that are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;[19] and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord. Brethren, you need not that I should specify the time to you; for yourselves are perfectly aware that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." "The time is short." "I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." "At his appearing he shall judge the living and the dead." "The Lord is at hand." The author of these sentences undeniably looked for the great advent soon. Than Paul, indeed, no one more earnestly believed (or did more to strengthen in others that belief) in that speedy return of Christ, the anticipation of which thrilled all early Christendom with hope and dread, and kept the disciples day and night on the stretch and start of expectation to hear the awful blast of the judgment-trump and to see the glorious vision of the Son of God descending amidst a convoy of angels. What sublime emotions must have rushed through the apostle's soul when he thought that he, as a survivor of death's reign on earth, might behold the resurrection without himself entering the grave! Upon a time when he should be perchance at home, or at Damascus, or, it might be, at Jerusalem, the sun would become as blood, the moon as sackcloth of hair, the last trump would swell the sky, and,

> "Lo! the nations of the dead,
> Which do outnumber all earth's races, rise,
> And high in sumless myriads overhead
> Sweep past him in a cloud, as 'twere the skirts
> Of the Eternal passing by."

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[17] That "justify" often means, in Paul's usage, to absolve from Hades, we have concluded from a direct study of his doctrines and language. We find that Bretschneider gives it the same definition in his Lexicon of the New Testament. See δικαιόω.

[18] "Every one shall rise in his own division" of the great army of the dead,—"Christ, the first-fruits; afterwards, they that are Christ's, at his coming."

[19] Rabbi Akiba says, in the Talmud, "God shall take and blow a trumpet a thousand godlike

The resurrection which Paul thought would attend the second coming of Christ was the rising of the summoned spirits of the deceased from their rest in the under-world. Most certainly it was not the restoration of their decomposed bodies from their graves,—although that incredible surmise has been generally entertained. He says, while answering the question, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but naked grain: God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him." The comparison is, that so the naked soul is sown in the under-world, and God, when he raiseth it, giveth it a fitting body. He does not hesitate to call the man "a fool" who expects the restoration of the same body that was buried. His whole argument is explicitly against that idea. "There are bodies celestial, as well as bodies terrestrial: the first man was of the earth, earthy; the second man was the Lord from heaven; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." In view of these declarations, it is astonishing that any one can suppose that Paul believed in the resurrection of these present bodies and in their transference into heaven. "In this tabernacle we groan, being burdened," and, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" he cries. If ever there was a man whose goading experience, keen intellectual energies, and moral sensibilities, made him weary of this slow, gross body, and passionately to long for a more corresponding, swift, and pure investiture, it was Paul. And in his theory of "the glorious body of Christ, according to which our vile body shall be changed," he relieved his impatience and fed his desire. What his conception of that body was, definitely, we cannot tell; but doubtless it was the idea of a vehicle adapted to his mounting and ardent soul, and in many particulars very unlike this present groaning load of clay.

The epistles of Paul contain no clear implication of the notion of a millennium,—a thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints on the earth after his second advent. On the contrary, in many places, particularly in the fourth chapter of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, (supposing that letter to be his,) he says that the Lord and they that are his will directly pass into heaven after the consummation of his descent from heaven and their resurrection from the dead. But the declaration "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet," taken with its context, is thought, by Bertholdt, Billroth, De Wette, and others, to imply that Christ would establish a millennial kingdom on earth, and reign in it engaged in vanquishing all hostile forces. Against this exegesis we have to say, first, that, so far as that goes, the vast preponderance of critical

yards in length, whose echo shall sound from end to end of the world. At the first blast the earth shall tremble. At the second, the dust shall part. At the third, the bones shall come together. At the fourth, the members shall grow warm. At the fifth, they shall be crowned with the head. At the sixth, the soul shall re-enter the body. And at the seventh, they shall stand erect." Corrodi, Geschichte des Chiliasmus, band i. s. 356.

authorities is opposed to it. Secondly, if this conquest were to be secured on earth, there is nothing to show that it need occupy much time: one hour might answer for it as well as a thousand years. There is nothing here to show that Paul means just what the Rabbins taught. Thirdly, even if Paul supposed a considerable period must elapse before "all enemies" would be subdued, during which period Christ must reign, it does not follow that he believed that reign would be on earth: it might be in heaven. The "enemies" referred to are, in part at least, the wicked spirits occupying the regions of the upper air; for he specifies these "principalities, authorities, and powers."[20] And the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews represents God as saying to Jesus, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Fourthly, it seems certain that, if in the apostle's thought a thousand years were interpolated between Christ's second coming and the delivering of his mediatorial sceptre to God, he would have said so,—at least somewhere in his writings. He would naturally have dwelt upon it a little, as the Chiliasts did so much. Instead of that, he repeatedly contradicts it. Upon the whole, then, with Rückert, we cannot see any reason for not supposing that, according to Paul, "the end" was immediately to succeed "the coming," as *eἶτα* would properly indicate. The doctrine of a long earthly reign of Christ is not deduced *from* this passage, by candid interpretation, because it must be there, but foisted *into* it, by Rabbinical information, because it *may* be there.

Paul distinctly teaches that the believers who died before the second coming of the Savior would remain in the under-world until that event, when they and the transformed living should ascend "together with the Lord." All the relevant expressions in his epistles, save two, are obviously in harmony with this conception of a temporary subterranean sojourn, waiting for the appearance of Jesus from heaven to usher in the resurrection. But in the fifth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians he writes, "Abiding in the body we are absent from the Lord." It is usually inferred, from these words and those which follow them, that the apostle expected whenever he died to be instantly with Christ. Certainly they do mean pretty nearly that; but they mean it in connection with the second advent and the accompanying circumstances and events; for Paul believed that many of the disciples—possibly himself—would live until Christ's coming. All through these two chapters (the fourth and fifth) it is obvious, from the marked use of the terms "we" and "you," and from other considerations, that "we" here refers solely to the writer, the individual Paul. It is the plural of accommodation used by common custom and consent. In the form of a

[20] The apocryphal "Ascension of Isaiah," already spoken of, gives a detailed description of the upper air as occupied by Satan and his angels, among whom fighting and evil deeds rage; but Christ in his ascent conquers and spoils them all, and shows himself a victor ever brightening as he rises successively through the whole seven heavens to the feet of God. Ascensio Vatis Isaiæ, cap. vi.–x.

slight paraphrase we may unfold the genuine meaning of the passage in hand. "In this body I am afflicted: not that I would merely be released from it, for then I should be a naked spirit. But I earnestly desire, unclothing myself of this earthly body, at the same time to clothe myself with my heavenly body, that I may lose all my mortal part and its woes in the full experience of heaven's eternal life. God has determined that this result shall come to me sooner or later, and has given me a pledge of it in the witnessing spirit. But it cannot happen so long as I tarry in the flesh, the Lord delaying his appearance. Having the infallible earnest of the spirit, I do not dread the change, but desire to hasten it. Confident of acceptance in that day at the judgment-seat of Christ, before which we must all then stand, I long for the crisis when, divested of this body and invested with the immortal form wrought for me by God, I shall be with the Lord. Still, knowing the terror which shall environ the Lord at his coming to judgment, I plead with men to be prepared." Whoever carefully examines the whole connected passage, from iv. 6 to v. 16, will see, we think, that the above paraphrase truly exposes its meaning.

The other text alluded to as an apparent exception to the doctrine of a residence in the lower land of ghosts intervening between death and the ascension, occurs in the Epistle to the Philippians:—"I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better; but that I should abide in the flesh is more needful for you." There are three possible ways of regarding this passage. First, we may suppose that Paul, seeing the advent of the Lord postponed longer and longer, changed his idea of the intermediate state of deceased Christians, and thought they would spend that period of waiting in heaven, not in Hades. Neander advocates this view. But there is little to sustain it, and it is loaded with fatal difficulties. A change of faith so important and so bright in its view as this must have seemed under the circumstances would have been clearly and fully stated. Attention would have been earnestly invited to so great a favor and comfort; exultation and gratitude would have been expressed over so unheard-of a boon. Moreover, what had occurred to effect the alleged new belief? The unexpected delay of Christ's coming might make the apostle wish that his departed friends were tarrying above the sky instead of beneath the sepulchre; but it could furnish no ground to warrant a sudden faith in that wish as a fulfilled fact. Besides, the truth is that Paul never ceased, even to the last, to expect the speedy arrival of the Lord and to regard the interval as a comparative trifle. In this very epistle he says, "The Lord is at hand: be careful for nothing." Secondly, we may imagine that he expected himself, as a divinely-chosen and specially-favored servant, to go to Christ in heaven as soon as he died, if that should happen before the Lord's appearance, while the great multitude of believers would abide in the under-world until the general resurrection. The death he was in peril of and is referring to was that of martyrdom for the gospel

at the hands of Nero. And many of the Fathers maintained that in the case of every worthy Christian martyr there was an exception to the general doom, and that he was permitted to enter heaven at once. Still, to argue such a thought in the text before us requires an hypothesis far-fetched and unsupported by a single clear declaration of the apostle himself. Thirdly, we may assume—and it seems to us by far the least-encumbered and the most plausible theory that attempts to meet the case—that Paul believed there would be vouchsafed to the faithful Christian during his transient abode in the under-world a more intimate and blessed spiritual fellowship with his Master than he could experience while in the flesh. "For I am persuaded that neither death [separation from the body] nor depth [the under-world] shall be able to separate us from God's love, which he has manifested through Christ." He may refer, therefore, by his hopes of being straightway with Christ on leaving the body, to a spiritual communion with him in the disembodied state below, and not to his physical presence in the supernal realm, the latter not being attainable previous to the resurrection. Indeed, a little farther on in this same epistle, he plainly shows that he did not anticipate being received to heaven until after the second coming of Christ. He says, "We look for the Savior from heaven, who shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body." This change is the preliminary preparation to ascent to heaven,—which change he repeatedly represents as indispensable.

What Paul believed would be the course and fate of things on earth after the final consummation of Christ's mission is a matter of inference from his brief and partial hints. The most probable and consistent view which can be constructed from those hints is this. He thought all mankind would become reconciled and obedient to God, and that death, losing its punitive character, would become what it was originally intended to be, —the mere change of the earthly for a heavenly body preparatory to a direct ascension. "Then shall the Son himself be subject unto Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Then placid virtues and innocent joys should fill the world, and human life be what it was in Eden ere guilt forbade angelic visitants and converse with heaven.[21] "So when"—without a previous descent into Hades, as the context proves—"this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, 'Death shall be swallowed up in victory. O Death, thou last enemy, where is thy sting? O Hades, thou gloomy prison, where is thy victory?'" The exposition just offered is confirmed by its striking adaptedness to the whole Pauline scheme. It is also the interpretation given by the earliest Fathers, and by the Church in general until now. This idea of men being changed and

[21] Neander thinks Paul's idea was that "the perfected kingdom of God would then blend itself harmoniously throughout his unbounded dominions." We believe his apprehension is correct. This globe would become a part of the general paradise, an ante-room or a lower story to the Temple of the Universe.

rising into heaven without at all entering the disembodied state below was evidently in the mind of Milton when he wrote the following lines:—

> "And from these corporeal nutriments, perhaps,
> Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
> And, wing'd, ascend ethereal,—may, at choice,
> Here, or in heavenly paradise, dwell."

It now remains to see what Paul thought was to be the final portion of the hardened and persevering sinner. One class of passages in his writings, if taken by themselves, would lead us to believe that on that point he had no fixed convictions in regard to particulars, but, thinking these beyond the present reach of reason, contented himself with the general assurance that all such persons would meet their just deserts, and there left the subject in obscurity. "God will render to every man—to the Jew first, and also to the Greek—according to his deeds." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." "At the judgment-seat of Christ every one shall receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or whether it be bad." From these and a few kindred texts we might infer that the author, aware that he "knew but in part," simply held the belief—without attempting to pry into special methods, details, and results—that at the time of the judgment all should have exact justice. He may, however, have unfolded in his preaching minutiæ of faith not explained in his letters.

A second class of passages in the epistles of Paul would naturally cause the common reader to conclude that he imagined that the unregenerate—those unfit for the presence of God—were to be annihilated when Christ, after his second coming, should return to heaven with his saints. "Those who know not God and obey not the gospel of Christ shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence and glory of the Lord when he shall come." "The end of the enemies of the cross of Christ is destruction." "The vessels of wrath fitted for destruction." "As many as have sinned without law shall perish without law." But it is to be observed that the word here rendered "destruction" need not signify annihilation. It often, even in Paul's epistles, plainly means severe punishment, dreadful misery, moral ruin, and retribution. For example, "foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," "piercing them through with many sorrows." It may or may not have that sense in the instances above cited. Their meaning is intrinsically uncertain: we must bring other passages and distinct considerations to aid our interpretation.

From a third selection of texts in Paul's epistles it is not strange that some persons have deduced the doctrine of unconditional, universal salvation. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." But the genuine explanation of this sentence, we are constrained to believe, is as follows:—"As, following after the example of Adam, all souls

descend below, so, following after Christ, all shall be raised up,"—that is, at the judgment, after which event some may be taken to heaven, others banished again into Hades. "We trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe." This means that all men have been saved now from the unconditional sentence to Hades brought on them by the first sin, but not all know the glad tidings: those who receive them into believing hearts are already exulting over their deliverance and their hopes of heaven. All are objectively saved from the unavoidable and universal necessity of Hadean imprisonment; the obedient believers are also subjectively saved from the contingent and personal risk of incurring that doom. "God hath shut them all up together in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." "All" here means both Jews and Gentiles; and the reference is to the universal annulment of the universal fatality, and the impartial offer of heaven to every one who sanctifies the truth in his heart. In some cases the word "all" is used with rhetorical looseness, not with logical rigidness, and denotes merely all Christians. Rückert shows this well in his commentary on the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. In other instances the universality, which is indeed plainly there, applies to the removal from the race of the inherited doom; while a conditionality is unquestionably implied as to the actual salvation of each person. We say Paul does constantly represent personal salvation as depending on conditions, as beset by perils and to be earnestly striven for. "Lest that by any means I myself should be a castaway." "Deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of the Lord." "To them that are saved we are a savor of life unto life; to them that perish, a savor of death unto death." "Charge them that are rich that they be humble and do good, laying up in store a good foundation, that they may lay hold on eternal life." It is clear, from these and many similar passages of Paul, that he did not believe in the unconditional salvation, the positive mechanical salvation, of all individuals, but held personal salvation to be a contingent problem, to be worked out, through the permitting grace of God, by Christian faith, works, and character. How plainly this is contained, too, in his doctrine of "a resurrection of the just and the unjust," and of a day of judgment, from whose august tribunal Christ is to pronounce sentence according to each man's deeds! At the same time, the undeniable fact deserves particular remembrance that he says, and apparently knows, nothing whatever of a hell, in the present acceptation of that term, —a prison-house of fiery tortures. He assigns the realm of Satan and the evil spirits to the air, the vexed region between earth and heaven, according to the demonology of his age and country.[22]

[22] A detailed and most curious account of this region, which he calls Tartarus, is given by Augustine. De Gen. ad. lit. lib. iii. cap. 14, 15, ed. Benedictinâ.

Finally, there is a fourth class of passages, from which we might infer that the apostle's faith merely excluded the reprobate from participating in the ascent with Christ,—just as some of the Pharisees excluded the Gentiles from their resurrection,—and there left the subject in darkness. "They that are Christ's," "the dead in Christ, shall rise." "No sensualist, extortioner, idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." "There is laid up a crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give in that day to all them that love his appearing." In all these, and in many other cases, there is a marked omission of any reference to the ultimate positive disposal of the wicked. Still, against the supposition of his holding the doctrine that all except good Christians would be left below eternally, we have his repeated explicit avowals. "I have hope towards God that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust." "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." These last statements, however, prove only that Paul thought the bad as well as the good would be raised up and judged: they are not inconsistent with the belief that the condemned would afterwards either be annihilated, or remanded everlastingly to the under-world. This very belief, we think, is contained in that remarkable passage where Paul writes to the Philippians that he strives "if by any means he may attain unto the resurrection." Now, the common resurrection of the dead for judgment needed not to be striven for: it would occur to all unconditionally. But there is another resurrection, or another part remaining to complete the resurrection,—namely, after the judgment, a rising of the accepted to heaven. All shall rise from Hades upon the earth to judgment. This Paul calls simply the resurrection, *ἀνάστασις*. After the judgment, the accepted shall rise to heaven. This Paul calls, with distinctive emphasis, *ἐξανάστασις*, the pre-eminent or complete resurrection,—the prefix being used as an intensive. This is what the apostle considers uncertain and labors to secure, "stretching forward and pressing towards the goal for the prize of that call upwards," *ἄνω*, (that invitation to heaven,) "which God has extended through Christ." Those who are condemned at the judgment can have no part in this completion of the resurrection, cannot enter the heavenly kingdom, but must be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence and glory of the Lord,"—that is, as we suppose is signified, be thrust into the under-world for evermore.

As unessential to our object, we have omitted an exposition of the Pauline doctrine of the natural rank and proper or delegated offices of Christ in the universe; also an examination of the validity of the doubts and arguments brought against the genuineness of the lesser epistles ascribed to Paul. In close, we will sum up in brief array the leading conceptions in his view of the last things. First, there is a world of immortal light and bliss over the sky, the exclusive abode of God and the angels from of old; and there is a dreary world of darkness and repose under the earth, the abode of all departed human spirits. Secondly, death was originally meant to lead souls into heaven, clothed in new and divine

bodies, immediately on the fall of the present tabernacle; but sin broke that plan and doomed souls to pass disembodied into Hades. Thirdly, the Mosaic dispensation of law could not deliver men from that sentence; but God had promised Abraham that through one of his posterity they should be delivered. To fulfil that promise Christ came. He illustrated God's unpurchased love and forgiveness and determination to restore the original plan, as if men had never sinned. Christ effected this aim, in conjunction with his teachings, by dying, descending into Hades,—as if the doom of a sinful man were upon him also,—subduing the powers of that prison-house, rising again, and ascending into heaven, —the first one ever admitted there from among the dead,—thus exemplifying the fulfilled "expectation of the creature that was groaning and travailing in pain" to be born into the freedom of the heavenly glory of the sons of God. Fourthly, "justification by faith," therefore, means the redemption from Hades by acceptance of the dispensation of free grace which is proclaimed in the gospel. Fifthly, every sanctified believer receives a pledge or earnest of the spirit sealing him as God's and assuring him of acceptance with Christ and of advance to heaven. Sixthly, Christ is speedily to come a second time,—come in glory and power irresistible, —to consummate his mission, raise the dead, judge the world, establish a new order of things, and return into heaven with his chosen ones. Seventhly, the stubbornly wicked portion of mankind will be returned eternally into the under-world. Eighthly, after the judgment the subterranean realm of death will be shut up, no more souls going into it, but all men at their dissolution being instantly invested with spiritual bodies and ascending to the glories of the Lord. Finally, Jesus—having put down all enemies and restored the primeval paradise—will yield up his mediatorial throne, and God the Father be all in all.

The preparatory rudiments of this system of the last things existed in the belief of the age, and it was itself composed by the union of a theoretic interpretation of the life of Christ and of the connected phenomena succeeding his death, with the elements of Pharasaic Judaism, all mingled in the crucible of the soul of Paul and fused by the fires of his experience. It illustrates a great number of puzzling passages in the New Testament, without the necessity of recourse to the unnatural, incredible, unwarranted dogmas associated with them by the unique, isolated peculiarities of Calvinism. The interpretation given above, moreover, has this strong confirmation of its accuracy,—namely, that it is arrived at from the stand-point of the thought and life of the Apostle Paul in the first century, not from the stand-point of the theology and experience of the educated Christian of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER V.

JOHN'S DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

We are now to see if we can determine and explain what were the views of the Apostle John upon the subject of death and life, condemnation and salvation, the resurrection and immortality. To understand his opinions on these points, it is obviously necessary to examine his general system of theological thought. John is regarded as the writer of the proem to the fourth Gospel, also of three brief epistles. There are such widely-spread doubts of his being the author of the Apocalypse that it has seemed better to examine that production separately, leaving each one free to attribute its doctrine of the last things to whatever person—known or unknown—he believes wrote the book. It is true that the authorship of the fourth Gospel itself is powerfully disputed; but an investigation of that question would lead us too far and detain us too long from our real aim, which is not to discuss the genuineness or the authority of the New Testament documents, but to show their meaning in what they actually contain and imply concerning a future life. It is necessary to premise that we think it certain that John wrote with some reference to the sprouting philosophy of his time, the Platonic and Oriental speculations so early engrafted upon the stock of Christian doctrine. For the peculiar theories which were matured and systematized in the second and third centuries by the Gnostic sects were floating about, in crude and fragmentary forms, at the close of the first century, when the apostle wrote. They immediately awakened dissension and alarm, cries of heresy and orthodoxy, in the Church. Some modern writers deny the presence in the New Testament of any allusion to such views; but the weight of evidence on the other side—internal, from similarity of phrase, and external, from the testimony of early Fathers—is, when accumulated and appreciated, overwhelming. Among these Gnostic notions the most distinctive and prominent was the belief that the world was created and the Jewish dispensation given, not by the true and infinite God, but by a subordinate and imperfect deity, the absolute God remaining separate from all created things, unknown and afar, in the sufficiency of his aboriginal pleroma or fulness. The Gnostics also maintained that Creative Power, Reason, Life, Truth, Love, and other kindred realities, were individual beings, who had emanated from God, and who by their own efficiency constructed, illuminated, and carried on the various provinces of creation and races of existence. Many other opinions, fanciful, absurd, or recondite, which they held, it is not neces-

sary here to state. The evangelist, without alluding perhaps to any particular teachers or systems of these doctrines, but only to their general scope, traverses by his declarations partially the same ground of thought which they cover, stating dogmatically the positive facts as he apprehended them. He agrees with some of the Gnostic doctrines and differs from others, not setting himself to follow or to oppose them indiscriminately, but to do either as the truth seemed to him to require.

There are two methods of seeking the meaning of the introduction to the fourth Gospel where the Johannean doctrine of the Logos is condensed. We may study it grammatically, or historically; morally, or metaphysically; from the point of view of experimental religious faith, or from that of contemporary speculative philosophy. He who omits either of these ways of regarding the subject must arrive at an interpretation essentially defective. Both modes of investigation are indispensable for acquiring a full comprehension of the expressions employed and the thoughts intended. But to be fitted to understand the theme in its historical aspect—which, in this case, for purposes of criticism, is by far the more important—one must be intelligently acquainted with the Hebrew personification of the Wisdom, also of the Word, of God; with the Platonic conception of archetypal ideas; with the Alexandrian-Jewish doctrine of the Divine Logos; and with the relevant Gnostic and Christian speculation and phraseology of the first two centuries. Especially must the student be familiar with Philo, who was an eminent Platonic Jewish philosopher and a celebrated writer, flourishing previous to the composition of the fourth Gospel, in which, indeed, there is scarcely a single superhuman predicate of Christ which may not be paralleled with striking closeness from his extant works. In all these fields are found, in imperfect proportions and fragments, the materials which are developed in John's belief of the Logos become flesh. To present all these materials here would be somewhat out of place and would require too much room. We shall, therefore, simply state, as briefly and clearly as possible, the final conclusions to which a thorough study has led us, drawing such illustrations as we do advance almost entirely from Philo. The reader who wishes to see in smallest compass and most lucid order the facts requisite for the formation of a judgment is referred to Lücke's "Dissertation on the Logos,"[1] to Norton's "Statement of Reasons," and to Neander's exposition of the Johannean theology in his "Planting and Training of the Church." Nearly every thing important, both external and internal, is collected in these three sources taken together, and set forth with great candor, power, and skill. Differing in their conclusions, they supply pretty adequate means for the independent student to conclude for himself.

In the first place, what view of the Father himself, the absolute Deity,

[1] There is an English translation of it, by Professor G. R. Noyes, in the numbers of the Christian Examiner for March and May, 1849.

do these writings present? John conceives of God—no one can well collate the relevant texts in his works without perceiving this—as the one perfect and eternal Spirit, in himself invisible to mortal eyes,—the Personal Love, Life, Truth, Light, "in whom is no darkness at all." This corresponds entirely with the purest and highest idea the human mind can form of the one uncreated infinite God. The apostle, then, going back to the period anterior to the material creation, and soaring to the contemplation of the sole God, does not conceive of him as being utterly alone, but as having a Son with him, an "only-begotten Son," a beloved companion "before the foundation of the world." "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was nothing made that was made." The true explanation of these words, according to their undeniable *historical* and their unforced *grammatical* meaning, is as follows. Before the material creation, when God was yet the sole being, his first production, the Logos, was a Son, at once the image of himself and the idea of the yet uncreated world. By him—this personal Idea, Son, or Logos—all things were afterward created; or, more exactly, through him, by means of him, all things became,—that is, were brought, from their being in a state of conception in the mind of God, into actual existence in space and time. Thus Philo says, "God is the most generic; second is the Logos of God."[2] "The Logos is the first-begotten Son."[3] "The Logos of God is above the whole world, and is the most ancient and generic of all that had a beginning."[4] "Nothing intervenes between the Logos and God on whom he rests."[5] "This sensible world is the junior son of God; the Senior is the Idea,"[6] or Logos. "The shadow and seeming portrait of God is his Logos, by which, as by an assumed instrument, he made the world. As God is the *original* of the *image* here called shadow, so this *image* becomes the *original* of other things."[7] "The intelligible world, or world of archetypal ideas, is the Logos of the world-creating God; as an intelligible or ideal city is the thought of the architect reflecting to build a sensible city."[8] "Of the world, God is the cause by which, the four elements the material from which, the Logos the instrument through which, the goodness of the Creator the end for which, it was made."[9] These citations from Philo clearly show, in various stages of development, that doctrine of the Logos which began—first arguing to the Divine Being from human analogies—with separating the conception of a plan in the mind of God from its execution in fact; proceeded with personifying that plan, or sum of ideas, as a mediating agent between motive and action, between impulse and fulfilment; and ended with hypostatizing the arranging power of the Divine thought as a separate being, his intel-

[2] Mangey's edition of Philo, vol. i. p. 82. [3] Ibid. p. 308. [4] Ibid. p. 121.
[5] Ibid. p. 560. [6] Ibid. p. 277. [7] Ibid. p. 106. [8] Ibid. p. 5.
[9] Ibid. p. 162.

lectual image or Son, his first and perfect production. They unequivocally express these thoughts: that God is the only being who was from eternity; that the Logos was the first-begotten, antemundane being, that he was the likeness, image, immediate manifestation, of the Father; that he was the medium of creation, the instrumental means in the outward formation of the world. History shows us this doctrine unfolded by minute steps,—which it would be tedious to follow,—from the Book of Proverbs to Philo Judæus and John, from Plato to Justin Martyr and Athanasius. But the rapid sketch just presented may be sufficient now.

When it is written, "and the Logos *was* God," the meaning is not strictly literal. To guard against its being so considered, the author tautologically repeats what he had said immediately before, "the same was in the beginning *with* God." Upon the supposition that the Logos is strictly identical with God, the verses make utter nonsense. "In the beginning was God, and God was with God, and God was God. God was in the beginning with God." But suppose the Logos to mean an antemundane but subordinate being, who was a perfect image or likeness of God, and the sense is both clear and satisfactory, and no violence is done either to historical data or to grammatical demands. "And the Logos *was* God,"—that is, was the mirror or fac-simile of God. So, employing the same idiom, we are accustomed to say of an accurate representation of a person, It is the very man himself! Or, without the use of this idiom, we may explain the expression "the Logos was God" thus:—He stands in the place of God to the lower creation: practically considered, he is as God to us. As Philo writes, "To the wise and perfect the Most High is God; but to us, imperfect beings, the Logos—God's interpreter—is God."[10]

The inward significance of the Logos-doctrine, in all its degrees and phases, circumstantially and essentially, from first to last, is *the revelation of God*. God himself, in himself, is conceived as absolutely withdrawn beyond the apprehension of men, in boundless immensity and inaccessible secrecy. His own nature is hidden, as a thought is hidden in the mind; but he has the power of revealing it, as a thought is revealed by speaking it in a word. That uttered word is the Logos, and is afterwards conceived as a person, and as creative, then as building and glorifying the world. All of God that is sent forth from passive concealment into active manifestation is the Logos. "The term Logos comprehends," Norton says, "all the attributes of God manifested in the creation and government of the universe." The Logos is the hypostasis of "the unfolded portion," "the revealing power," "the self-showing faculty," "the manifesting action," of God. The essential idea, then, concerning the Logos is that he is the means through which the hidden God comes to the cognizance of his creatures. In harmony with this prevailing philosophy one

[10] Mangey's edition of Philo, vol. ii. p. 128.

who believed the Logos to have been incarnated in Christ would suppose the purpose of his incarnation to be the fuller revelation of God to men. And Martineau says, "The view of revelation which is implicated in the folds of the Logos-doctrine that everywhere pervades the fourth Gospel, is that it is the appearance to beings who have something of a divine spirit within them, of a yet diviner without them, leading them to the divinest of all, who embraces them both." This is a fine statement of the practical religious aspect of John's conception of the nature and office of the Savior.

Since he regarded God as personal love, life, truth, and light, and Christ, the embodied Logos, as his only-begotten Son, an exact image of him in manifestation, it follows that John regarded Christ, next in rank below God, as personal love, life, truth, and light; and the belief that he was the necessary medium of communicating these Divine blessings to men would naturally result. Accordingly, we find that John repeats, as falling from the lips of Christ, all the declarations required by and supporting such an hypothesis. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." But Philo, too, had written before in precisely the same strain. Witness the correspondences between the following quotations respectively from John and Philo. "I am the bread which came down from heaven to give life to the world."[11] "Whoso eateth my body and drinketh my blood hath eternal life."[12] "Behold, I rain bread upon you from heaven: the heavenly food of the soul is the word of God, and the Divine Logos, from whom all eternal instructions and wisdoms flow."[13] "The bread the Lord gave us to eat was his word."[14] "Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you."[15] "He alone can become the heir of incorporeal and divine things whose whole soul is filled with the salubrious Word."[16] "Every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him shall have everlasting life."[17] "He strains every nerve towards the highest Divine Logos, who is the fountain of wisdom, in order that, drawing from that spring, he may escape death and win everlasting life."[18] "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever."[19] "Lifting up his eyes to the ether, man receives manna, the Divine Logos, heavenly and immortal nourishment for the right-desiring soul."[20] "God is the perennial fountain of life; God is the fountain of the most ancient Logos."[21] "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."[22] Does it not seem perfectly plain that John's doctrine of the Christ is at bottom identical with Philo's doctrine of the Logos? The difference of development in the two doctrines, so far as

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[11] John vi. 33, 41.
[12] Ibid. 54.
[13] Quoted by G. Scheffler in his Treatise "De Usu Philonis in Interpretatione Novi Testamenti," p. 82.
[14] Ibid. p. 81.
[15] John vi. 53.
[16] Philo, vol. i. p. 482.
[17] John vi. 40.
[18] Philo, vol. i. p. 560.
[19] John vi. 51.
[20] Philo, vol. i. p. 498.
[21] Ibid. pp. 575, 207.
[22] John vi. 57.

there is a difference, is that the latter view is philosophical, abstract; the former, practical, historical. Philo describes the Logos ideally, filling the supersensible sphere, mediating between the world and God; John presents him really, incarnated as a man, effecting the redemption of our race. The same dignity, the same offices, are predicated of him by both. John declares, "In him [the Divine Logos] was life, and the life was the light of men."[23] Philo asserts, "Nothing is more luminous and irradiating than the Divine Logos, by the participation of whom other things expel darkness and gloom, earnestly desiring to partake of living light."[24] John speaks of Christ as "the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father."[25] Philo says, "The Logos is the first-begotten Son of God," "between whom and God nothing intervenes."[26] John writes, "The Son of man will give you the food of everlasting life; for him hath God the Father sealed."[27] Philo writes, "The stamp of the seal of God is the immortal Logos."[28] We have this from John:—"He was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin."[29] And this from Philo:—"The Divine Logos is free from all sins, voluntary and involuntary."[30]

The Johannean Christ is the Philonean Logos born into the world as a man. "And the Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." The substance of what has thus far been established may now be concisely stated. The essential thought, whether the subject be metaphysically or practically considered, is this. God is the eternal, infinite personality of love and truth, life and light. The Logos is his first-born Son, his exact image, the reproduction of his being, the next lower personality of love and truth, life and light, the instrument for creating and ruling the world, the revelation of God, the medium of communication between God and his works. Christ is that Logos come upon the earth as a man to save the perishing, proving his pre-existence and superhuman nature by his miraculous knowledge and works. That the belief expressed in the last sentence is correctly attributed to John will be repeatedly substantiated before the close of this chapter: in regard to the statements in the preceding sentences no further proof is thought necessary.

With the aid of a little repetition, we will now attempt to make a step of progress. The tokens of energy, order, splendor, beneficence, in the universe, are not, according to John, as we have seen, the effects of angelic personages, emanating gods, Gnostic æons, but are the workings of the self-revealing power of the one true and eternal God,—this power being conceived by John, according to the philosophy of his age, as a proper person, God's instrument in creation. Reason, life, light, love, grace, righteousness,—kindred terms so thickly scattered over his pages,

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[23] John i. 4.
[24] Philo, vol. i. pp. 427, 560.
[25] 1 John iii. 5.
[26] Philo, vol. i. p. 121.
[27] John vi. 27.
[28] Philo, vol. i. p. 562.
[29] John i. 18.
[30] Philo, vol. ii. p. 606.

—are not to him, as they were to the Gnostics, separate beings, but are the very working of the Logos, consubstantial manifestations of God's nature and attributes. But mankind, fallen into folly and vice, perversity and sin, lying in darkness, were ignorant that these Divine qualities were in reality mediate exhibitions of God, immediate exhibitions of the Logos. "The light was shining in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." Then, to reveal to men the truth, to regenerate them and conjoin them through himself with the Father in the experience of eternal life, the hypostatized Logos left his transcendent glory in heaven and came into the world in the person of Jesus. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him." "I came down from heaven to do the will of Him that sent me." This will is that all who see and believe on the Son shall have everlasting life. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "The bread of God is He who cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world." The doctrine of the pre-existence of souls, and of their being born into the world in the flesh, was rife in Judea when this Gospel was written, and is repeatedly alluded to in it.[a] That John applies this doctrine to Christ in the following and in other instances is obvious. "Before Abraham was, I am." "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world." "Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" As for ourselves, we do not see how it is possible for any unprejudiced person, after studying the fourth Gospel faithfully with the requisite helps, to doubt that the writer of it believed that Jesus pre-existed as the Divine Logos, and that he became incarnate to reveal the Father and to bring men into the experience of true eternal life. John declares this, in his first epistle, in so many words, saying, "The living Logos, the eternal life which was with the Father from the beginning, was manifested unto us;" and, "God sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." Whether the doctrine thus set forth was really entertained and taught by Jesus himself, or whether it is the interpretation put on his language by one whose mind was full of the notions of the age, are distinct questions. With the settlement of these questions we are not now concerned: such a discussion would be more appropriate when examining the genuine meaning of the words of Christ. All that is necessary here is the suggestion that when we show the theological system of John it does not necessarily follow that that is the true teaching of Christ. Having adopted the Logos-doctrine, it might tinge and turn his thoughts and words when reporting from memory, after the lapse of many years, the discourses of his Master. He might unconsciously, under such an influence, represent literally

[a] John i. 21; ix. 2.

what was figuratively intended, and reflect from his own mind lights and shades, associations and meanings, over all or much of what he wrote. There are philosophical and literary peculiarities which have forced many of the best critics to make this distinction between the intended meaning of Christ's declarations as he uttered them, and their received meaning as this evangelist reported them. Norton says, "Whether St. John did or did not adopt the Platonic conception of the Logos is a question not important to be settled in order to determine our own judgment concerning its truth."[32] Lücke has written to the same effect, but more fully:—"We are allowed to distinguish the sense in which John understood the words of Christ, from the original sense in which Christ used them."[33]

It is to be observed that in all that has been brought forward, thus far, there is not the faintest hint of the now current notion of the Trinity. The idea put forth by John is not at all allied with the idea that the infinite God himself assumed a human shape to walk the earth and undergo mortal sufferings. It is simply said that that manifested and revealing portion of the Divine attributes which constituted the hypostatized Logos was incarnated and displayed in a perfect, sinless sample of man, thus exhibiting to the world a finite image of God. We will illustrate this doctrine with reference to the inferences to be drawn from it in regard to human nature. John repeatedly says, in effect, "God is truth," "God is light," "God is love," "God is life." He likewise says of the Savior, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men," and reports him as saying of himself, "I am the truth," "I am the life," "I am the light of the world." The fundamental meaning of these declarations—so numerous, striking, and varied in the writings of John—is, that all those qualities which the consciousness of humanity has recognised as Divine are consubstantial with the being of God; that all the reflections of them in nature and man belong to the Logos, the eldest Son, the first production, of God; and that in Jesus their personality, the very Logos himself, was consciously embodied, to be brought nearer to men, to be exemplified and recommended to them. Reason, power, truth, light, love, blessedness, are not individual æons, members of a hierarchy of deities, but are the revealing elements of the one true God. The personality of the abstract and absolute fulness of all these substantial qualities is God. The personality of the discerpted portion of them shown in the universe is the Logos. Now, that latter personality Christ was. Consequently, while he was a man, he was not merely a man, but was also a supernatural messenger from heaven, sent into the world to impersonate the image of God under the condition of humanity, free from every sinful defect and spot. Thus, being the manifesting representative of the Father, he could say, "He that hath seen me hath [virtually] seen the Father." Not that they were identical in person, but that they were

[32] Statement of Reasons, 1st ed. p. 239. [33] Christian Examiner, May, 1849, p. 431.

similar in nature and character, spirit and design: both were eternal holiness, love, truth, and life. "I and my Father are one thing," (in essence, not in personality.) Nothing can be more unequivocally pronounced than the subordination of the Son to the Father—that the Father sent him, that he could do nothing without the Father, that his Father was greater than he, that his testimony was confirmed by the Father's—in a hundred places by John, both as author writing his own words and as interpreter reporting Christ's. There is not a text in the record that implies Christ's identity with God, but only his identity with the Logos. The identity of the Logos with God is elementary, not personal. From this view it follows that every man who possesses, knows, and exhibits the elements of the Divine life, the characteristics of God, is in that degree a son of God, Christ being pre-eminently the Son on account of his pre-eminent likeness, his supernatural divinity, as the incarnate Logos.

That the apostle held and taught this conclusion appears, first, from the fact, otherwise inexplicable, that he records the same sublime statements concerning all good Christians, with no other qualification than that of degree, that he does concerning Christ himself. Was Jesus the Son of God? "To as many as received him he gave power to become the sons of God." There is in Philo a passage corresponding remarkably with this one from John:—"Those who have knowledge of the truth are properly called sons of God: he who is still unfit to be named a son of God should endeavor to fashion himself to the first-born Logos of God."[84] Was Jesus "from above," while wicked men were "from beneath"? "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Was Jesus sent among men with a special commission? "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." Was Jesus the subject of a peculiar glory, bestowed upon him by the Father? "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one." Had Jesus an inspiration and a knowledge not vouchsafed to the princes of this world? "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Did Jesus perform miraculous works? "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." In the light of the general principle laid down,—that God is the actual fulness of truth and love and light and blessedness; that Christ, the Logos, is the manifested impersonation of them; and that all men who receive him partake of their Divine substance and enjoy their prerogative,—the texts just cited, and numerous other similar ones, are transparent. It is difficult to see how on any other hypothesis they can be made to express an intelligible and consistent meaning.

Secondly, we are brought to the same conclusion by the synonymous use and frequent interchange of different terms in the Johannean writings. Not only it is said, "Whoever is born of God cannot sin," but

[84] Philo, vol. i. p. 427.

it is also written, "Every one that doeth righteousness is born of God;" and again, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." In other words, having a good character and leading a just life, heartily receiving and obeying the revelation made by Christ, are identical phrases. "He that hath the Son hath life." "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" in the doctrine of Christ. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." "He that keepeth the commandments dwelleth in God and God in him." "He that confesseth that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." "He that doeth good is of God." "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know the true God and eternal life." From these citations, and from other passages which will readily occur, we gather the following pregnant results. To "do the truth," "walk in the truth," "walk in the light," "keep the commandments," "do righteousness," "abide in the doctrine of Christ," "do the will of God," "do good," "dwell in love," "abide in Christ," "abide in God," "abide in life,"—all are expressions meaning precisely the same thing. They all signify essentially the conscious possession of goodness; in other words, the practical adoption of the life and teachings of Jesus; or, in still other terms, the personal assimilation of the spiritual realities of the Logos, which are love, life, truth, light. Jesus having been sent into the world to exemplify the characteristics and claims of the Father, and to regenerate men from unbelief and sin to faith and righteousness, those who were walking in darkness, believers of lies and doers of unrighteousness, those who were abiding in alienation and death, might by receiving and following him be restored to the favor of God and pass from darkness and death into life and light. "This is eternal life, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

The next chief point in the doctrine of John is his belief in an evil being, the personality of wickedness, and the relation between him and bad men. There have been, from the early centuries, keen disputes on the question whether this apostle uses the terms devil and evil one with literal belief or with figurative accommodation. We have not a doubt that the former is the true view. The popular denial of the existence of evil spirits, with an arch-demon over them, is the birth of a philosophy much later than the apostolic age. The use of the term "devil" merely as the poetic or ethical personification of the seductive influences of the world is the fruit of theological speculation neither originated nor adopted by the Jewish prophets or by the Christian apostles. Whoso will remember the prevailing faith of the Jews at that time, and the general state of speculative opinion, and will recollect the education of John, and notice the particular manner in which he alludes to the subject throughout his epistles and in his reports of the discourses of Jesus, we

think will be convinced that the Johannean system includes a belief in the actual existence of Satan according to the current Pharisaic dogma of that age. It is not to be disguised, either, that the investigations of the ablest critics have led an overwhelming majority of them to this interpretation. "I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the evil one." "He that is begotten of God guardeth himself, and the evil one toucheth him not." "He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning." "Whosoever is born of God cannot sin. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." "Ye are of your father the devil, and his lusts ye will do." There can be no doubt that these, and other passages of a kindred and complementary nature, yield the following view. Good men are allied to God, because their characteristics are the same as his,—truth, light, love, life, righteousness. "As he is, so are we in this world." Bad men are allied to the devil, because their characteristics are the same as his,—falsehood, darkness, hatred, death, sin. "Cain, who slew his brother, was of the evil one." The facts, then, of the great moral problem of the world, according to John, were these. God is the infinite Father, whose nature and attributes comprehend all holy, beautiful, desirable realities, and who would draw mankind to his blessed embrace forever. The goodness, illumination, and joy of holy souls reflect his holiness and display his reign. The devil is the great spirit of wickedness, whose attributes comprehend all evil, dark, fearful realities, and who entices mankind to sin. The wickedness, gloom, and misery of corrupt souls reveal his likeness and his kingdom. The former manifests himself in the glories of the world and in the divine qualities of the soul. The latter manifests himself in the whole history of temptation and sin and in the vicious tendencies of the heart. Good men, those possessing pre-eminently the moral qualities of God, are his children, are born of him,—that is, are inspired and led by him. Bad men, those possessing in a ruling degree the qualities of the devil, are his children, are born of him,—that is, are animated and governed by his spirit.

Whether the evangelist gave to his own mind any philosophical account of the origin and destiny of the devil or not is a question concerning which his writings are not explicit enough for us to determine. In the beginning he represents God as making, by means of the Logos, all things that were made, and his light as shining in darkness that comprehended it not. Now, he may have conceived of matter as uncreated, eternally existing in formless night, the ground of the devil's being, and may have limited the work of creation to breaking up the sightless chaos, defining it into orderly shapes, filling it with light and motion, and peopling it with children of heaven. Such was the Persian faith, familiar at that time to the Jews. Neander, with others, objects to this view that it would destroy John's monotheism and make him a dualist, a believer in two self-existents, aboriginal and everlasting antago-

nists. It only needs to be observed, in reply, that John was not a philosopher of such thorough dialectic training as to render it impossible for inconsistencies to coexist in his thoughts. In fact, any one who will examine the beliefs of even such men as Origen and Augustine will perceive that such an objection is not valid. Some writers of ability and eminence have tried to maintain that the Johannean conception of Satan was of some exalted archangel who apostatized from the law of God and fell from heaven into the abyss of night, sin, and woe. They could have been led to such an hypothesis only by preconceived notions and prejudices, because there is not in John's writings even the obscurest intimation of such a doctrine. On the contrary, it is written that the devil is a liar and the father of lies *from the beginning*,—the same phrase used to denote the primitive companionship of God and his Logos anterior to the creation. The devil is spoken of by John, with prominent consistency, as bearing the same relation to darkness, falsehood, sin, and death that God bears to light, truth, righteousness, and life,—that is, as being their original personality and source. Whether the belief itself be true or not, be reconcilable with pure Christianity or not, in our opinion John undoubtedly *held* the belief of the personality of the source of wickedness, and supposed that the great body of mankind had been seduced by him from the free service of heaven, and had become infatuated in his bondage.

Just here in the scheme of Christianity arises the necessity, appears the profound significance in the apostolic belief, of that disinterested interference of God through his revelation in Christ which aimed to break the reigning power of sin and redeem lost men from the tyranny of Satan. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." That is to say, the revelation of the nature and will of God in the works of the creation and in the human soul was not enough, even when aided by the law of Moses, to preserve men in the truth and the life. They had been seduced by the evil one into sin, alienated from the Divine favor, and plunged in darkness and death. A fuller, more powerful manifestation of the character, claims, attractions of the Father was necessary to recall the benighted wanderers from their lost state and restore them to those right relations and to that conscious communion with God in which alone true life consists. Then, and for that purpose, Jesus Christ was commissioned to appear,—a pre-existent being of most exalted rank, migrating from the super-stellar sphere into this world, to embody and mirror forth through the flesh those characteristics which are the natural attributes of God the Father and the essential conditions of heaven the home. In him the glorious features of the Divinity were miniatured on a finite scale and perfectly exhibited, "thus revealing," (as Neander says, in his exposition of John's doctrine,) "for the first time, in a comprehensible manner, what a being that God is whose holy personality man was created to represent." So Philo says,

"The Logos is the image of God, and man is the image of the Logos."[35] Therefore, according to this view, man is the image of the image of God. The dimmed, imperfect reflection of the Father, originally shining in nature and the soul, would enable all who had not suppressed it and lost the knowledge of it, to recognise at once and adore the illuminated image of Him manifested and moving before them in the person of the Son; the faint gleams of Divine qualities yet left within their souls would spontaneously blend with the full splendors irradiating the form of the inspired and immaculate Christ. Thus they would enter into a new and intensified communion with God, and experience an unparalleled depth of peace and joy, an inspired assurance of eternal life. But those who, by worldliness and wickedness, had obscured and destroyed all their natural knowledge of God and their affinities to him, being without the inward preparation and susceptibility for the Divine which the Savior embodied and manifested, would not be able to receive it, and thus would pass an infallible sentence upon themselves. "When the Comforter is come, he will convict the world of sin, because they believe not on me." "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that believeth not is condemned already, in that he loveth darkness rather than light." "Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us." "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" The idea is, that such a denial must be caused by inward depravity, could only spring from an evil character.

In the ground-thought just presented we may find the explanation of the seemingly obscure and confused use of terms in the following instances, and learn to understand more fully John's idea of the effect of spiritual contact with Christ. "He that doeth righteousness is born of God." "He that believeth Jesus to be the Christ is born of God." "He that denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." "He that hath the Son hath life." These passages all become perspicuous and concordant in view of John's conception of the inward unity of truth, or the universal oneness of the Divine life, in God, in Christ, in all souls that partake of it. A character in harmony with the character of God will, by virtue of its inherent light and affinity, recognise the kindred attributes or characteristics of God, wherever manifested. He who perceives and embraces the Divinity in the character of Christ proves thereby that he was prepared to receive it by kindred qualities residing in himself,—proves that he was distinctively of God. He who fails to perceive the peculiar glory of Christ proves thereby that he was alienated and blinded by sin and darkness, distinctively of the evil one. Varying the expression to illustrate the thought, if the light and warmth of a living love of God were in a soul, it would necessarily, when brought into contact with the concentrated radiance of Divinity incarnated and beaming in

[35] Philo, vol. i. p. 106.

Christ, effect a more fervent, conscious, and abiding union with the Father than could be known before he was thus revealed. But if iniquities, sinful lusts, possessing the soul, had made it hard and cold, even the blaze of spotless virtues and miraculous endowments in the manifesting Messiah would be the radiation of light upon darkness insensible to it. Therefore, the presentation of the Divine contents of the soul or character of Jesus to different persons was an unerring test of their previous moral state: the good would apprehend him with a thrill of unison, the bad would not. To have the Son, to have the Father, to have the truth, to have eternal life,—all are the same thing: hence, where one is predicated or denied all are predicated or denied.

Continuing our investigation, we shall find the distinction drawn of a sensual or perishing life and a spiritual or eternal life. The term world (*kosmos*) is used by John apparently in two different senses. First, it seems to signify all mankind, divided sometimes into the unbelievers and the Christians. "Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "God sent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." It is undeniable that "world" here means not the earth, but the men on the earth. Secondly, "world" in the dialect of John means all the evil, all the vitiating power, of the material creation. "Now shall the Prince of this world be cast out." It is not meant that this is the devil's world, because John declares in the beginning that God made it; but he means that all diabolic influence comes from the darkness of matter fighting against the light of Divinity, and by a figure he says "world," meaning the evils in the world, meaning all the follies, vanities, sins, seductive influences, of the dark and earthy, the temporal and sensual. In this case the love of the world means almost precisely what is expressed by the modern word *worldliness*. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

In a vein strikingly similar, Philo writes, "It is impossible for the love of the world and the love of God to coexist, as it is impossible for light and darkness to coexist."[36] "For all that is in the world," says John, "the lust of the flesh, and the greed of the eyes, and the pomp of living, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, with the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides forever." He who is taken up and absorbed in the gauds and pleasures of time and sense has no deep spring of religious experience: his enjoyments are of the decaying body; his heart and his thoughts are set on things which soon fly away. But the earnest believer in God pierces through all these superficial and transitory objects and pursuits, and fastens his affections to imperishable verities: he feels, far down in his soul, the living well of faith and fruition, the cool fresh fountain of

[36] Philo, vol. ii. p. 649.

spiritual hope and joy, whose stream of life flows unto eternity. The vain sensualist and hollow worldling has no true life in him: his love reaches not beyond the grave. The loyal servant of duty and devout worshipper of God has a spirit of conscious superiority to death and oblivion: though the sky fall, and the mountains melt, and the seas fade, he knows he shall survive, because immaterial truth and love are deathless. The whole thought contained in the texts we are considering is embodied with singular force and beauty in the following passage from one of the sacred books of the Hindus:—"Who would have immortal life must beware of outward things, and seek inward truth, purity, and faith; for the treacherous and evanescent world flies from its votaries, like the mirage, or devil-car, which moves so swiftly that one cannot ascend it." The mere negation of real life or blessedness is predicated of the careless worldling; positive death or miserable condemned unrest is predicated of the bad-hearted sinner. Both these classes of men, upon accepting Christ,—that is, upon owning the Divine characteristics incarnate in him,—enter upon a purified, exalted, and new experience. "He that hates his brother is a murderer and abides in death." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This new experience is distinctively, emphatically, life; it is spiritual peace, joy, trust, communion with God, and therefore immortal. It brings with it its own sufficient evidence, leaving its possessor free from misgiving doubts, conscious of his eternity. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit." "That ye may *know* that ye have eternal life."

The objects of Christ's mission, so far as they refer to the twofold purpose of revealing the Father by an impersonation of his image, and giving new moral life to men by awakening within them a conscious fellowship with Divine truth and goodness, have already been unfolded. But this does not include the whole: all this might have been accomplished by his appearance, authoritative teachings, miracles, and return to heaven, without dying. Why, then, did he die? What was the meaning or aim of his death and resurrection? The apostle conceives that he came not only to reveal God and to regenerate men, but also to be a "propitiation" for men's sins, to redeem them from the penalty of their sins; and it was for this end that he must suffer the doom of physical death. "Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins." It is the more difficult to tell exactly what thoughts this language was intended by John to convey, because his writings are so brief and miscellaneous, so unsystematic and incomplete. He does not explain his own terms, but writes as if addressing those who had previously received such oral instruction as would make the obscurities clear, the hints complete, and the fragments whole. We will first quote from John all the important texts bearing on the point before us, and then endeavor to discern and explain their sense. "If we walk in the light as God is

in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "He is the propitiation for our sins." "Your sins are forgiven through his name." "The whole world is subject to the evil one." These texts, few and vague as they are, comprise every thing directly said by John upon the atonement and redemption: other relevant passages merely repeat the same substance. Certainly these statements do not of themselves teach any thing like the Augustinian doctrine of expiatory sufferings to placate the Father's indignation at sin and sinners, or to remove, by paying the awful debt of justice, the insuperable bars to forgiveness. Nothing of that sort is anywhere intimated in the Johannean documents, even in the faintest manner. So far from saying that there was unwillingness or inability in the Father to take the initiative for our ransom and pardon, he expressly avows, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and *sent* his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Instead of exclaiming, with the majority of modern theologians, "Believe in the atoning death, the substitutional sufferings, of Christ, and your sins shall then all be washed away, and you shall be saved," he explicitly says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." And again: "Whosoever believeth in him"—not in his death, but in him—"shall have eternal life." The allusions in John to the doctrine of redemption and reconciliation do not mean, it is plain enough, the buying off of the victims of eternal condemnation by the vicarious pains of Jesus. What, then, do they mean? They are too few, short, and obscure for us to decide this question conclusively by their own light alone. We must get assistance from abroad.

The reader will remember that it was the Jewish belief, and the retained belief of the converts to Christianity, at that time, that men's souls, in consequence of sin, were doomed upon leaving the body to descend into the under-world. This was the objective penalty of sin, inherited from Adam. Now, Christ in his superangelic state in heaven was not involved in sin or in its doom of death and subterranean banishment. Yet at the will of the Father he became a man, went through our earthly experiences, died like a sinner, and after death descended into the prison of disembodied souls below, then rose again and ascended into heaven to the Father, to show men that their sins were forgiven, the penalty taken away, and the path opened for them too to rise to eternal life in the celestial mansions with Christ "and be with him where he is." Christ's death, then, cleanses men from sin, he is a propitiation for their sins, in two ways. First, by his resurrection from the power of death and his ascent to heaven he showed men that God had removed the great penalty of sin: by his death and ascension he was the medium of giving them this knowledge. Secondly, the joy, gratitude, love to God, awakened in them by such glorious tidings, would purify their natures, exalt their souls into spiritual freedom and virtue, into a blessed and Divine life. According to this view, Christ was a vicarious

sacrifice, not in the sense that he suffered instead of the guilty, to purchase their redemption from the iron justice of God, but in the sense that, when he was personally free from any need to suffer, he died for the sake of others, to reveal to them the mighty boon of God's free grace, assuring them of the wondrous gift of a heavenly immortality. This representation perfectly fills and explains the language, without violence or arbitrary suppositions,—does it in harmony with all the exegetical considerations, historical and grammatical; which no other view that we know of can do.

There are several independent facts which lend strong confirmation to the correctness of the exposition now given. We know that we have not directly proved the justice of that exposition, only constructively, inferentially, established it; not shown it to be true, only made it appear plausible. But that plausibility becomes an extreme probability—nay, shall we not say certainty?—when we weigh the following testimonies for it. First, this precise doctrine is unquestionably contained in other parts of the New Testament. We have in preceding chapters demonstrated its existence in Paul's epistles, in Peter's, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in the Apocalypse. Therefore, since John's phraseology is better explained by it than by any other hypothesis, it is altogether likely that his real meaning was the same.

Secondly, the terms "light" and "darkness," so frequent in this evangelist, were not originated by him, but adopted. They were regarded by the Persian theology, by Plato, by Philo, by the Gnostics, as having a physical basis as well as a spiritual significance. In their conceptions, physical light, as well as spiritual holiness, was an efflux or manifestation from the supernal God; physical darkness, as well as spiritual depravity, was an emanation or effect from the infernal Satan, or principle of evil. Is it not so in the usage of John? He uses the terms, it is true, prevailingly in a moral sense: still, there is much in his statements that looks as if he supposed they had a physical ground. If so, then how natural is this connection of thought! All good comes from the dazzling world of God beyond the sky; all evil comes from the nether world of his adversary, the prince of darkness. That John believed in a local heaven on high, the residence of God, is made certain by scores of texts too plain to be evaded. Would he not, then, in all probability, believe in a local hell? Believing, as he certainly did, in a devil, the author and lord of darkness, falsehood, and death, would he not conceive a kingdom for him? In the development of ideas reached at that time, it is evident that the conception of God implied an upper world, his resplendent abode, and that the conception of Satan equally implied an under-world, his gloomy realm. To the latter human souls were doomed by sin. From the former Christ came, and returned to it again, to show that the Father would forgive our sins and take us there.

Thirdly, John expected that Christ, after death, would return to the

Father in heaven. This appears from clear and reiterated statements in his reports of the Savior's words. But after the resurrection he tells us that Jesus had not yet ascended to the Father, but was just on the point of going. "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father." Where, then, did he suppose the soul of his crucified Master had been during the interval between his death and his resurrection? Dormant in the body, dead with the body, laid in the tomb? That is opposed to the doctrine of uninterrupted life which pervades his writings. Besides, such a belief was held only by the Sadducees, whom the New Testament stigmatizes. To assume that such was John's conception of the fact is an arbitrary supposition, without the least warrant from any source whatever. If he imagined the soul of Jesus during that time to have been neither in heaven nor in the sepulchre, is it not pretty sure that he supposed it was in the under-world,—the common receptacle of souls,—where, according to the belief of that age, every man went after death?

Fourthly, it is to be observed, in favor of this general interpretation, that the doctrine it unfolds is in harmony with the contemporary opinions,—a natural development from them,—a development which would be forced upon the mind of a Jewish Christian accepting the resurrection of Christ as a fact. It was the Jewish opinion that God dwelt with his holy angels in a world of everlasting light above the firmament. It was the Jewish opinion that the departed souls of men, on account of sin, were confined beneath the earth in Satan's and death's dark and slumberous cavern of shadows. It was the Jewish opinion that the Messiah would raise the righteous dead and reign with them on earth. Now, the first Christians clung to the Jewish creed and expectations, with such modifications merely as the variation of the actual Jesus and his deeds from the theoretical Messiah and his anticipated achievements compelled. Then, when Christ—having been received as the bringer of glad tidings from the Father—died, and after three days rose from the dead and ascended to God, promising his brethren that where he was they should come, must they not have regarded it all as a dramatic exemplification of the fact that the region of death was no longer a hopeless dungeon, since one mighty enough to solve its chains and burst its gates had returned from it? must they not have considered him as a pledge that their sins were forgiven, their doom reversed, and heaven attainable?

John, in common with all the first Christians, evidently expected that the second advent of the Lord would soon take place, to consummate the objects he had left unfinished,—to raise the dead and judge them, justifying the worthy and condemning the unworthy. There was a well-known Jewish tradition that the appearance of Antichrist would immediately precede the triumphant coming of the Messiah. John says, "Even now are there many Antichrists: thereby we know that it is the

last hour."[37] "Abide in him, that, when he shall appear, we may not be ashamed before him at his coming." "That we may have boldness in the day of judgment." The evangelist's outlook for the return of the Savior is also shown at the end of his Gospel. "Jesus said not unto him, 'He shall not die;' but, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?'" That the doctrine of a universal resurrection—which the Jews probably derived, through their communication with the Persians, from the Zoroastrian system, and, with various modifications, adopted—is embodied in the following passage, who can doubt? "The hour is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth." That a general resurrection would literally occur under the auspices of Jesus was surely the meaning of the writer of those words. Whether that thought was intended to be conveyed by Christ in the exact terms he really used or not is a separate question, with which we are not now concerned, our object being simply to set forth John's views. Some commentators, seizing the letter and neglecting the spirit, have inferred from various texts that John expected that the resurrection would be limited to faithful Christians,—just as the more rigid of the Pharisees confined it to the righteous Jews. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." To force this figure into a literal meaning is a mistake; for in the preceding chapter it is expressly said that "They that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation." Both shall rise to be judged; but—as we conceive the most probable sense of the phrases—the good shall be received to heaven, the bad shall be remanded to the under-world. "Has no life in him" of course cannot mean is absolutely dead, annihilated, but means has not faith and virtue, the elements of blessedness, the qualifications for heaven. The particular figurative use of words in these texts may be illustrated by parallel idioms from Philo, who says, "Of the living some are dead; on the contrary, the dead live. For those lost from the life of virtue are dead, though they reach the extreme of old age; while the good, though they are disjoined from the body, live immortally."[38] Again he writes, "Deathless life delivers the dying pious; but the dying impious everlasting death seizes."[39] And a great many passages plainly show that one element of Philo's meaning, in such phrases as these, is, that he believed that, upon their leaving the body, the souls of the good would ascend to heaven, while the souls of the bad would descend to Hades. These discriminated events he supposed would follow death at once. His thorough Platonism had weaned him from the Persian-Pharisaic doctrine of a

[37] See the able and impartial discussion of John's belief on this subject contained in Lücke's Commentary on the First Epistle of John, i. 18–28.

[38] Vol. i. p. 554. [39] Ibid. p. 233.

common intermediate state detaining the dead below until the triumphant advent of a Redeemer should usher in the great resurrection and final judgment.[40]

John declares salvation to be conditional. "The blood of Christ"—that is, his death and what followed—"cleanses us from all sin, if we walk in the light as he is in the light;" not otherwise. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see eternal life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." "If any man see his brother commit a sin which is not unto death, he shall pray, and shall receive life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he [Christ] shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." The heads of the doctrine which seems to underlie these statements are as follow. Christ shall come again. All the dead shall rise for judicial ordeal. Those counted worthy shall be accepted, be transfigured into the resemblance of the glorious Redeemer and enter into eternal blessedness in heaven. The rest shall be doomed to the dark kingdom of death in the under-world, to remain there—for aught that is hinted to the contrary—forever. From these premises two practical inferences are drawn in exhortations. First, we should earnestly strive to fit ourselves for acceptance by moral purity, brotherly love, and pious faith. Secondly, we should seek pardon for our sins by confession and prayer, and take heed lest by aggravated sin we deprave our souls beyond recovery. There are those who sin unto death, for whom it is hopeless to pray. Light, truth, and the divine life of heaven can never receive them; darkness, falsehood, and the deep realm of death irrevocably swallow them.

And now we may sum up in a few words the essential results of this whole inquiry into the principles of John's theology, especially as composing and shown in his doctrine of a future life. First, God is personal love, truth, light, holiness, blessedness. These realities, as concentrated in their incomprehensible absoluteness, are the elements of his infinite being. Secondly, these spiritual substances, as diffused through the worlds of the universe and experienced in the souls of moral creatures, are the medium of God's revelation of himself, the direct presence and working of his Logos. Thirdly, the persons who prevailingly partake of these qualities are God's loyal subjects and approved children, in peaceful communion with the Father, through the Son, possessing eternal life. Fourthly, Satan is personal hatred, falsehood, darkness, sin, misery. These realities, in their abstract nature and source, are his being; in their special manifestations they are his efflux and power. Fifthly, the persons who partake rulingly of these qualities are the devil's enslaved subjects and lineal children: in sinful bondage to him, in depraved com-

[40] See vol. i. pp. 139, 416, 417, 555, 643, 648; vol. ii. pp. 178, 433.

munion with him, they dwell in a state of hostile banishment and unhappiness, which is moral death. Sixthly, Christ was the Logos who, descending from his anterior glory in heaven, and appearing in mortal flesh, embodied all the Divine qualities in an unflawed model of humanity, gathered up and exhibited all the spiritual characteristics of the Father in a stainless and perfect soul supernaturally filled and illumined, thus to bear into the world a more intelligible and effective revelation of God the Father than nature or common humanity yielded, to shine with regenerating radiance upon the deadly darkness of those who were groping in lying sins, "that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." Seventhly, the fickle and perishing experience of unbelieving and wicked men, the vagrant life of sensuality and worldliness, the shallow life in vain and transitory things, gives place in the soul of a Christian to a profoundly-earnest, unchanging experience of truth and love, a steady and everlasting life in Divine and everlasting things. Eighthly, the experimental reception of the revealed grace and verity by faith and discipleship in Jesus is accompanied by internal convincing proofs and seals of their genuineness, validity, and immortality. They awaken a new consciousness, a new life, inherently Divine and self-warranting. Ninthly, Christ, by his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension, was a propitiation for our sins, a mercy-seat pledging forgiveness; that is, he was the medium of showing us that mercy of God which annulled the penalty of sin, the descent of souls to the gloomy under-world, and opened the celestial domains for the ransomed children of earth to join the sinless angels of heaven. Tenthly, Christ was speedily to make a second advent. In that last day the dead should come forth for judgment, the good be exalted to unfading glory with the Father and the Son, and the bad be left in the lower region of noiseless shadows and dreams. These ten points of view, we believe, command all the principal features of the theological landscape which occupied the mental vision of the writer of the Gospel and epistles bearing the superscription, John.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRIST'S TEACHINGS CONCERNING THE FUTURE LIFE.

In approaching the teachings of the Savior himself concerning the future fate of man, we should throw off the weight of creeds and prejudices, and, by the aid of all the appliances in our power, endeavor to reach beneath the imagery and unessential particulars of his instructions to learn their bare significance in truth. This is made difficult by the

singular perversions his religion has undergone; by the loss of a complete knowledge of the peculiarities of the Messianic age in the lapse of the ages since; by the almost universal change in our associations, modes of feeling and thought, and styles of speech; and by the gradual accretion and hardening of false doctrines and sectarian biases and wilfulness. As we examine the words of Christ to find their real meaning, there are four prominent considerations to be especially weighed and borne in mind.

First, we must not forget the poetic Eastern style common to the Jewish prophets; their symbolic enunciations in bold figures of speech: "I am the door;" "I am the bread of life;" "I am the vine;" "My sheep hear my voice;" "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." This daring emblematic language was natural to the Oriental nations; and the Bible is full of it. Is the overthrow of a country foretold? It is not said, "Babylon shall be destroyed," but "The sun shall be darkened at his going forth, the moon shall be as blood, the stars shall fall from heaven, and the earth shall stagger to and fro as a drunken man." If we would truly understand Christ's declarations, we must not overlook the characteristics of figurative language. For "he spake to the multitude in parables, and without a parable spake he not unto them;" and a parable, of course, is not to be taken literally, but holds a latent sense and purpose which are to be sought out. The greatest injustice is done to the teachings of Christ when his words are studied as those of a dry scholastic, a metaphysical moralist, not as those of a profound poet, a master in the spiritual realm.

Secondly, we must remember that we have but fragmentary reports of a small part of the teachings of Christ. He was engaged in the active prosecution of his mission probably about three years,—at the shortest over one year; while all the different words of his recorded in the New Testament would not occupy more than five hours. Only a little fraction of what he said has been transmitted to us; and though this part may contain the essence of the whole, yet it must naturally in some instances be obscure and difficult of apprehension. We must therefore compare different passages with each other, carefully probe them all, and explain, so far as possible, those whose meaning is recondite by those whose meaning is obvious. Some persons may be surprised to think that we have but a small portion of the sayings of Jesus. The fact, however, is unquestionable. And perhaps there is no more reason that we should have a full report of his words than there is that we should have a complete account of his doings; and the evangelist declares, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should every one be written, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books."

Thirdly, when examining the instructions of Jesus, we should recollect that he adopted, and applied to himself and to his kingdom, the common Jewish phraseology concerning the Messiah and the events that

were expected to attend his advent and reign. But he did not take up these phrases in the perverted sense held in the corrupt opinions and earthly hopes of the Jews: he used them spiritually, in the sense which accorded with the true Messianic dispensation as it was arranged in the forecasting providence of God. No investigation of the New Testament should be unaccompanied by an observance of the fundamental rule of interpretation,—namely, that the student of a book, especially of an ancient, obscure, and fragmentary book, should imbue himself as thoroughly as he can with the knowledge and spirit of the opinions, events, influences, circumstances, of the time when the document was written, and of the persons who wrote it. The inquirer must be equipped for his task by a mastery of the Rabbinism of Gamaliel, at whose feet Paul was brought up; for the Jewish mind of that age was filled, and its religious language directed, by this Rabbinism. Guided by this principle, furnished with the necessary information, in the helpful light of the best results of modern critical scholarship, we shall be able to explain many dark texts, and to satisfy ourselves, at least in a degree, as to the genuine substance of Christ's declarations touching the future destinies of men.

Finally, he who studies the New Testament with patient thoroughness and with honest sharpness will arrive at a distinction most important to be made and to be kept in view, namely, a distinction between the real meaning of Christ's words in his own mind and the actual meaning understood in them by his auditors and reporters.[1] Here we approach a most delicate and vital point, hitherto too little noticed, but destined yet to become prominent and fruitful. A large number of religious phrases were in common use among the Jews at the time of Jesus. He adopted them, but infused into them a deeper, a correct meaning,—as Copernicus did into the old astronomic formulas. But the bystanders who listened to his discourses, hearing the familiar terms, seized the familiar meaning, and erroneously attributed it to him. It is certain that the Savior was often misunderstood and often not understood at all. When he declared himself the Messiah, the people would have made him a king by force! Even the apostles frequently grossly failed to appreciate his spirit and aims, wrenched unwarrantable inferences from his words, and quarrelled for the precedency in his coming kingdom and for seats at his right hand. In numerous cases it is glaringly plain that his ideas were far from their conceptions of them. We have no doubt the same was true in many other instances where it is not so clear. He repeatedly reproves them for folly and slowness because they did not perceive the sense of his instructions. Perhaps there was a slight impatience in his tones when he said, "How is it that ye do not understand that I spake

[1] See this distinction affirmed by De Wette, in the preface to his *Commentatio de Morte Jesu Christi Expiatoria*. See also Thurn, Jesus und seine Apostel in Widerspruch in Ansehung der Lehre von der Ewigen Verdamnniss. In Scherer's Schriftforsch. sect. i. nr. 4.

it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?" Jesus uttered in established phrases new and profoundly spiritual thoughts. The apostles—educated in, and full of, as they evidently were, the dogmas, prejudices, and hopes of their age and land—would naturally, to some extent, misapprehend his meaning. Then, after a tumultuous interval, writing out his instructions from memory, how perfectly natural that their own convictions and sentiments would have a powerful influence in modifying and shaping the animus and the verbal expressions in their reports! Under the circumstances, that we should now possess the very equivalents of his words with strict literalness, and conveying his very intentions perfectly translated from the Aramæan into the Greek tongue, would imply the most sustained and amazing of all miracles. There is nothing whatever that indicates any such miraculous intervention. There is nothing to discredit the fair presumption that the writers were left to their own abilities, under the inspiration of an earnest consecrating love and truthfulness. And we must, with due limitations, distinguish between the original words and conscious meaning of the sublime Master, illustrated by the emphasis and discrimination of his looks, tones, and gestures, and the apprehended meaning recorded long afterwards, shaped and colored by passing through the minds and pens of the sometimes dissentient and always imperfect disciples. He once declared to them, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye are not able to bear them." Admitting *his* infallibility, as we may, yet asserting *their* fallibility, as we must, and accompanied, too, as his words now are by many very obscuring circumstances, it is extremely difficult to lay the hand on discriminated texts and say, "*οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι ἀληθινοί εἰσι τοῦ θεοῦ.*"

The Messianic doctrine prevalent among the Jews in the time of Jesus appears to have been built up little by little, by religious faith, national pride, and priestly desire, out of literal interpretations of figurative prophecy, and Cabalistic interpretations of plain language, and Rabbinical traditions and speculations, additionally corrupted in some particulars by intercourse with the Persians. Under all this was a central spiritual germ of a Divine promise and plan. A Messiah was really to come. It was in answering the questions, what kind of a king he was to be, and over what sort of a kingdom he was to reign, that the errors crept in. The Messianic conceptions which have come down to us through the Prophets, the Targums, incidental allusions in the New Testament, the Talmud, and the few other traditions and records yet in existence, are very diverse and sometimes contradictory. They agreed in ardently looking for an earthly sovereign in the Messiah, one who would rise up in the line of David and by the power of Jehovah deliver his people, punish their enemies, subdue the world to his sceptre, and reign with Divine auspices of beneficence and splendor. They also expected that then a portion of the dead would rise from the under-world and assume their bodies again, to participate in the triumphs and blessings of his

earthly kingdom. His personal reign in Judea was what they usually meant by the phrases "the kingdom of heaven," "the kingdom of God." The apostles cherished these ideas, and expressed them in the terms common to their countrymen. But we cannot doubt that Jesus employed this and kindred language in a purer and deeper sense, which we must take pains to distinguish from the early and lingering errors associated with it.

Upon the threshold of our subject we meet with predictions of a second coming of Christ from heaven, with power and glory, to sit on his throne and judge the world. The portentous imagery in which these prophecies are clothed is taken from the old prophets; and to them we must turn to learn its usage and force. The Hebrews called any signal manifestation of power—especially any dreadful calamity—a *coming* of the Lord. It was a *coming* of Jehovah when his vengeance strewed the ground with the corpses of Sennacherib's host; when its storm swept Jerusalem as with fire, and bore Israel into bondage; when its sword came down upon Idumea and was bathed in blood upon Edom. "The day of the Lord" is another term of precisely similar import. It occurs in the Old Testament about fifteen times. In every instance it means some mighty manifestation of God's power in calamity. These occasions are pictured forth with the most astounding figures of speech. Isaiah describes the approaching destruction of Babylon in these terms:—"The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall give no light; the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not shine, the heavens shall shake, and the earth shall remove out of her place and be as a frightened sheep that no man taketh up." The Jews expected that the coming of the Messiah would be preceded by many fearful woes, in the midst of which he would appear with peerless pomp and might. The day of his coming they named emphatically the day of the Lord. Jesus actually appeared,—not, as they expected, a warrior travelling in the greatness of his strength, with dyed garments from Bozrah, staining his raiment with blood as he trampled in the wine-vat of vengeance, but the true Messiah, God's foreordained and anointed Son, despised and rejected of men, bringing good tidings, publishing peace. It must have been impossible for the Jews to receive such a Messiah without explanations. Those few who became converts apprehended his Messianic language, at least to some extent, in the sense which previously occupied their minds. He knew that often he was not understood; and he frequently said to his followers, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." His disciples once asked him, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" He replied, substantially, "There shall be wars, famines, and unheard-of trials; and immediately after the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power. And he shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered

before him, and he shall separate them one from another." That this language was understood by the evangelists and the early Christians, in accordance with their Pharisaic notions, as teaching literally a physical reappearance of Christ on the earth, a resurrection, and a general judgment, we fully believe. Those ideas were prevalent at the time, are expressed in scores of places in the New Testament, and are the direct strong assertion of the words themselves. But that such was the meaning of Christ himself we much more than doubt.

In the first place, in his own language *in regard to his second coming* there is not the least hint of a resurrection of the dead: the scene is confined to the living, and to the earth. Secondly, the figures which he employs in this connection are the same as those used by the Jewish prophets to denote great and signal events on the earth, and may be so taken here without violence to the idiom. Thirdly, he expressly fixed the date of the events he referred to within that generation; and if, therefore, he spoke literally, he was grossly in error, and his prophecies failed of fulfilment,—a conclusion which we cannot adopt. To suppose that he partook in the false, mechanical dogmas of the carnal Jews would be equally irreconcilable with the common idea of his Divine inspiration, and with the profound penetration and spirituality of his own mind. He certainly used much of the phraseology of his contemporary countrymen, metaphorically, to convey his own purer thoughts. We have no doubt he did so in regard to the descriptions of his second coming. Let us state in a form of paraphrase what his real instructions on this point seem to us to have been:—"You cannot believe that I am the Messiah, because I do not deliver you from your oppressors and trample on the Gentiles. Your minds are clouded with errors. The Father hath sent me to found the kingdom of peace and righteousness, and hath given me all power to reward and punish. By my word shall the nations of the earth be honored and blessed, or be overwhelmed with fire; and every man must stand before my judgment-seat. The end of the world is at the doors. The Mosaic dispensation is about to be closed in the fearful tribulations of the day of the Lord, and my dispensation to be set up. When you see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, know that the day is at hand, and flee to the mountains; for not one stone shall be left upon another. Then the power of God will be shown on my behalf, and the sign of the Son of Man be seen in heaven. My truths shall prevail, and shall be owned as the criteria of Divine judgment. According to them, all the righteous shall be distinguished as my subjects, and all the iniquitous shall be separated from my kingdom. Some of those standing here shall not taste death till all these things be fulfilled. Then it will be seen that I am the Messiah, and that through the eternal principles of truth which I have proclaimed I shall sit upon a throne of glory,—not literally, in person, as you thought, blessing the Jews and cursing the Gentiles, but spiritually, in the truth, dispensing joy to good men and woe to bad men, according to their deserts." Such we believe to be the meaning of

Christ's own predictions of his second coming. He figuratively identifies himself with his religion according to that idiom by which it is written, "Moses hath in every city them that read him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day." His figure of himself as the universal judge is a bold personification; for he elsewhere says, "He that believeth in me believeth not in me, but in Him that sent me." And again, "He that rejecteth me, I judge him not: the word that I have spoken, that shall judge him." His coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory was when, at the destruction of Jerusalem, the old age closed and the new began, the obstacles to his religion were removed and his throne established on the earth.[2] The apostles undoubtedly understood the doctrine differently; but that such was his own thought we conclude, because he did sometimes undeniably use figurative language in that way, and because the other meaning is an error, not in harmony either with his character, his mind, or his mission.

This interpretation is so important that it may need to be illustrated and confirmed by further instances:—"When the Son of Man sits on the throne of his glory, and all nations are gathered before him, his angels shall sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." A few such picturesque phrases have led to the general belief in a great world-judgment at the end of the appointed time, after which the condemned are to be thrown into the tortures of an unquenchable world of flame. How arbitrary and violent a conclusion this is, how unwarranted and gross a perversion of the language of Christ it is, we may easily see. The fact that the old prophets often described fearful misfortunes and woes in images of clouds and flame and falling stars, and other portentous symbols, and that this style was therefore familiar to the Jews, would make it very natural for Jesus, in foretelling such an event as the coming destruction of Jerusalem, in conflagration and massacre, with the irretrievable subversion of the old dispensation, to picture it forth in a similar way. Fire was to the Jews a common emblem of calamity and devastation; and judgments incomparably less momentous than those gathered about the fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the self-boasted favorites of Jehovah were often described by the prophets in appalling images of darkened planets, shaking heavens, clouds, fire, and blackness. Joel, speaking of a "day of the Lord," when there should be famine and drought, and a horrid army of destroying insects, "before whom a fire devoureth, and behind them a flame burneth," draws the scene in these terrific colors:—"The earth shall quake before them; the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining; and the Lord shall utter his voice before his terrible army of locusts, caterpillars, and destroying worms." Ezekiel represents God as saying, "The house of Israel is to me become dross: therefore I will gather you into the midst

[2] Norton, Statement of Reasons, Appendix.

of Jerusalem: as they gather silver, brass, iron, tin, and lead into the midst of the furnace to blow the fire upon it, so will I gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof." We read in Isaiah, "The Assyrian shall flee, and his princes shall be afraid, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem." Malachi also says, "The day cometh that shall burn as a furnace, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and shall be burned up root and branch. They shall be trodden as ashes beneath the feet of the righteous." The meaning of these passages, and of many other similar ones, is, in every instance, some severe temporal calamity, some dire example of Jehovah's retributions among the nations of the earth. Their authors never dreamed of teaching that there is a place of fire beyond the grave in which the wicked dead shall be tormented, or that the natural creation is finally to be devoured by flame. It is perfectly certain that not a single text in the Old Testament was meant to teach any such doctrine as that. The judgments shadowed forth in kindred metaphors by Christ are to be understood in the light of this fact. Their meaning is, that all unjust, cruel, false, impure men shall endure severe punishments. This general thought is fearfully distinct; but every thing beyond—all details—are left in utter obscurity.

In the august scene of the King in judgment, when the sentence has been pronounced on those at the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels," it is written, "and they shall go away into everlasting punishment." It is obvious to remark that the imagery of a fiery prison built for Satan and the fallen angels, and into which the bad shall be finally doomed, is poetical language, or language of accommodation to the current notions of the time. These startling Oriental figures are used to wrap and convey the assertion that the wicked shall be severely punished according to their deserts. No literal reference seems to be made either to the particular time, to the special place, or to the distinctive character, of the punishment; but the mere fact is stated in a manner to fill the conscience with awe and to stamp the practical lesson vividly on the memory. But admitting the clauses apparently descriptive of the nature of this retribution to be metaphorical, yet what shall we think of its duration? Is it absolutely unending? There is nothing in the record to enable a candid inquirer to answer that question decisively. So far as the letter of Scripture is concerned, there are no data to give an indubitable solution to the problem. It is true the word "everlasting" is repeated; but, when impartially weighed, it seems a sudden rhetorical expression, of indefinite force, used to heighten the impressiveness of a sublime dramatic representation, rather than a cautious philosophical term employed to convey an abstract conception. There is no reason whatever for supposing that Christ's mind was particularly directed to the metaphysical idea of endlessness, or to the much more metaphysical idea of timelessness. The presumptive evidence is that he spoke popularly. Had he been charged to re-

veal a doctrine so tremendous, so awful, so unutterably momentous in its practical relations, as that of the endless close of all probation at death, is it conceivable that he would merely have couched it in a few figurative expressions and left it as a matter of obscure inference and uncertainty? No: in that case, he would have iterated and reiterated it, defined, guarded, illustrated it, and have left no possibility of honest mistake or doubt of it.

The Greek word *αἰώνιος*,—and the same is true of the corresponding Hebrew word,—translated "everlasting" in the English Bible, has not in its popular usage the rigid force of eternal duration, but varies,—is now applied to objects as evanescent as man's earthly life, now to objects as lasting as eternity.[3] Its power in any given case is to be sought from the context and the reason of the thing. Isaiah, having threatened the unrighteous nations that they "should conceive chaff and bring forth stubble, that their own breath should be fire to devour them, and that they should be burnt like lime, like thorns cut up in the fire," makes the terror-smitten sinners and hypocrites cry, "Who among us can dwell in devouring fire? Who among us can dwell in everlasting burnings?" Yet his reference is solely to an outward, temporal judgment in this world. The Greek adjective rendered "everlasting" is etymologically, and by universal usage, a term of duration, but indefinite,—its extent of meaning depending on the subjects of which it is predicated. Therefore, when Christ connects this word with the punishment of the wicked, it is impossible to say with any certainty, judging from the language itself, whether he implies that those who die in their sins are hopelessly lost, perfectly irredeemable forever, or not,—though the probabilities are very strongly in the latter direction. "Everlasting punishment" may mean, in philosophical strictness, a punishment absolutely eternal, or may be a popular expression denoting, with general indefiniteness, a very long duration. Since in all Greek literature, sacred and profane, *αἰώνιος* is applied to things that end, ten times as often as it is to things immortal, no fair critic can assert positively that when it is connected with future punishment it has the stringent meaning of metaphysical endlessness. On the other hand, no one has any critical right to say positively that in such cases it has not that meaning. The Master has not explained his words on this point, but has left them veiled. We can settle the question itself concerning the limitedness or the unlimitedness of future punishment only on other grounds than those of textual criticism,—even on grounds of enlightened reason postulating the cardinal principles of Christianity and of ethics. Will not the unimpeded Spirit of Christ lead all free minds and loving hearts to one conclusion? But that conclusion is to be held modestly as a trusted inference, not dogmatically as a received revelation.

Another point in the Savior's teachings which it is of the utmost im-

[3] See Christian Examiner for March, 1854, pp. 280–297.

portance to understand is the sense in which he used the Jewish phrases "Resurrection of the Dead" and "Resurrection at the Last Day." The Pharisees looked for a restoration of the righteous from their graves to a bodily life. This event they supposed would take place at the appearance of the Messiah; and the time of his coming they called "the last day." So the Apostle John says, "Already are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." Now, Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, clothed in his functions, though he interpreted those functions as carrying an interior and moral, not an outward and physical, force. "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him should have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Again, when Martha told Jesus that "she knew her brother Lazarus would rise again in the resurrection at the last day," he replied, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This utterance is surely metaphorical; for belief in Jesus does not prevent physical dissolution. The thoughts contained in the various passages belonging to this subject, when drawn out, compared, and stated in general terms, seem to us to be as follows:—"You suppose that in the last day your Messiah will restore the dead to live again upon the earth. I am the Messiah, and the last days have therefore arrived. I am commissioned by the Father to bestow eternal life upon all who believe on me; but not in the manner you have anticipated. The true resurrection is not calling the body from the tomb, but opening the fountains of eternal life in the soul. I am come to open the spiritual world to your faith. He that believeth in me and keepeth my commandments has passed from death unto life,—become conscious that though seemingly he passes into the grave, yet really he shall live with God forever. The true resurrection is, to come into the experience of the truth that 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him.' Over the soul that is filled with such an experience, death has no power. Verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead, the ignorant and guilty, buried in trespasses and sins, shall hear these truths declared, and they that believe shall lay hold of the life thus offered and be blessed. The Father hath given me authority to execute judgment,—that is, to lay down the principles by which men shall be judged according to their deserts. All mankind shall be judged in the spiritual state by the spirit and precepts of my religion as veritably as if in their graves the generations of the dead heard my voice and came forth, the good to blessedness, the evil to misery. The judgment which is, as it were, committed unto me, is not really committed unto me, but unto the truth which I declare; for of mine own self I can do nothing." We believe this paraphrase expresses the essential meaning of Christ's own declarations concerning a resurrection and an associated judgment. Coming to bring from the Father authenticated tidings of immortality, and to reveal the laws of the Divine

judgment, he declared that those who believed and kept his words were delivered from the terror of death, and, knowing that an endless life of blessedness was awaiting them, immediately entered upon its experience. He did not teach the doctrine of a bodily restoration, but said, "In the resurrection," that is, in the spiritual state succeeding death, "they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of heaven." He did not teach the doctrine of a temporary sleep in the grave, but said to the penitent thief on the cross, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise:" instantly upon leaving the body their souls would be together in the state of the blessed.

It is often said that the words of Jesus in relation to the dead hearing his voice and coming forth must be taken literally; for the metaphor is of too extreme violence. But it is in keeping with his usage. He says, "Let the dead bury their dead." It is far less bold than "This is my body; this is my blood." It is not nearly so strong as Paul's adjuration, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." It is not more daringly imaginative than the assertion that "the heroes sleeping in Marathon's gory bed stirred in their graves when Leonidas fought at Thermopylæ;" or than Christ's own words, "If thou hadst faith like a grain of mustard-seed, thou couldst say to this mountain, Be thou cast into yonder sea, and it should obey you." So one might say,—

> "Where'er the gospel comes,
> It spreads diviner light;
> It calls dead sinners from their tombs
> And gives the blind their sight."

And in the latter days, when it has done its work, and the glorious measure of human redemption is full, liberty, intelligence, and love shall stand hand in hand on the mountain-summits and raise up the long generations of the dead to behold the completed fruits of their toils. In this figurative moral sense Jesus probably spoke when he said, "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." He referred simply to the rewards of the virtuous in the state beyond the grave. The phraseology in which he clothed the thought he accommodatingly adopted from the current speech of the Pharisees. They unquestionably meant by it the group of notions contained in their dogma of the destined physical restoration of the dead from their sepulchres at the advent of the Messiah. And it seems perfectly plain to us, on an impartial study of the record, that the evangelist, in reporting his words, took the Pharisaic dogma, and not merely the Christian truth, with them. But that Jesus himself modified and spiritualized the meaning of the phrase when he employed it, even as he did the other contemporaneous language descriptive of the Messianic offices and times, we conclude for two reasons. First, he certainly did often use language in that spiritual way, dressing in bold metaphors moral thoughts of inspired insight and truth. Secondly, the moral doctrine is the only one that is

true, or that is in keeping with his penetrative thought. The notion of a physical resurrection is an error borrowed most likely from the Persians by the Pharisees, and not belonging to the essential elements of Christianity. The notion being prevalent at the time in Judea, and being usually expressed in certain appropriated phrases, when Christ used those phrases in a true spiritual sense the apostles would naturally apprehend from them the carnal meaning which already filled their minds in common with the minds of their countrymen.

The word *Hades*, translated in the English New Testament by the word "hell," a word of nearly the same etymological force, but now conveying a quite different meaning, occurs in the discourses of Jesus only three several times. The other instances of its use are repetitions or parallels. First, "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be brought down to the under-world;" that is, the great and proud city shall become powerless, a heap of ruins. Second, "Upon this rock I will found my Church, and the gates of the under-world shall not prevail against it;" that is, the powers of darkness, the opposition of the wicked, the strength of evil, shall not destroy my religion; in spite of them it shall assert its organization and overcome all obstacles.

The remaining example of the Savior's use of this word is in the parable of Dives and Lazarus. The rich man is described, after death, as suffering in the under-world. Seeing the beggar afar off in Abraham's bosom, he cries, "Father Abraham, pity me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Well-known fancies and opinions are here wrought up in scenic form to convey certain moral impressions. It will be noticed that the implied division of the under-world into two parts, with a gulf between them, corresponds to the common Gentile notion of an Elysian region of delightful meadows for the good and a Tartarean region of blackness and fire for the bad, both included in one subterranean kingdom, but divided by an interval.[4]

The dramatic details of the account—Lazarus being borne into bliss by angels, Dives asking to have a messenger sent from bale to warn his surviving brothers—rest on opinions afloat among the Jews of that age, derived from the Persian theology. Zoroaster prays, "When I shall die, let Aban and Bahman carry me to the bosom of joy."[5] And it was a common belief among the Persians that souls were at seasons permitted to leave purgatory and visit their relatives on earth.[6] It is evident that the narrative before us is not a history to be literally construed, but a parable to be carefully analyzed. The imagery and the particulars are

[4] See copious illustrations by Rosenmüller, in Luc. cap. xvi. 22, 23.

"Hic locus est partes ubi se via findit in ambas:
Dextera, quæ Ditis magni sub mœnia tendit;
Hâc iter Elysium nobis: at læva malorum
Exercet pœnas, et ad impia Tartara mittit."

[5] Rhode, Heilige Sage des Zendvolks, s. 406.

[6] Ibid. s. 410.

to be laid aside, and the central thoughts to be drawn forth. Take the words literally,—that the rich man's immaterial soul, writhing in flames, wished the tip of a finger dipped in water to cool his tongue,—and they are ridiculous. Take them figuratively, as a type of unknown spiritual anguish, and they are awful. Besides, had Christ intended to teach the doctrine of a local burning hell, he surely would have enunciated it in plain words, with solemn iteration and explanatory amplifications, instead of merely insinuating it incidentally, in metaphorical terms, in a professed parable. The sense of the parable is, that the formal distinctions of this world will have no influence in the allotments of the future state, but will often be reversed there; that a righteous Providence, knowing every thing here, rules hereafter, and will dispense compensating justice to all; that men should not wait for a herald to rise from the dead to warn them, but should heed the instructions they already have, and so live in the life that now is, as to avoid a miserable condemnation, and secure a blessed acceptance, in the life that is to come. By inculcating these truths in a striking manner, through the aid of a parable based on the familiar poetical conceptions of the future world and its scenery, Christ no more endorses those conceptions than by using the Messianic phrases of the Jews he approves the false carnal views which they joined with that language. To interpret the parable literally, then, and suppose it meant to teach the actual existence of a located hell of fire for sinners after death, is to disregard the proprieties of criticism.

"Gehenna," or the equivalent phrase, "Gehenna of fire," unfortunately translated into our tongue by the word "hell," is to be found in the teachings of Christ in only five independent instances, each of which, after tracing the original Jewish usage of the term, we will briefly examine. Gehenna, or the Vale of Hinnom, is derived from two Hebrew words, the first meaning a vale, the second being the name of its owner. The place thus called was the eastern part of the beautiful valley that forms the southern boundary of Jerusalem. Here Moloch, the horrid idol-god worshipped by the Ammonites, and by the Israelites during their idolatrous lapses, was set up. This monstrous idol had the head of an ox and the body of a man. It was hollow; and, being filled with fire, children were laid in its arms and devoured alive by the heat. This explains the terrific denunciations uttered by the prophets against those who made their children pass through the fire to Moloch. The spot was sometimes entitled Tophet,—a place of abhorrence; its name being derived, as some think, from a word meaning to vomit with loathing, or, as others suppose, from a word signifying drum, because drums were beaten to drown the shrieks of the burning children. After these horrible rites were abolished by Josiah, the place became an utter abomination. All filth, the offal of the city, the carcasses of beasts, the bodies of executed criminals, were cast indiscriminately into Gehenna. Fires were kept constantly burning to prevent the infection of the atmosphere from the putrifying mass. Worms were to be seen preying on the relics.

The primary meaning, then, of Gehenna, is a valley outside of Jerusalem, a place of corruption and fire, only to be thought of with execration and shuddering.

Now, it was not only in keeping with Oriental rhetoric, but also natural in itself, that figures of speech should be taken from these obvious and dreadful facts to symbolize any dire evil. For example, how naturally might a Jew, speaking of some foul wretch, and standing, perhaps, within sight of the place, exclaim, "He deserves to be hurled into the fires of Gehenna!" So the term would gradually become an accepted emblem of abominable punishment. Such was the fact; and this gives a perspicuous meaning to the word without supposing it to imply a fiery prison-house of anguish in the future world. Isaiah threatens the King of Assyria with ruin in these terms:—"Tophet is ordained of old, and prepared for the king: it is made deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of Jehovah, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." The prophet thus portrays, with the dread imagery of Gehenna, approaching disaster and overthrow. A thorough study of the Old Testament shows that the Jews, during the period which it covers, did not believe in future rewards and punishments, but expected that all souls without discrimination would pass their shadowy dream-lives in the silence of Sheol. Between the termination of the Old Testament history and the commencement of the New, various forms of the doctrine of future retribution had been introduced or developed among the Jews. But during this period few, if any, decisive instances can be found in which the image of penal fire is connected with the future state. On the contrary, "darkness," "gloom," "blackness," "profound and perpetual night," are the terms employed to characterize the abode and fate of the wicked. Josephus says that, in the faith of the Pharisees, "the worst criminals were banished to the darkest part of the underworld." Philo represents the depraved and condemned as "groping in the lowest and darkest part of the creation." The word Gehenna is rarely found in the literature of this time, and when it is it commonly seems to be used either simply to denote the detestable Vale of Hinnom, or else plainly as a general symbol of calamity and horror, as in the elder prophets.

But in some of the Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases of the Hebrew Scriptures,—especially in the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel,—we meet repeated applications of the word Gehenna to signify a punishment by fire in the future state.[†] This is a fact about which there can be no question. And to the documents showing such a usage of the word, the best scholars are pretty well agreed in assigning a date as early as the days of Christ. The evidence afforded by these Targums, together with the marked application of the term by Jesus himself, and the similar general use of it immediately after both by Christians and

[†] Gesenius, Hebrew Thesaurus, Ge Hinnom.

Jews, render it not improbable that Gehenna was known to the contemporaries of the Savior as the metaphorical name of hell, a region of fire, in the under-world, where the reprobate were supposed to be punished after death. But admitting that, before Christ began to teach, the Jews had modified their early conception of the under-world as the silent and sombre abode of all the dead in common, and had divided it into two parts, one where the wicked suffer, called Gehenna, one where the righteous rest, called Paradise, still, that modification having been borrowed, as is historically evident, from the Gentiles, or, if developed among themselves, at all events unconnected with revelation, of course Christianity is not involved with the truth or falsity of it,—is not responsible for it. It does not necessarily follow that Jesus gave precisely the same meaning to the word Gehenna that his contemporaries or successors did. He may have used it in a modified emblematic sense, as he did many other current terms. In studying his language, we should especially free our minds both from the tyranny of pre-Christian notions and dogmas and from the associations and influences of modern creeds, and seek to interpret it in the light of his own instructions and in the spirit of his own mind.

We will now examine the cases in which Christ uses the term Gehenna, and ask what it means.

First: "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou vile wretch! shall be in danger of the fiery Gehenna." Interpret this literally, and it teaches that whosoever calls his brother a wicked apostate is in danger of being thrown into the filthy flames in the Vale of Hinnom. But no one supposes that such was its meaning. Jesus would say, as we understand him, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil, the law; to show how at the culmination of the old dispensation a higher and stricter one opens. I say unto you, that, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. The conditions of acceptance under the new order are far more profound and difficult than under the old. That said, Whosoever commits murder shall be exposed to legal punishment from the public tribunal. This says, An invisible inward punishment, as much to be dreaded as the judgments of the Sanhedrim, shall be inflicted upon those who harbor the secret passions that lead to crime; whosoever, out of an angry heart, insults his brother, shall be exposed to spiritual retributions typified by the horrors of yon flaming valley. They of old time took cognizance of outward crimes by outward penalties. I take cognizance of inward sins by inward returns more sure and more fearful."

Second: "If thy right eye be a source of temptation to thee, pluck it out and fling it away; for it is better for thee that one of thy members perish than that thy whole body should be cast into Gehenna." Give these words a literal interpretation, and they mean, "If your eyes or your hands are the occasions of crime,—if they tempt you to commit offences which will expose you to public execution, to the ignominy and

torture heaped upon felons put to a shameful death and then flung among the burning filth of Gehenna,—pluck them out, cut them off betimes, and save yourself from such a frightful end; for it is better to live even thus maimed than, having a whole body, to be put to a violent death." No one can suppose that Jesus meant to convey such an idea as that when he uttered these words. We must, then, attribute a deeper, an exclusively moral, significance to the passage. It means, "If you have some bosom sin, to deny and root out which is like tearing out an eye or cutting off a hand, pause not, but overcome and destroy it immediately, at whatever cost of effort and suffering; for it is better to endure the pain of fighting and smothering a bad passion than to submit to it and allow it to rule until it acquires complete control over you, pervades your whole nature with its miserable unrest, and brings you at last into a state of woe of which Gehenna and its dreadful associations are a fit emblem." A verse spoken, according to Mark, in immediate connection with the present passage, confirms the figurative sense we have attributed to it:—"Whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe in me to fall, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged around his neck and he were plunged into the midst of the sea;" that is, in literal terms, a man had better meet a great calamity, even the loss of life, than commit a foul crime and thus bring the woe of guilt upon his soul.

The phrase, "their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched," is a part of the imagery naturally suggested by the scene in the Valley of Hinnom, and was used to give greater vividness and force to the moral impression of the discourse. By an interpretation resulting either from prejudice or ignorance, it is generally held to teach the doctrine of literal fire-torments enduring forever. It is a direct quotation from a passage in Isaiah which signifies that, in a glorious age to come, Jehovah will cause his worshippers to go forth from new moon to new moon and look upon the carcasses of the wicked, and see them devoured by fire which shall not be quenched and gnawed by worms which shall not die, until the last relics of them are destroyed.

Third: "Fear not them that kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." A similar use of figurative language, in a still bolder manner, is found in Isaiah. Intending to say nothing more than that Assyria should be overthrown and crushed, the prophet bursts out, "Under the glory of the King of Assyria Jehovah shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire; and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day, and shall consume the glory of his forest and of his fruitful field, both soul and body." Reading the whole passage in Matthew with a single eye, its meaning will be apparent. We may paraphrase it thus. Jesus says to his disciples, "You are now going forth to preach the gospel. My religion and its destinies are intrusted to your hands. As you go from place to place, be on your guard; for they will persecute you, and scourge you, and deliver you up to

death. But fear them not. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master; and if they have done so unto me, how much more shall they unto you! Do not, through fear of hostile men, who can only kill your bodies and are not able in any wise to injure your souls, shrink from danger and prove recreant to the momentous duties imposed upon you; but be inspired to proclaim the principles of the heavenly kingdom with earnestness and courage, in the face of all perils, by fearing God,—him who is able to plunge both your souls and your bodies in abomination and agony,—him who, if you prove unfaithful and become slothful servants or wicked traitors, will leave your bodies to a violent death and after that your souls to bitter shame and anguish. Fear not the temporal, physical power of your enemies, to be turned from your work by it; but rather fear the eternal, spiritual power of your God, to be made faithful by it."

Fourth: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and, when he is made, ye make him twofold more a child of Gehenna than yourselves." That is, "Ye make him twice as bad as yourselves in hypocrisy, bigotry, extortion, impurity, and malice,—a subject of double guilt and of double retribution."

Finally, Jesus exclaims to the children of those who killed the prophets, "Serpents, brood of vipers! how can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna?" That is to say, "Venomous creatures, bad men! you deserve the fate of the worst criminals; you are worthy of the polluted fires of Gehenna; your vices will surely be followed by condign punishment: how can such depravity escape the severest retributions?"

These five are all the distinct instances in which Jesus uses the word Gehenna. It is plain that he always uses the word metaphorically. We therefore conclude that Christianity, correctly understood, never implies that eternal fire awaits sinners in the future world, but that moral retributions, according to their deeds, are the portion of all men here and hereafter. There is no more reason to suppose that essential Christianity contains the doctrine of a fiery infernal world than there is to suppose that it really means to declare that God is a glowing mass of flame, when it says, "Our God is a consuming fire." We must remember the metaphorical character of much scriptural language. Wickedness is a fire, in that it preys upon men and draws down the displeasure of the Almighty, and consumes them. As Isaiah writes, "Wickedness burneth as the fire, the anger of Jehovah darkens the land, and the people shall be the food of the fire." And James declares to proud extortioners, "The rust of your cankered gold and silver shall eat your flesh as it were fire."

When Jesus says, "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city" which will not listen to the preaching of my kingdom, but drives my disciples away, he uses a familiar figure to signify that Sodom and Gomorrah would at such a call

have repented in sackcloth and ashes. The guilt of Chorazin and Bethsaida was, therefore, more hardened than theirs, and should receive a severer punishment; or, making allowance for the natural exaggeration of this kind of language, he means, That city whose iniquities and scornful unbelief lead it to reject my kingdom when it is proffered shall be brought to judgment and be overwhelmed with avenging calamities. Two parallel illustrations of this image are given us by the old prophets. Isaiah says, "Babylon shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." And Jeremiah complains, "The punishment of Jerusalem is greater than the punishment of Sodom." It is certainly remarkable that such passages should ever have been thought to teach the doctrine of a final, universal judgment-day breaking on the world in fire.

The subject of our Lord's teachings in regard to the punishment of the wicked is included in two classes of texts, and may be summed up in a few words. One class of texts relate to the visible establishment of Christianity as the true religion, the Divine law, at the destruction of the Jewish power, and to the frightful woes which should then fall upon the murderers of Christ, the bitter enemies of his cause. All these things were to come upon that generation,—were to happen before some of them then standing there tasted death. The other class of texts—and they are by far the more numerous—signify that the kingdom of Truth is now revealed and set up; that all men are bound to accept and obey it with reverence and love, and thus become its blessed subjects, the happy and immortal children of God; that those who spurn its offers, break its laws, and violate its pure spirit shall be punished, inevitably and fearfully, by moral retributions proportioned to the degrees of their guilt. Christ does not teach that the good are immortal and that the bad shall be annihilated, but that all alike, both the just and the unjust, enter the spiritual world. He does not teach that the bad shall be eternally miserable, cut off from all possibility of amendment, but simply that they shall be justly judged. He makes no definitive reference to duration, but leaves us at liberty, peering into the gloom as best we can, to suppose, if we think it most reasonable, that the conditions of our spiritual nature are the same in the future as now, and therefore that the wicked may go on in evil hereafter, or, if they will, all turn to righteousness, and the universe finally become as one sea of holiness and as one flood of praise.

Another portion of Christ's doctrine of the future life hinges on the phrase "the kingdom of heaven." Much is implied in this term and its accompaniments, and may be drawn out by answering the questions, What is heaven? Who are citizens of, and who are aliens from, the kingdom of God? Let us first examine the subordinate meanings and shades of meaning with which the Savior sometimes uses these phrases.

"Ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." No confirmation of the literal sense of this that is afforded by any incident found in the Gospels. There is

every reason for supposing that he meant by it, "There shall be open manifestations of supernatural power and favor bestowed upon me by God, —evident signs of direct communications between us." His Divine works and instructions justified the statement. The word "heaven" as here used, then, does not mean any particular place, but means the approving presence of God. The instincts and natural language of man prompt us to consider objects of reverence as above us. We kneel below them. The splendor, mystery, infinity, of the starry regions help on the delusion. But surely no one possessing clear spiritual perceptions will think the literal facts in the case must correspond to this,—that God must dwell in a place overhead called heaven. He is an Omnipresence.

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you for my sake: rejoice, for great is your reward in heaven." This passage probably means, "In the midst of tribulation be exceeding glad; because you shall be abundantly rewarded in a future state for all your present sufferings in my cause." In that case, heaven signifies the spiritual world, and does not involve reference to any precisely-located spot. Or it may mean, "Be not disheartened by insults and persecutions met in the cause of God; for you shall be greatly blessed in your inward life: the approval of conscience, the immortal love and pity of God, shall be yours: the more you are hated and abused by men unjustly, the closer and sweeter shall be your communion with God." In that case, heaven signifies fellowship with the Father, and is independent of any particular time or place.

"Our Father, who art in heaven." Jesus was not the author of this sentence. It was a part of the Rabbinical synagogue-service, and was based upon the Hebrew conception of God as having his abode in an especial sense over the firmament. The Savior uses it as the language of accommodation, as is evident from his conversation with the woman of Samaria; for he told her that no exclusive spot was an acceptable place of worship, since "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." No one who comprehends the meaning of the words can suppose that the Infinite Spirit occupies a confined local habitation, and that men must literally journey there to be with him after death. Wherever they may be now, they are away from him or with him, according to their characters. After death they are more banished from him or more immediately with him, instantly, wherever they are, according to the spirit they are of.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, but in heaven." In other words, Be not absorbed in efforts to accumulate hoards of gold and silver, and to get houses and lands, which will soon pass away; but rather labor to acquire heavenly treasures,—wisdom, love, purity, and faith,— which will never pass from your possession nor cease from your enjoyment.

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." To understand this text, we must carefully study

the whole four chapters of the connection in which it stands. They abound in bold symbols. An instance of this is seen where Jesus, having washed his disciples' feet, says to them, "Ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him. Therefore said he, Ye are not all clean." The actual meaning of the passage before us may be illustrated by a short paraphrase of it with the context:—"Let not your hearts be troubled by the thought that I must die and be removed from you; for there are other states of being besides this earthly life. When they crucify me, as I have said to you before, I shall not perish, but shall pass into a higher state of existence with my Father. Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know: my Father is the end, and the truths that I have declared point out the way. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I say that I go to the Father. And if I go to him,—if, when they have put me to death, I pass into an unseen state of blessedness and glory, (as I prophesy unto you that I shall,)—I will reveal myself unto you again, and tell you. I go before you as a pioneer, and will surely come back and confirm, with irresistible evidence, the reality of what I have already told you. Therefore, trouble not your hearts, but be of good cheer."

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The sentiment of this Divine declaration simply implies that all good beings sympathize with every triumph of goodness; that the living chain of mutual interest runs through the spiritual universe, making one family of those on earth and those in the invisible state.

"Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." "Cling not to me, detain me not, for I have not yet left the world forever, to be in the spiritual state with my Father; and ere I do this I must seek my disciples, to convince them of my resurrection and to give them my parting commission and blessing." He used the common language, for it was the only language which she whom he addressed would understand; and although, literally interpreted, it conveyed the idea of a local heaven on high, yet at the same time it conveyed, and in the only way intelligible to her, all the truth that was important,—namely, that when he disappeared he would still be living, and be, furthermore, with God.

When Christ finally went from his disciples, he seemed to them to rise and vanish towards the clouds. This would confirm their previous material conceptions, and the old forms of speech would be handed down, strengthened by these phenomena, misunderstood in themselves and exaggerated in their importance. We generally speak now of God's "throne," of "heaven," as situated far away in the blue ether; we point upward to the world of bliss, and say, *There* the celestial hosannas roll; *there* the happy ones, the unforgotten ones of our love, wait to welcome us. These forms of speech are entirely natural; they are harmless; they aid in giving definiteness to our thoughts and feelings, and it is well to continue their use; it would be difficult to express our thoughts without

them. However, we must understand that they are not strictly and exclusively true. God is everywhere; and wherever he is there is heaven to the spirits that are like him and, consequently, see him and enjoy his ineffable blessedness.

Jesus sometimes uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven" as synonymous with the Divine will,—the spiritual principles or laws which he was inspired to proclaim. Many of his parables were spoken to illustrate the diffusive power and the incomparable value of the truth he taught,—as when he said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard-seed, which becomes a great tree;" it is "like unto leaven, which a woman put in two measures of meal until the whole was leavened;" it is "like a treasure hid in a field," or "like a goodly pearl of great price, which, a man finding, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it." In these examples "the kingdom of heaven" is plainly a personification of the revealed will of God, the true law of salvation and eternal life. In answer to the question why he spoke so many things to the people in parables, Jesus said to his disciples, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but unto them it is not given;" that is, *You* are prepared to understand the hitherto concealed truths of God's government, if set forth plainly; but *they* are not prepared. Here —as also in the parables of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, and of the man who sowed good seed in his field, and in a few other cases—"the kingdom of heaven" means God's government, his mode of dealing with men, his method of establishing his truths in the hearts of men. "The kingdom of heaven" sometimes signifies personal purity and peace, freedom from sensual solicitations. "There be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

Christ frequently uses the term "kingdom of heaven" in a somewhat restricted, traditional sense, based—in form but not in spirit—upon the Jewish expectations of the Messiah's kingdom. "Be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you;" "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also;" "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Christ was charged to bear to men a new revelation from God of his government and laws, that he might reign over them as a monarch over conscious and loyal subjects. "Many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness." The sense of these texts is as follows. "God is now offering unto you, through me, a spiritual dispensation, a new kingdom; but, unless you faithfully heed it and fulfil its conditions, you shall be rejected from it and lose the Divine favor. Although, by your position as the chosen people, and in the line of revelation, you are its natural heirs, yet, unless you rule your spirits and lives by its commands, you shall see the despised Gentiles enjoying all the privileges your faith allows to the revered patriarchs of your nation, while yourselves are shut out

from them and overwhelmed with shame and anguish. Your pride of descent, haughtiness of spirit, and reliance upon dead rites unfit you for the true kingdom of God, the inward reign of humility and righteousness; and the very publicans and harlots, repenting and humbling themselves, shall go into it before you."

To be welcomed under this Messianic dispensation, to become a citizen of this spiritual kingdom of God, the Savior declares that there are certain indispensable conditions. A man must repent and forsake his sins. This was the burden of John's preaching,—that the candidate for the kingdom of heaven must first be baptized with water unto repentance, as a sign that he abjures and is cleansed from all his old errors and iniquities. Then he must be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire,—that is, must learn the positive principles of the coming kingdom, and apply them to his own character, to purge away every corrupt thing. He must be born again, born of water and of the Spirit: in other words, he must be brought out from his impurity and wickedness into a new and Divine life of holiness, awakened to a conscious experience of purity, truth, and love,—the great prime elements in the reign of God. He must be guileless and lowly. "Whosoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

The kingdom of heaven, the better dispensation which Christ came to establish, is the humility of contrite hearts, the innocence of little children, the purity of undefiled consciences, the fruit of good works, the truth of universal laws, the love of God, and the conscious experience of an indestructible, blessed being. Those who enter into these qualities in faith, in feeling, and in action are full citizens of that eternal kingdom; all others are aliens from it. . .

Heaven, then, according to Christ's use of the word, is not distinctively a world situated somewhere in immensity, but a purely spiritual experience, having nothing to do with any special time or place. It is a state of the soul, or a state of society, under the rule of truth, governed by God's will, either in this life or in a future. He said to the young ruler who had walked faithfully in the law, and whose good traits drew forth his love, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." It is evident that this does not mean a bounded place of abode, but a true state of character, a virtuous mode of life "My kingdom is not of this world." "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." That is, "My kingdom is the realm of truth, the dominion of God's will, and all true men are my subjects." Evidently this is not a material but a moral reign and therefore unlimited by seasons or places. Wherever purity, truth, love, obedience, prevail, there is God, and that is heaven. It is not necessary to depart into some distant sphere to meet the Infinite Holy One and dwell with him. He is on the very dust we tread, he is the very centre of our souls and breath of our lives, if we are only in a state that is fitted to recognise and enjoy him. "He that hath sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone, for I always do those things

which please him." It is a fair inference from such statements as this that to do with conscious adoration and love those things that please God is to be with him, without regard to time or place; and that is heaven. "I speak that which I have seen with my Father," *God*, "and ye do that which ye have seen with your father, *the devil*." No one will suppose that Jesus meant to tell the wicked men whom he was addressing that they committed their iniquities in consequence of lessons learned in a previous state of existence with an arch-fiend, the parent of all evil. His meaning, then, was, I bring forth in words and deeds the things which I have learned in my secret soul from inspired communion with infinite goodness and perfection; you bring forth the things which you have learned from communion with the source of sin and woe,—that is, foul propensities, cruel passions, and evil thoughts.

"I come forth from the Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go unto the Father." "I go unto Him that sent me." Since it is declared that God is an Omnipresent Spirit, and that those who obey and love him see him and are with him everywhere, these striking words must bear one of the two following interpretations. First, they may imply in general that man is created and sent into this state of being by the Father, and that after the termination of the present life the soul is admitted to a closer union with the Parent Spirit. This gives a natural meaning to the language which represents dying as going to the Father. Not that it is necessary to travel to reach God, but that the spiritual verity is most adequately expressed under such a metaphor. But, secondly, and more probably, the phraseology under consideration may be meant as an assertion of the Divine origin and authority of the special mission of Christ. "Neither came I of myself, but He sent me;" "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself;" "As the Father hath taught me, I speak these things." These passages do not necessarily teach the pre-existence of Christ and his descent from heaven in the flesh. That is a carnal interpretation which does great violence to the genuine nature of the claims put forth by our Savior. They may merely declare the supernatural commission of the Son of God, his direct inspiration and authority. He did not voluntarily assume his great work, but was Divinely ordered on that service. Compare the following text:—"The baptism of John, whence was it, from Heaven, or of men?" That is to say, was it of human or of Divine origin and authority? So when it is said that the Son of Man descended from heaven, or was sent by the Father, the meaning in Christ's mind probably was that he was raised up, did his works, spoke his words, by the inspiration and with the sanction of God. The accuracy of this interpretation is seen by the following citation from the Savior's own words, when he is speaking—in his prayer at the last supper—of sending his disciples out to preach the gospel:—"As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." The reference,

evidently, is to a Divine choice and sealing,—not to a descent upon the earth from another sphere.

That the author of the Fourth Gospel believed that Christ descended from heaven literally we have not the shadow of a doubt. He repeatedly speaks of him as the great super-angelic Logos, the first-born Son and perfect image of God, the instrumental cause of the creation. His mind was filled with the same views, the same lofty Logos-theory that is so abundantly set forth in the writings of Philo Judæus. He reports and describes the Savior in conformity with such a theological postulate. Possessed with the foregone conclusion that Jesus was the Divine Logos, descended from the celestial abode, and born into the world as a man, in endeavoring to write out from memory, years after they were uttered, the Savior's words, it is probable that he unconsciously misapprehended and tinged them according to his theory. The Delphic apothegm, "Know thyself," was said to have descended from heaven:—

"E cœlo descendit γνῶθι σεαυτόν."

By a familiar Jewish idiom, "to ascend into heaven" meant to learn the will of God.[8] And whatever bore the direct sanction of God was said to descend from heaven. When in these figurative terms Jesus asserted his Divine commission, it seems that some understood him literally, and concluded—perhaps in consequence of his miracles, joined with their own speculations—that he was the Logos incarnated. That such a conclusion was an unwarranted inference from metaphorical language and from a foregone pagan dogma appears from his own explanatory and justifying words spoken to the Jews. For when they accused him of making himself God, he replies, "If in your law they are called gods to whom the word of God came, charge ye him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world with blasphemy, because he says he is the Son of God?" Christ's language in the Fourth Gospel may be fairly explained without implying his actual pre-existence or superhuman nature. But it does not seem to us that John's possibly can be. His miracles, according to the common idea of them, did not prove him to be the coequal facsimile, but merely proved him to be the delegated envoy, of God.

We may sum up the consideration of this point in a few words. Christ did not essentially mean by the term "heaven" the world of light and glory located by the Hebrews, and by some other nations, just above the visible firmament. His meaning, when he spoke of the kingdom of God or heaven, was always, in some form, either the reign of justice, purity, and love, or the invisible world of spirits. If that world, heaven, be in fact, and were in his conception, a sphere located in space, he never alluded to its position, but left it perfectly in the dark, keeping his instructions scrupulously free from any such commitment. He said, "I go to Him that sent me;" "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that

[8] Schoettgen, in John iii. 13.

where I am there ye may be also." The references to locality are vague and mysterious. The nature of his words, and their scantiness, are as if he had said, We shall live hereafter; we shall be with the Father; we shall be together. All the rest is mystery, even to me: it is not important to be known, and the Father hath concealed it. Such, almost, are his very words. "A little while, and ye shall not see me; again, a little while, and ye shall see me, *because I go to the Father.*" "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." Whether heaven be technically a material abode or a spiritual state it is of little importance to us to know; and the teachings of Jesus seem to have nothing to do with it. The important things for us to know are that there is a heaven, and how we may prepare for it; and on these points the revelation is explicit. To suppose the Savior ignorant of some things is not inconsistent with his endowments; for he himself avowed his ignorance, saying, "Of that day knoweth no man; no, not even the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father." And it adds an awful solemnity, an indescribably exciting interest, to his departure from the world, to conceive him hovering on the verge of the same mystery which has enveloped every passing mortal,—hovering there with chastened wonder and curiosity, inspired with an absolute trust that in that fathomless obscurity the Father would be with him, and would unveil new realms of life, and would enable him to come back and assure his disciples. He certainly did not reveal the details of the future state: whether he was acquainted with them himself or not we cannot tell.

We next advance to the most important portion of the words of Christ regarding the life and destiny of the soul,—those parts of his doctrine which are most of a personal, experimental character, sounding the fountains of consciousness, piercing to the dividing asunder of our being. It is often said that Jesus everywhere takes for granted the fact of immortality,—that it underlies and permeates all he does and says. We should know at once that such a being must be immortal; such a life could never be lived by an ephemeral creature; of all possible proofs of immortality he is himself the sublimest. This is true, but not the whole truth. The resistless assurance, the Divine inspiration, the sublime repose, with which he enunciates the various thoughts connected with the theme of endless existence, are indeed marvellous. But he not only authoritatively assumes the truth of a future life: he speaks directly of it in many ways, often returns to it, continually hovers about it, reasons for it, exhorts upon it, makes most of his instructions hinge upon it, shows that it is a favorite subject of his communion. We may put the justice of these statements in a clear light by bringing together and explaining some of his scattered utterances.

His express language teaches that man in this world is a twofold being, leading a twofold life, physical and spiritual,—the one temporal, the other eternal,—the one apt unduly to absorb his affections, the other really deserving his profoundest care. This separation of the body and

the soul, and survival of the latter, is brought to light in various striking forms and with various piercing applications. In view of the dangers that beset his disciples on their mission, he exhorted and warned them thus:—"Fear not them which have power to kill the body and afterwards have no more that they can do; but rather fear Him who can kill both soul and body;" "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it;" that is, whosoever, for the sake of saving the life of his body, shrinks from the duties of this dangerous time, shall lose the highest welfare of the soul; but whosoever loveth his lower life in the body less than he loves the virtues of a consecrated spirit shall win the true blessedness of his soul. Both of these passages show that the soul has a life and interest separate from the material tabernacle. With what pathos and convincing power was the same faith expressed in his ejaculation from the cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!"—an expression of trust which, under such circumstances of desertion, horror, and agony, could only have been prompted by that inspiration of God which he always claimed to have.

Christ once reasoned with the Sadducees "as touching the dead, that they rise;" in other words, that the souls of men upon the decease of the body pass into another and an unending state of existence:—"Neither can they die any more; for they are equal with the angels, and are children of God, being children of the resurrection." His argument was, that "God is the God of the living, not of the dead;" that is, the spiritual nature of man involves such a relationship with God as pledges his attributes to its perpetuity. The thought which supports this reasoning penetrates far into the soul and grasps the moral relations between man and God. It is most interesting viewed as the unqualified affirmation by Jesus of the doctrine of a future life which shall be deathless.

But the Savior usually stood in a more imposing attitude and spoke in a more commanding tone than are indicated in the foregoing sentences. The prevailing stand-point from which he spoke was that of an oracle giving responses from the inner shrine of the Divinity. The words and sentiments he uttered were not his, but the Father's; and he uttered them in the clear tones of knowledge and authority, not in the whispering accents of speculation or surmise. How these entrancing tidings came to him he knew not: they were no creations of his; they rose spontaneously within him, bearing the miraculous sign and seal of God, —a recommendation he could no more question or resist than he could deny his own existence. He was set apart as a messenger to men. The tide of inspiration welled up till it filled every nerve and crevice of his being with conscious life and with an overmastering recognition of its living relations with the Omnipresent and Everlasting Life. Straightway he knew that the Father was in him and he in the Father, and that he was commissioned to reveal the mind of the Father to the world. He knew, by the direct knowledge of inspiration and consciousness, that he

should live forever. Before his keen, full, spiritual vitality the thought of death fled away, the thought of annihilation could not come. So far removed was his soul from the perception of interior sleep and decay, so broad and powerful was his consciousness of indestructible life, that he saw quite through the crumbling husks of time and sense to the crystal sea of spirit and thought. So absorbing was his sense of eternal life in himself that he even constructed an argument from his personal feeling to prove the immortality of others, saying to his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Ye believe what God declares, for he cannot be mistaken; believe what I declare—for his inspiration makes me infallible—when I say there are many spheres of life for us when this is ended.

It was from the fulness of this experience that Jesus addressed his hearers. He spoke not so much as one who had faith that immortal life would hereafter be revealed and certified, but rather as one already in the insight and possession of it,—as one whose foot already trod the eternal floor and whose vision pierced the immense horizon. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Being himself brought to this immovable assurance of immortal life by the special inspiration of God, it was his aim to bring others to the same blessed knowledge. His efforts to effect this form a most constant feature in his teachings. His own definition of his mission was, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." We see by the persistent drift of his words that he strove to lead others to the same spiritual point he stood at, that they might see the same prospect he saw, feel the same certitude he felt, enjoy the same communion with God and sense of immortality he enjoyed. "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will;" "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself;" "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee; as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him: and this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." In other words, the mission of Christ was to awaken in men the experience of immortal life; and that would be produced by imparting to them—reproducing in them—the experience of his own soul. Let us notice what steps he took to secure this end.

He begins by demanding the unreserved credence of men to what he says, claiming to say it with express authority from God, and giving miraculous credentials. "Whatsoever I speak, therefore, as the Father said to me, so I speak." This claim to inspired knowledge he advances so emphatically that it cannot be overlooked. He then announces, as an unquestionable truth, the supreme claim of man's spiritual interests upon his attention and labor, alike from their inherent superiority and their

enduring subsistence. "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall be those things thou hast gathered?" "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." The inspiration which dictated these instructions evidently based them upon the profoundest spiritual philosophy,—upon the truth that man lives at once in a sphere of material objects which is comparatively unimportant because he will soon leave it, and in a sphere of moral realities which is all-important because he will live in it forever. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The body, existing in the sphere of material relations, is supported by material bread; but the soul, existing in the sphere of spiritual relations, is supported by truth,—the nourishing breath of God's love. We are in the eternal world, then, at present. Its laws and influences penetrate and rule us; its ethereal tides lave and bear us on; our experience and destiny in it are decided every moment by our characters. If we are pure in heart, have vital faith and force, we shall see God and have new revelations made to us. Such are among the fundamental principles of Christianity.

There is another class of texts,—based upon a highly-figurative style of speech, striking Oriental idioms,—the explanation of which will cast further light upon the branch of the subject immediately before us. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me;" that is, As the blessed Father hath inspired me with the knowledge of him, and I am blessed with the consciousness of his immortal love, so he that believes and assimilates these truths as I proclaim them, he shall experience the same blessedness through my instruction. The words "I am the bread of life" are explained by the words "I am the truth." The declaration "Whoso eateth my flesh hath eternal life" is illustrated by the declaration "Whosoever heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life." There is no difficulty in understanding what Jesus meant when he said, "I have meat to eat ye know not of: my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." Why should we not with the same ease, upon the same principles, interpret his kindred expression, "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die"? The idea to be conveyed by all this phraseology is, that whosoever understands, accepts, assimilates, and brings out in earnest experience, the truths Christ taught, would realize the life of Christ, feel the same assurance of Divine favor and eternal blessedness. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him;" that is, we have the same character, are fed by the same nutriment, rest in the same experience. Fortunately, we are not left to guess at the accuracy of this exegesis: it is demonstrated from the lips of the Master himself. When he knew that the disciples murmured at what he had said

about eating his flesh, and called it a hard saying, he said to them, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: *the words that I speak* unto you, they are spirit and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not." Any man who heartily believed what Christ said that he was Divinely authorized to declare, and did declare,—the pervading goodness of the Father and the immortal blessedness of the souls of his children,—by the very terms was delivered from the bondage of fear and commenced the consciousness of eternal life. Of course, we are not to suppose that faith in Christ obtains immortality itself for the believer: it only rectifies and lights up the conditions of it, and awakens the consciousness of it. "I am the resurrection and the life: whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." We suppose this means, he *shall know* that he is never to perish: it cannot refer to physical dissolution, for the believer dies equally with the unbeliever; it cannot refer to immortal existence in itself, for the unbeliever is as immortal as the believer: it must refer to the blessed nature of that immortality and to the personal assurance of it, because these Christ does impart to the disciple, while the unregenerate unbeliever in his doctrine, of course, has them not. Coming from God to reveal his infinite love, exemplifying the Divine elements of an immortal nature in his whole career, coming back from the grave to show its sceptre broken and to point the way to heaven, well may Christ proclaim, "Whosoever believes in me" *knows* he "shall never perish."

Among the Savior's parables is an impressive one, which we cannot help thinking—perhaps fancifully—was intended to illustrate the dealings of Providence in ordering the earthly destiny of humanity. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground and the seed should grow up; but when the fruit is ripe he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Men are seed sown in this world to ripen and be harvested in another. The figure, taken on the scale of the human race and the whole earth, is sublime. Whether such an image were originally suggested by the parable or not, the conception is consistent with Christian doctrine. The pious Sterling prays,—

> "Give thou the life which we require,
> That, rooted fast in thee,
> From thee to thee we may aspire,
> And earth thy garden be."

The symbol—shockingly perverted from its original beautiful meaning by the mistaken belief that we sleep in our graves until a distant resurrection-day—is often applied to burial-grounds. Let its appropriate significance be restored. Life is the field, death the reaper, another sphere of being the immediate garner. An enlightened Christian, instead of entitling a graveyard the garden of the dead, and looking for its long-buried forms to spring from its cold embrace, will hear the angel saying again, "They are not here: they are risen." The line which written on

Klopstock's *tomb* is a melancholy error, engraved on his *cradle* would have been an inspiring truth:—

"Seed sown by God to ripen for the harvest."

Several fragmentary speeches, which we have not yet noticed, of the most tremendous and even exhaustive import, are reported as having fallen from the lips of Christ at different times. These sentences, rapid and incomplete as they are in the form in which they have reached us, do yet give us glimpses of the most momentous character into the profoundest thoughts of his mind. They are sufficient to enable us to generalize their fundamental principles, and construct the outlines, if we may so speak, of his theology,—his inspired conception of God, the universe, and man, and the resulting duties and destiny of man. We will briefly bring together and interpret these passages, and deduce the system which they seem to presuppose and rest upon.

Jesus told the woman of Samaria that God was to be worshipped acceptably neither in that mountain nor at Jerusalem exclusively, but anywhere, if it were worthily done. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." This passage, with others, teaches the spirituality and omnipresence of God. Christ conceived of God as an infinite Spirit. Again, comforting his friends in view of his approaching departure, he said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." Here he plainly figures the universe as a house containing many apartments, all pervaded and ruled by the Father's presence. He was about taking leave of this earth to proceed to another part of the creation, and he promised to come back to his followers and assure them there was another abode prepared for them. Christ conceived of the universe, with its innumerable divisions, as the house of God. Furthermore, he regarded truth—or the essential laws and right tendencies of things—and the will of God as identical. He said he came into the world to do the will of Him that sent him; that is, as he at another time expressed it, he came into the world to bear witness unto the truth. Thus he prayed, "Father, sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth." Christ conceived of pure truth as the will of God. Finally, he taught that all who obey the truth, or do the will of God, thereby constitute one family of brethren, one family of the accepted children of God, in all worlds forever. "He that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God;" "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother;" "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house forever; but the son abideth forever. If the Son, therefore, make you free, ye shall be free indeed." That is to say, truth gives a good man the freedom of the universe, makes him know himself an heir, immortally and everywhere at home; sin

gives the wicked man over to bondage, makes him feel afraid of being an outcast, loads him with hardships as a servant. Whoever will believe the revelations of Christ, and assimilate his experience, shall lose the wretched burdens of unbelief and fear and be no longer a servant, but be made free indeed, being adopted as a son.

The whole conception, then, is this: The universe is one vast house, comprising many subordinate mansions. All the moral beings that dwell in it compose one immortal family. God is the universal Father. His will—the truth—is the law of the household. Whoever obeys it is a worthy son and has the Father's approbation; whoever disobeys it is alienated and degraded into the condition of a servant. We may roam from room to room, but can never get lost outside the walls beyond the reach of the Paternal arms. Death is variety of scenery and progress of life:—

> "We bow our heads
> At going out, we think, and enter straight
> Another golden chamber of the King's,
> Larger than this we leave, and lovelier."

Who can comprehend the idea, in its overwhelming magnificence and in its touching beauty,—its sweeping amplitude embracing all mysteries, its delicate fitness meeting all wants,—without being impressed and stirred by it, even to the regeneration of his soul? If there is any thing calculated to make man feel and live like a child of God, it would surely seem to be this conception. Its unrivalled simplicity and verisimilitude compel the assent of the mind to its reality. It is the most adequate and sublime view of things that ever entered the reason of man. It is worthy the inspiration of God, worthy the preaching of the Son of God. All the artificial and arbitrary schemes of fanciful theologians are as ridiculous and impertinent before it as the offensive flaring of torches in the face of one who sees the steady and solemn splendors of the sun. To live in the harmony of the truth of things, in the conscious love of God and enjoyment of immortality, blessed children, everywhere at home in the hospitable mansions of the everlasting Father,—this is the experience to which Christ calls his followers; and any eschatology inconsistent with such a conception is not his.

There are two general methods of interpretation respectively applied to the words of Christ,—the literal, or mechanical, and the spiritual, or vital. The former leads to a belief in his second visible advent with an army of angels from heaven, a bodily resurrection of the dead, a universal judgment, the burning up of the world, eternal tortures of the wicked in an abyss of infernal fire, a heaven located on the arch of the Hebrew firmament. The latter gives us a group of the profoundest moral truths clustered about the illuminating and emphasizing mission of Christ, sealed with Divine sanctions,—truths of universal obligation and of all-redeeming power. The former method is still adopted by the great body of Christendom, who are landed by it in a system of doctrines wellnigh

identical with those of the Pharisees, against which Christ so emphatically warned his followers,—a system of traditional dogmas not having the slightest support in philosophy, nor the least contact with the realities of experience, nor the faintest color of inherent or historical probability. In this age they are absolutely incredible to unhampered and studious minds. On the other hand, the latter method is pursued by the growing body of rational Christians, and it guides them to a consistent array of indestructible moral truths, simple, fundamental, and exhaustive,—an array of spiritual principles commanding universal and implicit homage, robed in their own brightness, accredited by their own fitness, armed with the loveliness and terror of their own rewarding and avenging divinity, flashing in mutual lights and sounding in consonant echoes alike from the law of nature and from the soul of man, as the Son of God, with miraculous voice, speaks between.

CHAPTER VII.

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

Of all the single events that ever were supposed to have occurred in the world, perhaps the most august in its moral associations and the most stupendous in its lineal effects, both on the outward fortunes and on the inward experience of mankind, is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. If, therefore, there is one theme in all the range of thought worthy of candid consideration, it is this. There are two ways of examining it. We may, as unquestioning Christians, inquire how the New Testament writers represent it,—what premises they assume, what statements they make, and what inferences they draw. Thus, without perversion, without mixture of our own notions, we should construct the Scripture doctrine of the resurrection of the Savior. Again as critical scholars and philosophical thinkers, we may study that doctrine in all its parts, scrutinize it in all its bearings, trace, as far as possible, the steps and processes of its formation, discriminate as well as we can, by all fair tests, whether it be entirely correct, or wholly erroneous, or partly true and partly false. Both of these methods of investigation are necessary to a full understanding of the subject. Both are obligatory upon the earnest inquirer. Whoso would bravely face his beliefs and intelligently comprehend them, with their grounds and their issues, with a devout desire for the pure truth, whatsoever it may be, putting his trust in the God who made him, will never shrink from either of these courses of examination. Whoso does shrink from these inquiries is either a moral coward, afraid of the results of an honest search after that truth of things which expresses the will of the Creator, or a spiritual sluggard, frightened by a

call to mental effort and torpidly clinging to ease of mind. And whoso, accepting the personal challenge of criticism, carries on the investigation with prejudice and passion, holding errors because he thinks them safe and useful, and rejecting realities because he fancies them dangerous and evil, is an intellectual traitor, disloyal to the sacred laws by which God hedges the holy fields and rules the responsible subjects of the realm of truth. We shall combine the two modes of inquiry, first singly asking what the Scriptures declare, then critically seeking what the facts will warrant,—it being unimportant to us whether these lines exactly coincide or diverge somewhat, the truth itself being all. We now pass to an examination of Christ's resurrection from five points of view: first, as a fact; second, as a fulfilment of prophecy; third, as a pledge; fourth, as a symbol; and fifth, as a theory.

The writers of the New Testament speak of the resurrection of Christ, in the first place, as a fact. "Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree, him hath God raised up." It could not have been viewed by them in the light of a theory or a legend, nor, indeed, as any thing else than a marvellous but literal fact. This appears from their minute accounts of the scenes at the sepulchre and of the disappearance of his body. Their declarations of this are most unequivocal, emphatic, iterated. "The Lord is risen indeed." All that was most important in their faith they based upon it, all that was most precious to them in this life they staked upon it. "Else why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" They held it before their inner vision as a guiding star through the night of their sufferings and dangers, and freely poured out their blood upon the cruel shrines of martyrdom in testimony that it was a fact. That they believed he literally rose from the grave in visible form also appears, and still more forcibly, from their descriptions of his frequent manifestations to them. These show that in their faith he assumed at his resurrection the same body in which he had lived before, which was crucified and buried. All attempts, whether by Swedenborgians or others, to explain this Scripture language as signifying that he rose in an immaterial body, are futile.[1] He appeared to their senses and was recognised by his identical bodily form. He partook of physical food with them. "They gave him a piece of broiled fish and of an honey-comb; and he ate before them." The marks in his hands and side were felt by the incredulous Thomas, and convinced him. He said to them, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." To a candid mind there can hardly be a question that the gospel records describe the resurrection of Christ as a literal fact, that his soul reanimated the deceased body, and that in it he showed himself to his disciples. Yet that there are a few texts implying the immateriality of his resurrection body—that there are two accounts of it in the gospels—we cannot deny.

We advance to see what is the historical evidence for the fact of the

[1] The opposite view is ably argued by Bush in his valuable treatise on the Resurrection.

resurrection of Christ. This argument, of course, turns chiefly on one point,—namely, the competency of the witnesses, and the validity of their testimony.[2] We will present the usually-exhibited scheme of proof as strongly as we can.[3] In the first place, those who testified to the resurrection were numerous enough, so far as mere numbers go, to establish the fact beyond question. Paul declares there were above five hundred who from their personal knowledge could affirm of the Lord's resurrection. But particularly there were the eleven apostles, the two Marys, Cleopas, and the disciples from whom Joseph and Matthias—the candidates for Judas Iscariot's apostleship—were selected, consisting probably of most of the seventy. If the evidence of any number of men ought to convince us of the alleged event, then, under the existing circumstances, that of twelve ought. Important matters of history are often unhesitatingly received on the authority of a single historian. If the occurrences at the time were sufficient to demonstrate to a reasonable mind the reality of the resurrection, then the unanimous testimony of twelve men to those occurrences should convince us. The oaths of a thousand would be no stronger.

These men possessed sufficient abilities to be trusted, good powers of judgment, and varied experience. The selection of them by Him who "knew what was in man," the boldness and efficiency of their lives, the fruits of their labors everywhere, amply prove their general intelligence and energy. And they had, too, the most abundant opportunities of knowledge in regard to the facts to which they bore witness. They were present in the places, at the times, when and where the events occurred. Every motive would conspire to make them scrutinize the subject and the attendant circumstances. And it seems they did examine; for at first some doubted, but afterwards believed. They had been close companions of Jesus for more than a year at the least. They had studied his every feature, look, gesture. They must have been able to recognise him, or to detect an impostor,—if the absurd idea of an attempted imposition can be entertained. They saw him many times, near at hand, in the broad light. Not only did they see him, but they handled his wounded limbs and listened to his wondrous voice. If these means of knowing the truth were not enough to make their evidence valid, then no opportunities could be sufficient.

Whoso allows its full force to the argument thus far will admit that the testimony of the witnesses to the resurrection is conclusive, unless he suspects that by some cause they were either incapacitated to weigh

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[2] Sherlock, Trial of the Witnesses.

[3] Ditton, Démonstration of the Resurrection of Christ. For a sternly faithful estimate of the cogency of this argument, it must be remembered that all the data, every fact and postulate in each step of the reasoning, rest on the historical authority of the four Gospels, documents whose authorship and date are lost in obscurity. Even of "orthodox" theologians few, with any claims to scholarship, now hold that these Gospels, as they stand, were written by the persons whose names they bear. They wander and waver in a thick fog. See Milman's "History of Christianity," vol. i. ch. ii. appendix ii.

evidence fairly, or were led wilfully to stifle the truth and publish a falsehood. Very few persons have ever been inclined to make this charge,—that the apostles were either wild enthusiasts of fancy, or crafty calculators of fraud; and no one has ever been able to support the position even with moderate plausibility. Granting, in the first place, hypothetically, that the disciples were ever so great enthusiasts in their general character and conduct, still, they could not have been at all so in relation to the resurrection, because, before it occurred, they had no belief, expectations, nor thoughts about it. By their own frank confessions, they did not understand Christ's predictions, nor the ancient supposed prophecies of that event. And without a strong faith, a burning hopeful desire, or something of the kind, for it to spring from, and rest on, and be nourished by, evidently no enthusiasm could exist. Accordingly, we find that previous to the third day after Christ's death they said nothing, thought nothing, about a resurrection; but from that time, as by an inspiration from heaven, they were roused to both words and deeds. The sudden astonishing change here alluded to is to be accounted for only by supposing that in the mean time they had been brought to a belief that the resurrection had occurred. But, secondly, it is to be noticed that these witnesses were not enthusiasts on other subjects. No one could be the subject of such an overweening enthusiasm as the hypothesis supposes, without betraying it in his conduct, without being overmastered and led by it as an insane man is by his mania. The very opposite of all this was actually the case with the apostles. The Gospels are unpretending, dispassionate narratives, without rhapsody, adulation, or vanity. Their whole conduct disproves the charge of fanaticism. Their appeals were addressed more to reason than to feeling; their deeds were more courageous than rash. They avoided tumult, insult, and danger whenever they could honorably do so; but, when duty called, their noble intrepidity shrank not. They were firm as the trunks of oaks to meet the agony and horror of a violent death when it came; yet they rather shunned than sought to wear the glorious crown from beneath whose crimson circlet drops of bloody sweat must drip from a martyr's brows. The number of the witnesses for the resurrection, the abilities they possessed, their opportunities for knowing the facts, prove the impossibility of their being duped, unless we suppose them to have been blind fanatics. This we have just shown they were not. Would it not, moreover, be most marvellous if they *were* such heated fanatics, all of them, so many men?

But there is one further foothold for the disbeliever in the historic resurrection of Christ. He may say, "I confess the witnesses were capable of knowing, and undoubtedly did know, the truth; but, for some reason, they suppressed it, and proclaimed a deception." As to this charge, we not only deny the actuality, but even the possibility, of its truth. The narratives of the evangelists contain the strongest evidences of their honesty. The many little unaccountable circumstances they recount,

which are so many difficulties in the way of critical belief, the real and the apparent inconsistencies,—none of these would have been permitted by fraudulent authors. They are the most natural things in the world, supposing their writers unsuspiciously honest. They also frankly confess their own and each others' errors, ignorance, prejudices, and faults. Would they have done this save from simple-hearted truthfulness? Would a designing knave voluntarily reveal to a suspicious scrutiny actions and traits naturally subversive of confidence in him? The conduct of the disciples under the circumstances, through all the scenes of their after-lives, proves their undivided and earnest honesty. The cause they had espoused was, if we deny its truth, to the last degree repulsive in itself and in its concomitants, and they were surrounded with allurements to desert it. Yet how unyielding, wonderful, was their disinterested devotedness to it, without exception! Not one, overcome by terror or bowed by strong anguish, shrank from his self-imposed task and cried out, "I confess!" No; but when they, and their first followers who knew what they knew, were laid upon racks and torn, when they were mangled and devoured alive by wild beasts, when they were manacled fast amidst the flames till their souls rode forth into heaven in chariots of fire,—amidst all this, not one of them ever acknowledged fraud or renounced his belief in the resurrection of Jesus. Were they not honest? Others have died in support of theories and opinions with which their convictions and passions had become interwoven: they died rather than deny facts which were within the cognizance of their senses. Could any man, however firm and dauntless, under the circumstances, go through the trials they bore, without a feeling of truth and of God to support him?

These remarks are particularly forcible in connection with the career of Paul. Endowed with brilliant talents, learned, living at the time and place, he must have been able to form a reliable opinion. And yet, while all the motives that commonly actuate men—loud-mouthed consistency, fame, wealth, pride, pleasure, the rooted force of inveterate prejudices—all were beckoning to him from the temples and palaces of the Pharisaic establishment, he spurned the glowing visions of his ambition and dashed to earth the bright dreams of his youth. He ranged himself among the Christians,—the feeble, despised, persecuted Christians; and, after having suffered every thing humanity could bear, having preached the resurrection everywhere with unflinching power, he was at last crucified, or beheaded, by Nero; and there, expiring among the seven hills of Rome, he gave the resistless testimony of his death to the resurrection of Jesus, gasping, as it were, with his last breath, "It is true." Granting the honesty of these men, we *could* not have any greater proof of it than we have now.

But dishonesty in this matter was not merely untrue; it was also impossible. If fraud is admitted, a conspiracy must have been formed among the witnesses. But that a conspiracy of such a character should

have been entered into by such men is in itself incredible, in the outset. And then, if it had been entered into, it must infallibly have broken through, been found out, or been betrayed, in the course of the disasters, perils, terrible trials, to which it and its fabricators were afterwards exposed. Prove that a body of from twelve to five hundred men could form a plan to palm off a gross falsehood upon the world, and could then adhere to it unfalteringly through the severest disappointments, dangers, sufferings, differences of opinion, dissension of feeling and action, without retiring from the undertaking, letting out the secret, or betraying each other in a single instance in the course of years,—prove this, and you prove that men may do and dare, deny and suffer, not only without motives, but in direct opposition to their duty, interest, desire, prejudice, and passion. The disciples could not have pretended the resurrection from sensitiveness to the probable charge that they had been miserably deceived; for they did not understand their Master to predict any such event, nor had they the slightest expectation of it. They could not have pretended it for the sake of establishing and giving authority to the good precepts and doctrines Jesus taught; because such a course would have been in the plainest antagonism to all those principles themselves, and because, too, they must have known both the utter wickedness and the desperate hazards and forlornness of such an attempt to give a fictitious sanction to moral truths. In such an enterprise there was before them not the faintest probability of even the slightest success. Every selfish motive would tend to deter them; for poverty, hatred, disgrace, stripes, imprisonment, contempt, and death stared in their faces from the first step that way. Dishonesty, deliberate fraud, then, in this matter, was not merely untrue, but was impossible. The conclusion from the whole view is, therefore, the conviction that the evidence of the witnesses for the resurrection of Jesus is worthy of credence.

There are three considerations, further, worthy of notice in estimating the strength of the historic argument for the resurrection. First, the conduct of the Savior himself in relation to the subject. The charge of unbalanced enthusiasm is inconsistent with the whole character and life of Jesus; but suppose on this point he was an enthusiast, and really believed that three days after his death he would rise again. In that case, would not his mind have dwelt upon the wonderful anticipated phenomenon? Would not his whole soul have been wrapped up in it, and his speech have been almost incessantly about it? Yet he spoke of it only three or four times, and then with obscurity. Again: suppose he was an impostor. An impostor would hardly have risked his reputation voluntarily on what he knew could never take place. Had he done so, his only reliance must have been upon the credulous enthusiasm of his followers. He would then have made it the chief topic, would have striven strenuously to make it a living and intense hope, an immovable, all-controlling faith, concentrating on it their desires and expectations, heart and soul. But he really did not do this at all. He did not even

make them understand what his vaticinations of the resurrection meant. And when they saw his untenanted body hanging on the cross, they slunk away in confusion and despair. Admit, again, that Christ was enthusiast, or impostor, or both: these qualities exist not in the grave. Here was their end. They could neither raise him from the dead nor move him from the tomb. No considerations in any way connected with Christ himself, therefore, can account for the occurrences that succeeded his death.

Secondly, if the resurrection did not take place, what became of the Savior's body? We have already given reasons why the disciples could not have falsely pretended the resurrection. It is also impossible that they obtained, or surreptitiously disposed of, the dead and interred body; because it was in a tomb of rock securely sealed against them, and watched by a guard which they could neither bribe nor overpower; because they were too much disheartened and alarmed to try to get it; because they could not possibly want it,—since they expected a temporal Messiah, and had no hope of a resurrection like that which they soon began proclaiming to the world. And as for the story told by the watch, or rather by the chief priests and Pharisees, it has not consistency enough to hold together. Its foolish unlikelihood has always been transparent. It is unreasonable to suppose that fresh guards would slumber at a post where the penalty of slumbering was death. And, if one or two did sleep, it is absurd to think all would do so. Besides, if they slept, how knew they what transpired in the mean time? Could they have dreamed it? Dreams are not taken in legal depositions; and, furthermore, it would be an astounding, gratuitous miracle if they all dreamed the same thing at the same time.

Finally, a powerful collateral argument in proof of the resurrection of Christ is furnished by the conduct of the Jews. It might seem that if the guards told the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, of the miracles which occurred at the sepulchre, they must immediately have believed and proclaimed their belief in the Messiahship and resurrection of the crucified Savior. But they had previously remained invulnerable to as cogent proof as this would afford. They had acknowledged the miracles wrought by him when he was alive, but attributed them—even his works of beneficence—to demoniacal power. They said, "He casteth out devils by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils." So they acted in the present case, and, notwithstanding the peerless miracle related by the sentinels, still persisted in their alienation from the Christian faith. Their intensely-cherished preconceptions respecting the Messiah, their persecution and crucifixion of Jesus, the glaring inconsistency of his teachings and experience with most that they expected,—these things compelled their incredulity to every proof of the Messiahship of the contemned and murdered Nazarene. For, if they admitted the facts on which such proof was based, they would misinterpret them and deny the inferences justly drawn from them. This was plainly the case. It may

be affirmed that the Jews believed the resurrection, because they took no fair measures to disprove it, but threatened those who declared it. Since they had every inducement to demonstrate its falsity, and might, it seems, have done so had it been false, and yet never made the feeblest effort to unmask the alleged fraud, we must suspect that they were themselves secretly convinced of its truth, but dared not let it be known, for fear it would prevail, become mighty in the earth, and push them from their seats. In the rage and blindness of their prejudices, they cried, "His blood be on us and on our children!" And from that generation to our own, their history has afforded a living proof of the historic truth of the gospel, and of the stability of its chief corner-stone,—the resurrection of Christ. The triumphal progress of Christianity from conquering to conquering, together with the baffled plans and complete subjection of the Jews, show that their providential preparatory mission has been fulfilled. If God is in history, guiding the moral drift of human affairs, then the dazzling success of the proclamation of the risen Redeemer is the Divine seal upon the truth of his mission and the reality of his apotheosis. Planting himself on this ground, surrounding himself with these evidences, the reverential Christian will—at least for a long time to come—cling firmly to the accepted fact of the resurrection of Christ, regardless of whatever misgivings and perplexities may trouble the mind of the iconoclastic and critical truth-seeker.

The Christian Scriptures, assuming the resurrection of Christ as a fact, describe it as a fulfilment of prophecy. Luke reports from the risen Savior the words, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." Peter declares that the patriarch David before "spake of the resurrection of Christ." And Paul also affirms, "That the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." One can scarcely hesitate in deciding the meaning of these words as they were used by the apostles. The unanimous opinion and interpretation of the Christians of the first centuries, and of all the Church-Fathers, leave no shadow of a doubt that it was believed that the resurrection of Jesus was repeatedly foretold in the Old Testament, expected by the prophets, and fulfilled in the event as a seal of the inspired prophecy. Furthermore, Jesus himself repeatedly prophesied his own resurrection from the dead,—though his disciples did not understand his meaning until the event put a clear comment on the words. He charged those who saw his transfiguration on the mount, "Tell it to no man until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead." The chief priests told Pilate that they remembered that Jesus said, while he was yet alive, "After three days I will rise again." Standing in the temple at Jerusalem, Jesus said once, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "When, therefore, he

was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them;" and then they understood that "he had spoken of the temple of his body." It is perfectly plain that the New Testament represents the resurrection of Christ as the fulfilment of prophecies, those prophecies having been so expounded by him.

There are few problems presented to the candid Christian scholar of to-day more perplexing than the one involved in the subject of these prophecies. Paul declares to King Agrippa, "I say none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that *he should be the first that should rise from the dead* and should show light unto the Gentiles." It is vain to attempt to disguise the fact that the ingenuous student cannot find these prophecies in the Old Testament as we now have it. He will search it through in vain, unless his eyes create what they see. Let any man endeavor to discover a passage in the Hebrew Scriptures which, taken with its context, can fairly bear such a sense. There is not a shadow of valid evidence of any kind to support the merely traditional notions on this subject. The only way of discerning predictions of a death, descent, and ascent, of the Messiah, in the law and the prophets, is by the application of Cabalistic methods of interpretation, theories of occult types, double senses,—methods which now are not tolerable to intelligent men. That Rabbinical interpretation which made the story of Ishmael and Isaac, the two children borne to Abraham by Hagar and Sarah, an allegory referring to the two covenants of Judaism and Christianity, could easily extract any desired meaning from any given text. Bearing in mind the prevalence of this kind of exegesis among the Jews, and remembering also that they possessed in the times of Jesus a vast body of oral law, to which they attributed as great authority as to the written, there are two possible ways of honestly meeting the difficulty before us. First: in God's counsels it was determined that a Messiah should afterwards arise among the Jews. The revealed hope of this stirred the prophets and the popular heart. It became variously and vaguely hinted in their writings, still more variously and copiously unfolded in their traditions. The conception of him gradually took form; and they began to look for a warrior-prophet, a national deliverer, a theocratic king. Jesus, being the true Messiah, though a very different personage from the one meant by the writers and understood by the people, yet being the Messiah foreordained by God, applied these Messianic passages to himself, and explained them according to his experience and fate. This will satisfactorily clear up the application of some texts. And others may be truly explained as poetical illustrations, rhetorical accommodations,—as when he applies to Judas, at the Last Supper, the words of the Psalm, "He that eateth with me lifteth up his heel against me;" and when he refers to Jonah's tarry in the whale's belly as a symbol of his own destined stay beneath the grave for a similar length of time. Or, secondly, we may conclude that the prophecies under consideration,

referred to in the New Testament, were not derived from any sacred documents now in our possession, but either from perished writings, or from oral sources, which we know were abundant then. Justin Martyr says there was formerly a passage in Jeremiah to this effect:—"The Lord remembered the dead who were sleeping in the earth, and went down to them to preach salvation to them."[4] There were floating in the Jewish mind, at the time of Christ, at least some fragmentary traditions, vague expectations, that the Messiah was to die, descend to Sheol, rescue some of the captives, and triumphantly ascend. It is true, this statement is denied by some; but the weight of critical authorities seems to us to preponderate in its favor, and the intrinsic historical probabilities leave hardly a doubt of it in our own minds.[5] Now, three alternatives are offered us. Either Jesus interpreted Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets, on the Rabbinical ground of a double sense, with mystic applications; or he accepted the prophecies referred to, from oral traditions held by his countrymen; or the apostles misunderstood, and in consequence partially misreported, him. All we can positively say is that these precise predictions are plainly not in the Jewish Scriptures, undoubtedly were in the oral law, and were certainly received by the apostles as authoritative.

Continuing our inquiry into the apostolic view of the resurrection of Christ, we shall perceive that it is most prominently set forth as the certificate of our redemption from the kingdom of death to the same glorious destiny which awaited him upon his ascension into heaven. The apostles regarded his resurrection as a supernatural seal set on his mission, warranting his claims as an inspired deliverer and teacher. Thereby, they thought, God openly sanctioned and confirmed his promises. Thereby, they considered, was shown to men God's blessed grace, freely forgiving their sins, and securing to them, by this pledge, a deliverance from the doom of sin as he had risen from it, and an acceptance to a heavenly immortality as he had ascended to it. The *resurrection* of Christ, then, and not his *death*, was to them the point of vital interest, the hinge on which all hung. Does not the record plainly show this to an impartial reader? Wherever the apostles preach, whenever they write, they appeal not to the *death* of a veiled Deity, but to the *resurrection* of an appointed messenger; not to a vicarious atonement or purchase effected by the mortal sufferings of Jesus, but to the confirmation of the good tidings he brought, afforded by the Father's raising him from the dead. "Whereof he hath given assurance unto all, in that he hath raised him from the dead," Paul proclaimed on Mars Hill. In the discourses of the apostles recorded in the Book of Acts, we find that, when they preached the new religion to new audiences, the great doctrine in all cases set forth as fundamental and absorbing is the resurrection;

[4] Dial. cum Tryph. sect. lxxii.

[5] Discussed, with full list of references, in Strauss's Life of Jesus, part iii. cap. i. sect. 112.

not an atoning death, but a justifying resurrection. "He died for our sins, and rose for our justification." Some of the Athenians thought Paul "a setter-forth of two strange gods, Jesus and Resurrection." And when they desire to characterize Christ, the distinguishing culminating phrase which they invariably select shows on what their minds rested as of chief import: they describe him as the one "whom God hath raised from the dead." "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "That ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of God's power toward us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in heaven." It is plain here that the dying of Christ is regarded merely as preliminary to his rising, and that his resurrection and entrance into heaven are received as an assurance that faithful disciples, too, shall obtain admission into the heavenly kingdom.

The Calvinistic doctrine is that the unutterable vicarious agonies of the *death* of Christ placated the wrath of God, satisfied his justice, and ransomed the souls of the elect from the tortures of hell, and that his resurrection was simply his victorious return from a penal conflict with the powers of Satan. The Unitarian doctrine is that the violent death of Christ was an expression of self-sacrificing love, to exert a moral power on the hearts of men, and that his resurrection was a miraculous proof of the authority and truth of his teachings, a demonstration of human immortality. We maintain that neither of these views fully contains the true representation of the New Testament. The artificial horrors of the former cannot be forced into nor wrung out of the written words; while the natural simplicity and meagerness of the latter cannot be made to fill up the written words with adequate significance. There is a medium doctrine, based on the conceptions prevalent at the time the Christian system was constructed and written; a doctrine which equally avoids the credulous excess of the Calvinistic interpretation and the skeptical poverty of the Unitarian; a doctrine which fully explains all the relevant language of the New Testament without violence; a doctrine which, for our own part, we feel sure accurately represents the ideas meant to be conveyed by the Scripture authors. We will state it, and then quote, for its illustration and for their own explanation, the principal texts relating to the resurrection of Jesus.

On account of sin, which had alienated man from God and unfitted him for heaven, he was condemned after death to descend as a disembodied soul into the dark kingdom of the grave,—the under-world. In that cheerless realm of helpless shades and stillness all departed human spirits were prisoners, and must be, until the advent of the Messiah, when they, or a part of them, should rise. This was the Jewish belief. Now, the apostles were Jews, who had the ideas of their countrymen, to which, upon becoming Christians, they added the new conceptions formed in their minds by the teachings, character, deeds, death, resurrection, of

Christ, mixed with their own meditations and experience. Accepting, with these previous notions, the resurrection of Christ as a fact and a fulfilment of prophecy, they immediately supposed that his triumphant exit from the prison of the dead and return to heaven were the prefiguration of the similar deliverance of others and their entrance into heaven. They considered him as "the first-born from the dead," "the first-fruits of the dead." They emphatically characterize his return to life as a "resurrection out from among the dead," *αναστασις εκ νεκρων*, plainly implying that the rest of the dead still remained below.[6] They received his experience in this respect as the revealing type of that which was awaiting his followers. So far as relates to the separate existence of the soul, the restoration of the widow's son by Elijah, or the resurrection of Lazarus, logically implies all that is implied in the mere resurrection of Christ. But certain notions of localities, of a redemptive ascent, and an opening of heaven for the redeemed spirits of men to ascend thither, were associated exclusively with the last. When, through the will of God, Christ rose, "then first humanity triumphant passed the crystal ports of light, and seized eternal youth!" Their view was not that Christ effected all this by means of his own; but that the free grace of God decreed it, and that Christ came to carry the plan into execution. "God, for his great love to us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ." This was effected as in dramatic show: Christ died,—which was suffering the fate of a sinner; he went in spirit to the subterranean abode of spirits,—which was bearing the penalty of sin; he rose again,—which was showing the penalty of sin removed by Divine forgiveness; he ascended into heaven,—which was revealing the way for our ascent thrown open. Such is the general scope of thought in close and vital connection with which the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ stands. We shall spare enlarging on those parts of it which have been sufficiently proved and illustrated in preceding chapters, and confine our attention as much as may be to those portions which have direct relations with the resurrection of Christ. It is our object, then, to show—what we think will plainly appear in the light of the above general statement—that, to the New Testament writers, the resurrection, and not the death, of Christ is the fact of central moment, is the assuring seal of our forgiveness, reconciliation, and heavenly adoption. They saw two antithetical starting-points in the history of mankind: a career of ruin, beginning with condemned Adam in the garden of Eden at the foot of the forbidden tree, dragging a fleshly race down into Sheol; a career of remedy, beginning with victorious Christ in the garden of Joseph at the mouth of the rent sepulchre, guiding a spiritual race up into heaven.

The Savior himself is reported as saying, "I lay down my life that I may take it again:" the dying was not for the sake of substitutional suffering, but for the sake of a resurrection. "Except a corn of wheat

[6] Wood, The Last Things, pp. 34–44.

die, it abideth alone; but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow; but as soon as she is delivered of the child she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." The context here shows the Savior's meaning to be that the woe of his death would soon be lost in the weal of his resurrection. The death was merely the necessary antecedent to the significant resurrection. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead unto an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed." "Him hath God raised on high by his right hand, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." How clear it is here that not the vicarious death of Christ buys off sinners, but his resurrection shows sins to be freely forgiven, the penalty remitted! "Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, according to my gospel: therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." "Be it known unto you, therefore, men, brethren, that through Him whom God raised again is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." The passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ninth chapter, from the twenty-third verse to the twenty-seventh, most emphatically connects the annulling of sin through the sacrifice of Christ with his ascended appearance in heaven. "Jesus who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification:" that is, Jesus died because he had entered the condition of sinful humanity, the penalty of which was death; he was raised to show that God had forgiven us our sins and would receive us to heaven instead of banishing us to the under-world. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Belief in the resurrection of Christ is here undeniably made the great condition of salvation. No text can be found in which belief in the death, or blood, or atoning merits, of Christ is made that condition. And yet nine-tenths of Christendom by their creeds are to-day proclaiming, "Believe in the vicarious sufferings of Christ, and thou shalt be saved; believe not in them, and thou shalt be damned!" "God hath both raised up the Lord and will also raise up us." "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins." This text cannot be explained upon the common Calvinistic or Unitarian theories. Whether Christ was risen or not made no difference in their justification before God if his death had atoned for them,—made no difference in their moral condition, which was as it was; but if Christ had not risen, then they were mistaken in supposing that heaven had been opened for them: they were yet held in the necessity of descending to the under-world, the penalty of their sins. The careful reader will observe that, in many places in the Scriptures where a burden and stress of importance seem

laid upon the death of Christ, there immediately follows a reference to his resurrection, showing that the dying is only referred to as the preparatory step to the rising, the resurrection being the essential thing. "The Apostle Paul scarcely speaks of the death of the Savior except in connection with his resurrection," Bleek says, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. "It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again and is now at the right hand of God." "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again." "To this end Christ both died, and rose and lived again." "He died for them and rose again." We confidently avow, therefore, that the Christian Scriptures concentrate the most essential significance and value of the mission of Jesus in his resurrection, describing it as the Divine seal of his claims, the visible proof and pledge of our redemption, by God's freely-forgiving grace, from the fatal bondage of death's sepulchral domain to the blessed splendors of heaven's immortal life.

There remain a class of passages to be particularly noticed, in which an extraordinary emphasis seems to be laid on Christ's sufferings, Christ's blood, Christ's death,—three phrases that mean virtually the same thing and are used interchangeably. The peculiar prominence given to the idea of the sacrifice of Christ in the instances now referred to is such as might lead one to suppose that some mysterious efficacy was meant to be attributed to it. But we think an accurate examination of the subject will show that these texts are really in full harmony with the view we have been maintaining. Admitting that the resurrection of Christ was the sole circumstance of ultimate meaning and importance, still, his violent and painful death would naturally be spoken of as often and strongly as it is, for two reasons. First, the chief ground of wonder and claim for gratitude to him was that he should have left his pre-existent state of undisturbed bliss and glory, and submitted to such humiliation and anguish for others, for sinners. Secondly, it was the prerequisite to his resurrection,—the same, in effect, with it, since the former must lead to the latter; for, as the foremost apostle said, "It was not possible that he should be holden in death."

The apostolical writers do not speak of salvation by the *blood* of Christ any more plainly than they do of salvation by the *name* of Christ, salvation by *grace*, and salvation by *faith*. If at one time they identify him with the sacrificial "lamb," at another time they as distinctively identify him with the "high-priest offering himself," and again with "the great Shepherd of the sheep," and again with "the mediator of the new covenant," and again with "the second Adam." These are all figures of speech, and, taken superficially, they determine nothing as to doctrine. The propriety and the genuine character and force of the metaphor are in each case to be carefully sought with the lights of learning and under the guidance of a docile candor. The thoughts that, in consequence of transmitted sin, all departed souls of men were confined in the underworld, that Christ, to carry out and revealingly exemplify the free grace

of the Father, came into the world, died a cruel death, descended to the prison-world of the dead, declared there the glad tidings, rose thence and ascended into heaven, the forerunner of the ransomed hosts to follow,—these thoughts enable us to explain, in a natural, forcible, and satisfactory manner, the peculiar phraseology of the New Testament in regard to the death of Christ, without having recourse to the arbitrary conceptions and mystical horror usually associated with it now. For instance, consider the passage in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, from the eleventh verse to the nineteenth. The writer here says that "the Gentiles, who formerly were far off, strangers from the covenants of promise, are now made nigh by the blood of Christ." This language he clearly explains as meaning that through the death and resurrection of Christ "the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down" and a universal religion inaugurated, free from all invidious distinctions and carnal ordinances. In his bodily death and spiritual ascension the Jewish ritual law was abolished and the world-wide moral law alone installed. From his spirit, rising into heaven, all national peculiarities fell away, and through him Jews and Gentiles both had access, by communion with his ascended and cosmopolitan soul, unto the Father. A careful study of all the passages in the New Testament which speak of Christ as delivering men from the wrath of God will lead, it seems to us, almost every unprejudiced person to agree with one of the ablest German critics, who says that "the technical phrase 'wrath of God' here means, historically, banishment of souls into the under-world, and that the fact of Christ's triumph and ascent was a precious pledge showing to the Christians that they too should ascend to eternal life in heaven."[7] The doctrine of the descent of Christ among the dead and of his redemptive mission there has of late wellnigh faded from notice; but if any one wishes to see the evidence of its universal reception and unparalleled importance in the Christian Church for fifteen hundred years, presented in overwhelming quantity and irresistible array, let him read the learned work devoted to this subject recently published in Germany.[8] He can hardly peruse this work and follow up its references without seeing that, almost without an exception, from the days of Peter and Paul to those of Martin Luther, it has been held that "the death and resurrection of Christ are the two poles between which," as Güder says, "his descent into the under-world lies." The phrase "blood of Christ" is often used in Scripture in a pregnant sense, including the force of meaning that would be expressed by his death, descent, resurrection, and ascension, with all their concomitants. As a specimen of innumerable passages of like import which might be cited, we will quote a single expression from Epiphanius, showing that the orthodox teachers in the fourth century attributed redeem-

[7] Bretschneider, Religiöse Glaubenslehre, sect. 59: Christus der Erlöser vom Tode.

[8] Güder, Die Lehre von der Erscheinung Jesu Christi unter den Todten: In ihrem Zusammenhange mit der Lehre von den Letzten Dingen.

ing efficacy to Christ's resurrection rather than to his death. "As the pelican restores its dead offspring by dropping its own blood upon their wounds, so our Lord Jesus Christ dropped his blood upon Adam, Eve, and all the dead, and gave them life *by his burial and resurrection.*"[9]

It was a part of the Mosaic ritual, laid down in the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus, that on the great annual day of expiation there should be two goats chosen by lot,—one for the Lord and one for Azazel. The former the high-priest was to slay, and with his blood sprinkle the mercy-seat. The latter, when the high-priest's hands had been laid on his head and all the iniquities of the children of Israel confessed over him, was to be sent into the wilderness and loosed. The former goat is called "a sin-offering for the people." The latter is called "a scape-goat to make an atonement with the Lord." The blood of the sin-offering could not have been supposed to be a substitute purchasing the pardon of men's offences, because there is no hint of any such idea in the record, and because it was offered to reconcile "houses," "tabernacles," "altars," as well as to reconcile men. It had simply a ceremonial significance. Such rites were common in many of the early religions. They were not the efficient cause of pardon, but were the formal condition of reconciliation. And then, in regard to the scape-goat, it was not sacrificed as an expiation for sinners; it merely symbolically carried off the sins already freely forgiven. All these forms and phrases were inwrought with the whole national life and religious language of the Jews. Now, when Jesus appeared, a messenger from God, to redeem men from their sins and to promise them pardon and heaven, and when he died a martyr's death in the fulfilment of his mission, how perfectly natural that this sacrificial imagery—these figures of blood, propitiation, sprinkling the mercy-seat—should be applied to him, and to his work and fate! The burden of sins *forgiven by God's grace* in the old covenant the scape-goat emblematically bore away, and the people went free. So—if the words must be supposed to have an objective and not merely a moral sense—when the Baptist cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, that beareth off the sin of the world," his meaning was that Jesus was to bear off the penalty of sin—that is, the Hadean doom which God's free grace had annulled—and open heaven to the ranks of reconciled souls. There is not the least shadow of proof that the sacrifices in the Mosaic ritual were Divinely ordained as types prefiguring the great sacrifice of Christ. There is no such pretence in the record, no such tradition among the people, not the slightest foundation whatever of any sort to warrant that arbitrary presumption. All such applications of them are rhetorical; and their historical force and moral meaning are clearly explicable on the views which we have presented in the foregoing pages, but are most violently strained and twisted by the Calvinistic theory to meet the severe exigencies of a theoretical dogma.

If any one, granting that the central efficacy of the mission of Christ,

[9] Physiol., cap. 8: De Pelecano.

dogmatically and objectively considered, lay in his descent into Hades and in his resurrection, maintains that still certain passages in the New Testament do ascribe an expiatory effect directly to his death as such, we reply that this interpretation is quite likely to be correct. And we can easily trace the conception to its origin beyond the pale of revelation. It was an idea prevalent among the Jews in the time of the apostles, and before, that death was an atonement for all sins, and that the death of the righteous atoned for the sins of others.[10] Now, the apostles might adopt this view and apply it pre-eminently to the case of Christ. This is the very explanation given by Origen.[11] De Wette quotes the following sentence, and many others of the same purport, from the Talmud:—"The death of the just is the redemption of sinners."[12] The blood of any righteous man was a little atonement; that of Christ was a vast one. The former all Protestants call a heathen error. So they should the latter, because it sprung from the same source and is the same in principle. If, then, there are any scriptural texts which imply that the mere death of Christ had a vicarious, expiatory efficacy, they are, so far forth, the reflection of heathen and Jewish errors yet lingering in the minds of the writers, and not the inspired revelation of an isolated, arbitrary after-expedient contrived in the secret counsels of God and wonderfully interpolated into the providential history of the world. But, if there are any such passages, they are few and unimportant. The great mass of the scriptural language on this subject is fairly and fully explained by the historical theory whose outlines we have sketched. The root of the matter is the resurrection of Christ out from among the dead and his ascent into heaven.

It has not been our purpose in this chapter, or in the preceding chapters, to present the history of the Christian doctrine of the atonement, either in its intrinsic significance or in its relations to subjective religious experience. We have only sought to explain it, according to the original understanding of it, in its objective relations to the fate of men in the future life. The importance of the subject, its difficulty, and the profound prejudices connected with it, are so great as not only to excuse, but even to require, much explanatory repetition to make the truth clear and to recommend it, in many lights, with various methods, and by accumulated authorities. Those who wish to see the whole subject of the atonement treated with consummate fulness and ability, leaving nothing to be desired from the historical point of view, have only to read the masterly work of Baur.[13]

In leaving this part of our subject here, we would submit the following

[10] Gfrörer, Geschichte des Urchristenthums, abth. ii. pp. 187–190.

[11] Mosheim, Commentaries on Christianity in the First Three Centuries, Eng. trans., vol. ii. pp. 162–163.

[12] Comm. de Morte Christi Expiatoria, cap. iii.: Quæ Judæorum Recentiorum Christologia de Passione ac Morte Messiæ docet.

[13] Die Christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung in ihrer Geschichtlichen Entwicklung von der Ältesten Zeit bis auf die Neueste.

considerations to the candid judgment of the reader. Admitting the truth of the common doctrine of the atonement, why did Christ *die?* It does not appear how there could be any particular efficacy in mere *death.* The expiation of sin which he had undertaken required only a certain amount of suffering. It did not—as far as we can see on the theory of satisfaction by an equivalent substituted suffering—require death. It seems as if local and physical ideas must have been associated with the thought of his death. And we find the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews thus replying to the question, Why did Christ die? "That through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Now, plainly, this end was accomplished by his resurrection bursting asunder the bonds of Hades and showing that it was no longer the hopeless prison of the dead. The justice of this explanation appears from the logical necessity of the series of ideas, the internal coherence and harmony of thought. It has been ably shown that substantially this view is the accurate interpretation of the New Testament doctrine by Steinbart,[14] Schott,[15] Bretschneider,[16] Klaiber,[17] and others. The gradual deviations from this early view can be historically traced, step by step, through the refining speculations of theologians. First, in ecclesiastical history, after the New Testament times, it is thought the devil has a right over all souls in consequence of sin. Christ is a ransom offered to the devil to offset his claim. Sometimes this is represented as a fair bargain, sometimes as a deception practised on the devil, sometimes as a battle waged with him. Next, it is conceived that the devil has no right over human souls,—that it is God who has doomed them to the infernal prison and holds them there for their sin. Accordingly, the sacrifice of Christ for their ransom is offered not to the tyrannical devil but to the offended God. Finally, in the progress of culture, the satisfaction-theory appears; and now the suffering of Christ is neither to buy souls from the devil nor to appease God and soften his anger into forgiveness; but it is to meet the inexorable exigencies of the abstract law of infinite justice and deliver sinners by bearing for them the penalty of sin. The whole course of thought, once commenced, is natural, inevitable; but the starting-point is from an error, and the pausing-places are at false goals.

The view which we have asserted to be the scriptural view prevailed as the orthodox doctrine of the Church throughout the first three centuries, as Bähr has proved in his valuable treatise on the subject.[18] He shows that during that period Christ's death was regarded as a revelation of

[14] System der Reinen Philosophie, oder Glückseligkeitslehre des Christenthums, u.s.f.

[15] Epitome Theologiæ Christianæ Dogmaticæ.

[16] Die Lehren von Adam's Fall, der Erbsünde, und dem Opfer Christi.

[17] Studien der Evang. Geistlichkeit Würtemburgs, viii. 1, 2. Doederlein, Morus, Knapp, Schwarze, and Reinhard affirm that the death of Christ was not the price of our pardon, but the confirming *declaration* of free pardon from God. Hagenbach, Dogmengeschichte, sect. 297, note 5.

[18] Die Lehre der Kirche vom Tode Jesu in den Ersten Drei Jahrhunderten.

God's love, a victory over the devil, (through his resurrection,) a means of obtaining salvation for men, but not as a punitive sacrifice, not as a vindication of God's justice, not as a vicarious satisfaction of the law.[19] If the leading theologians of Christendom, such as Anselm, Calvin, and Grotius, have so thoroughly repudiated the original Christian and patristic doctrine of the atonement, and built another doctrine upon their own uninspired speculations, why should our modern sects defer so slavishly to them, and, instead of freely investigating the subject for themselves from the first sources of Scripture and spiritual philosophy, timidly cling to the results reached by these biassed, morbid, and over-sharp thinkers? In proportion as scholarly, unfettered minds engage in such a criticism, we believe the exposition given in the foregoing pages will be recognised as scriptural. Without involving this whole theory, how can any one explain the unquestionable fact that during the first four centuries the entire orthodox Church believed that Christ at his resurrection from the under-world *delivered Adam from his imprisonment there?*[20] All acknowledge that the phrase "redemption by the blood of Christ" is a metaphor. The only question is, what meaning was it intended to convey? We maintain its meaning to be that through all the events and forces associated with the death of Christ, including his descent to Hades and his resurrection, men are delivered from the doom of the under-world. The common theology explains it as teaching that there was an expiatory efficacy in the unmerited sufferings of Christ. The system known as Unitarianism says it denotes merely the exertion of a saving spiritual power on the hearts of men. The first interpretation charges the figure of speech with a dramatic revelation of the love of God freely rescuing men from their inherited fate. The second seems to make it a tank of gore, where Divine vengeance legally laps to appease its otherwise insatiable appetite. The third fills it with a regenerative moral influence to be distributed upon the characters of believers. The two former also include the last; but it excludes them. Now, as it seems to us, the first is the form of mistake in which the early Church, including the apostles, embodied the true significance of the mission of Christ. Owing to the circle of ideas in which they lived, this was the only possible form in which the disciples of Jesus could receive the new doctrine of a blessed immortality brought to light by Christianity.[21] The second is the form of false theory in which a few scholastic brains elaborated the cruel results of their diseased metaphysical speculations. The third is the dry, meager, inadequate statement of the most essential truth in the case.

There is one more point of view in which the New Testament holds up

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[19] Die Lehre der Kirche vom Tode Jesu in den Ersten Drei Jahrhunderten, ss. 176–180.

[20] Augustine, Epist. ad Evodium 99. Op. Imp. vi. 22, 30. Epist. 164. Dante makes Adam say he had been 4302 years in Limbo when Christ, at his descent, rescued him. Paradise, canto xxvi.

[21] Bretschneider forcibly illustrates this in his Handbuch der Dogmatik der Evang.-Luther. Kirche, sects. 156–158, band ii.

the resurrection of Christ. It is regarded as a summons to a moral and spiritual resurrection within the breast of the believer. As the great Forerunner had ascended to a spiritual and immortal life in the heavens, so his followers should be inspired with such a realizing sense of heavenly things, with such Divine faith and fellowship, as would lift them above the world, with all its evanescent cares, and fix their hearts with God. This high communion with Christ, and intense assurance of a destined speedy inheritance with him, should render the disciple insensible to the clamorous distractions of earth, invulnerable to the open and secret assaults of sin, as if in the body he were already dead, and only alive in the spirit to the obligations of holiness, the attractions of piety, and the promises of heaven. "When we were dead in trespasses and sins, God loved us, and hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places." "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, set your affection on things above, not on earthly things; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." This moral symbolic application of the resurrection is most beautiful and effective. Christ has risen, immaculate and immortal, into the pure and holy heaven: then live virtuously and piously, that you may be found worthy to be received unto him. "He that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as He is pure." Paul enforces this thought through the striking figure that, since "we are freed from the law through the death of Christ, we should be married to his risen spirit and bring forth fruit unto God." And again, when he speaks in these words, "Christ in you the hope of glory," we suppose he refers to the spiritual image of the risen Redeemer formed in the disciples' imagination and heart, the prefiguring and witnessing pledge of their ascension also to heaven. The same practical use is made of the doctrine through the rite and sign of baptism. "Ye are buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through faith in the working of God, who hath raised him from the dead." "Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ, why are ye subject to worldly ordinances? and if ye be risen with him, seek those things which are above." When the disciple sunk beneath the baptizing waters, he was typically dead and buried, as Jesus was in the tomb; when he rose from the waters into the air again, he figuratively represented Christ rising from the dead into heaven. Henceforth, therefore, he was to consider himself as dead to all worldly sins and lusts, alive to all heavenly virtues and aspirations. "Therefore," the apostle says, "we are buried with Christ by baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, even so we should walk in newness of life." "In that Christ died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This was strictly true to the immediate disciples of Jesus. When he died, their hearts died within them; they shrank away in hope-

less confusion and gloom. When he returned to life and ascended to heaven, in feeling and imagination they went with him. Every moral power and motive started into new life and energy.

> "The day when from the dead
> Our Lord arose, then everywhere,
> Out of their darkness and despair,
> Triumphant over fears and foes,
> The souls of his disciples rose."

An unheard-of assurance of the Father's love and of their eternal inheritance flooded their being with its regenerating, uplifting power. To their absorbing anticipations the mighty consummation of all was at hand. In reflective imagination it was already past, and they, dead to the world, only lived to God. The material world and the lust thereof had sunk beneath them and vanished. They were moving in the universe of imperishable realities unseen by the fleshly eye. To their faith already was unrolled over them that new firmament in whose spanless welkin no cloudy tempests ever gather and break, and the serene lights never fade nor go down. This experience of a spiritual exaltation above the sins and degrading turmoils of passion, above the perishing baubles of the earth, into the religious principles which are independent and assured,—peace, and bliss, and eternity,—is attainable by all who with the earnestness of their souls assimilate the moral truths of Christianity, pressing in pious trust after the steps of the risen Master. And this, after all, is the vital essence of the doctrine of the resurrection as it makes practical appeal to us. This will stand, though gnawing time and hostile criticism should assail and shake all the rest. It is something not to be mechanically wrought upon us from without, but to be done within by our own voluntary effort and prayer, by God's help. To rise from sloth, unbelief, sin, from moral death, to earnestness, faith, beneficence, to eternal life in the breast, is a real and most sublime resurrection, the indispensable preparation for that other and final one which shall raise us from the sepulchre to the sky. When, on Easter morning, Christian disciples throughout the world hear the joyous cry, "Christ is risen," and their own hearts instinctively respond, with an unquenchable persuasion that he is now alive somewhere in the heights of the universe, "Christ is risen indeed," they should endeavor in spirit to rise too,—rise from the deadly bondage and corruption of vice and indifference. While the earth remains, and men survive, and the evils which alienate them from God and his blessedness retain any sway over them, so oft as that hallowed day comes round, this is the kindling message of Divine authority ever fresh, and of transcendent import never old, that it bears through all the borders of Christendom to every responsible soul:—"Awake from your sleep, arise from your death, lift up your eyes to heaven, and the risen Redeemer will give you the light of immortal life!" Have this awakening and deathless experience in the soul, and you will be troubled by no doubts about an everlasting life suo-

ceeding the close of the world. But so long as this spiritual resurrection in the breast is unknown, you can have no knowledge of eternal life, no experimental faith in a future entrance from the grave into heaven, —no, not though millions of resurrections had crowded the interstellar space with ascending shapes. Rise, then, from your moral graves, and already, by faith and imagination, sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.

Before leaving this subject, it belongs to us to look at it as a theory; that is, to consider with critical scrutiny the conclusions which are supposed to flow from its central fact. We must regard it from three distinct points of view,—seeking its meaning in sound logic, its force in past history, its value in present experience. First, then, we are to inquire what really is the logical significance of the resurrection of Christ. The looseness and confusion of thought prevailing in relation to this point are amazing. It seems as if mankind were contented with investigations careless, reasonings incoherent, and inferences arbitrary, in proportion to the momentousness of the matter in hand. In regard to little details of sensible fact and daily business their observation is sharp, their analysis careful, their reflection patient; but when they approach the great problems of morality, God, immortality, they shrink from commensurate efforts to master those mighty questions with stern honesty, and remain satisfied with fanciful methods and vague results. The resurrection of Christ is generally regarded as a direct demonstration of the immortality of man,—an argument of irrefragable validity. But this is an astonishing mistake. The argument was not so constructed by Paul. He did not seek directly to prove the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the dead. He took for granted the Pharisaic doctrine that all souls on leaving their bodies descended to Sheol, where they darkly survived, waiting to be summoned forth at the arrival of the Messianic epoch. Assuming the further premise that Christ after death went down among these imprisoned souls, and then rose thence again, Paul infers, by a logical process strictly valid and irresistible to one holding those premises, that the general doctrine of a resurrection from the dead is true, and that by this visible pledge we may expect it soon, since the Messiah, who is to usher in its execution, has already come and finished the preliminary stages of his work. The apostle's own words plainly show this to be his meaning. "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. But now is Christ risen from the dead, become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. Every man shall be made alive in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming; then the last remnant, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God." The notions of a universal imprisonment of souls in the intermediate state, and of a universal raising of them thence at an appointed time, having faded from a deep and vivid belief into a cold traditional dogma, ridiculed by many, cared for at all

by few, realizingly held by almost none, Paul's argument has been perverted and misinterpreted, until it is now commonly supposed to mean this:—Christ has risen from the dead: therefore the soul of man is immortal. Whereas the argument really existed in his mind in the reverse form, thus:—The souls of men are immortal and are hereafter to be raised up: therefore Christ has risen as an example and illustration thereof. It is singular to notice that he has himself clearly stated the argument in this form three times within the space of four consecutive verses, as follows:—"If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:" "God raised Christ not up, if so be that the dead rise not." "For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised." The fact of the resurrection of Christ, taken in connection with the related notions previously held in the mind of Paul, formed the complement of an irresistible argument to prove the impending resurrection of the dead. But if it be now perceived that those other notions were Pharisaic errors, the argument, as he employed it, falls to the ground.

Taken by itself and analyzed by a severe logic, the resurrection of Christ proves nothing conclusively in regard to our immortality. If it did of itself prove any thing, the direct logical inference from it would be that henceforth all men, three days after death, would rise bodily from the dead, appear for a season on earth as before, and then ascend visibly into the sky. If at the present time a man who had been put to death and entombed three days should openly come forth alive,—considered as an isolated fact, what would it prove? It would merely prove that a wonderful event had occurred. It would show that either by some mysterious means he had escaped death, or else that by some apparently preternatural agency he had been restored to life from the dead. Taken by itself, it could not prove whether the occurrence was caused by a demoniacal or by a Divine power, or by some occult force of nature developed by a peculiar combination of conditions. The strange event would stand clear to our senses; but all beyond that would be but an hypothesis of our own, and liable to mistake. Consequently, we say, the resurrection, taken by itself, proves no doctrine. But we may so suppose the case that such an event would, from its relation to something else, acquire logical meaning. For instance, if Christ had taught that he had supernatural knowledge of truth, a Divine commission to reveal a future life, and said that, after he should have been dead and buried three days, God would restore him to life to authenticate his words, and if, then, so stupendous a miracle occurred in accordance with his prediction, it would prove that his claims and doctrine were true,—because God is no accomplice in deception. Such was the case with Jesus as narrated; and thus his resurrection appears, not as having doctrinal significance and demonstrative validity in itself, but as a miraculous authentication of his mission. That is to say, the Christian's faith in immortality rests not directly on the resurrection of Christ, but on his teachings, which were confirmed and sealed by his resurrection. It is true that, even in this

modified form, some persons of dialectical minds will deny all validity to the argument. What necessary connection is there, they will ask, between the exhibition of mechanico-chemical wonders, physical feats,—however abnormal and inexplicable,—and the possession of infallibility of intellectual insight and moral utterance? If a man should say, God is falsehood and hatred, and in evidence of his declaration should make a whole cemetery disembogue its dead alive, or cause the sun suddenly to sink from its station at noon and return again, would his wonderful performance prove his horrible doctrine? Why, or how, then, would a similar feat prove the opposite doctrine? Plainly, there is not, on rigid logical principles, any connecting tie or evidencing coherence between a physical miracle and a moral doctrine.[22] We admit the correctness of this, on philosophical grounds. But the validity of a miracle as proof of a doctrine rests on the spontaneous assumption that no man can work a miracle unless God specially delegate him the power: thereby God becomes the voucher of his envoy. And when a person claiming to be a messenger from God appears, saying, "The Father hath commanded me to declare that in the many mansions of his house there is a blessed life for men after the close of this life," and when he promises that, in confirmation of his claim, God will restore him to life after he shall have been three days dead, and when he returns accordingly triumphant from the sepulchre, the argument will be unquestioningly received as valid by the instinctive common sense of all who are convinced of the facts.

We next pass from the meaning of the resurrection in logic to its force and working in history. When Jesus hung on the cross, and the scornful shouts of the multitude murmured in his ears, the disciples had fled away, disappointed, terror-stricken, despairing. His star seemed set in a hopeless night of shame and defeat. The new religion appeared a failure. But in three days affairs had taken a new aspect. He that was crucified had risen, and the scattered disciples rallied from every quarter, and, animated by faith and zeal, went forth to convert the world. As an organic centre of thought and belief, as a fervid and enduring incitement to action, in the apostolic times and all through the early centuries, the received fact of the resurrection of Christ wielded an incomparable influence and produced incalculable results. Christianity indeed rose upon it, and, to a great extent, flourished through it. The principal effect which the gospel has had in bringing life and immortality to light throughout a large part of the world is to be referred to the proclaimed resurrection of Christ. For without the latter the former would not have been. Its historical value has therefore been immense. More than nine-tenths of the dormant common faith of Christendom in a future life now outwardly reposes on it from tradition and custom. The great majority of Christians grow up, by education and habit, without any sharp conscientious investigation of their own, to an undisturbed

[22] J. Blanco White, Letter on Miracles, in appendix to Martineau's Rationale of Religious Inquiry.

belief in immortality,—a belief passively resting on the demonstration of the doctrine supposed to have been furnished by the resurrection of Christ in Judea two thousand years ago. The historical power of that fact has therefore been inexpressibly important; and its vast and happy consequences as food and basis of faith still remain. But this historic force is no longer what it once was as a living and present cause. It now operates mostly through traditional reception as an established doctrine to be taken for granted, without fresh individual inquiry. Education and custom use it as an unexamined but trusted foundation to build on by common assumptions. And so the historic impetus is not yet spent. But it certainly has diminished; and it will diminish more. When faced with dauntless eyes and approached by skeptical methods, it of course cannot have the silencing, all-sufficient authority, now that it is buried in the dim remoteness of nineteen centuries and surrounded by obscuring accompaniments, that it had when its light blazed close at hand. The historical force of the alleged resurrection of Christ must evidently, other things being equal, lessen to an unprejudiced inquirer in some proportion to the lengthening distance of the event from him in time, and the growing difficulties of ignorance, perplexity, doubt, manifold uncertainty, deficiency, infidel suggestions, and naturalistic possibilities, intervening between it and him. The shock of faith given by the miracle is dissipated in coming through such an abyss of time. The farther off and the longer ago it was, the more chances for error and the more circumstances of obscurity there are, and so much the worth and force of the historical belief in it will naturally become fainter, till they will finally fade away. An honest student may bow humbly before the august front of Christian history and join with the millions around in acknowledging the fact of the resurrection of Christ. But we maintain that the essential fact in this historic act is not the visible resuscitation of the dead body, but the celestial reception of the deathless spirit. So Paul evidently thought; for he had never seen Christ in the flesh, yet he places himself, as a witness to the resurrection of Christ, in the same rank with those who had seen him on his reappearance in the body:—"Last of all he was seen of me also." Paul had only seen him in vision as a glorified spirit of heaven.

We know that our belief in the fleshly resurrection of Jesus rests on education and habit, on cherished associations of reverence and attachment, rather than on sifted testimony and convincing proof. It is plain, too, that if a person takes the attitude, not of piety and receptive trust, but of skeptical antagonism, it is impossible, as the facts within our reach are to-day, to convince him of the asserted reality in question. An unprejudiced mind competently taught and trained for the inquiry, but whose attitude towards the declared fact is that of distrust,—a mind which will admit nothing but what is conclusively proved,—cannot be driven from its position by all the extant material of evidence. Education, associations, hopes, affections, leaning that way, he may be con-

vinced; but leaning the other way, or poised in indifference on a severe logical ground, he will honestly remain in his unbelief despite of all the arguments that can be presented. In the first place, he will say, "The only history we have of the resurrection is in the New Testament; and the testimony of witnesses in their own cause is always suspicious; and it is wholly impossible now really to *prove* who wrote those documents, or precisely when and how they originated: besides that, the obvious discrepancies in the accounts, and the utterly uncritical credulity and unscientific modes of investigation which satisfied the writers, destroy their value as witnesses in any severe court of reason." And in reply, although we may claim that there is sufficient evidence to satisfy an humble Christian, previously inclined to such a faith, that the New Testament documents were written by the persons whose names they bear, and that their accounts are true, yet we cannot pretend that there is sufficient evidence effectually to convince a critical inquirer that there is no possibility of ungenuineness and unauthenticity. In the second place, such a person will say, "Many fabulous miracles have been eagerly credited by contemporaries of their professed authors, and handed down to the credulity of after-times; many actual events, honestly interpreted as miracles, without fraud in any party concerned, have been so accepted and testified to. Roman Catholic Christendom claims to this day the performance of miracles within the Church; while all Protestant Christendom scouts them as ridiculous tales: and this may be one of them. How can we demonstrate that it does not fall within the same class on the laws of evidence?" And although our own moral beliefs and sympathies may force upon us the most profound conviction to the contrary, it is plainly out of our power to disprove the possibility of this hypothesis being true. In the third place, he will say, "Of all who testify to the resurrection, there is nothing in the record—admitting its entire reliableness as an ingenuous statement of the facts as apprehended by the authors—to show that any one of them knew that Jesus was actually dead, or that any one of them made any real search into that point. He may have revived from a long insensibility, wandered forth in his grave-clothes, mingled afterwards with his disciples, and at last have died from his wounds and exhaustion, in solitude, as he was used to spend seasons in lonely prayer by night. Then, with perfectly good faith, his disciples, involving no collusion or deceit anywhere, may have put a miraculous interpretation upon it all,—such additional particulars as his visible ascension into the sky being a later mythical accretion." This view may well seem offensive, even shocking, to the pious believer; but it is plainly possible. It is intrinsically more easily conceivable than the accredited miracle. It is impossible positively to refute it: the available data do not exist. Upon the whole, then, we conclude that the time is coming when the basis of faith in immortality, in order to stand the tests of independent scrutiny, must be *historically* as well as logically shifted from a blind dependence on the miraculous resurrec-

tion of Christ to a wise reliance on insight into the supernatural capacity and destiny of man, on the deductions of moral reason and the prophecies of religious trust.

Finally, we pause a moment, in closing this discussion, to weigh the practical value of the resurrection of Christ as acknowledged in the experience of the present time. How does that event, admitted as a fact, rest in the average personal experience of Christians now? We shall provoke no intelligent contradiction when we say that it certainly does not often rest on laborious research and rigorous testing of evidence. We surely risk nothing in saying that with the multitude of believers it rests on a docile reception of tradition, an unquestioning conformity to the established doctrine. And that reception and conformity in the present instance depend, we shall find by going a step further back, upon a deep *à priori* faith in God and immortality. When Paul reasons that, if the dead are not to rise, Christ is not risen, but that the dead are to rise, and therefore Christ is risen, his argument reposes on a spontaneous practical method of moral assumption, not on a judicial process of logical proof. So is it with Christians now. The intense moral conviction that God is good, and that there is another life, and that it would be supremely worthy of God to send a messenger to teach that doctrine and to rise from the dead in proof of it,—it is this earnest previous faith that gives plausibility, vitality, and power to the preserved tradition of the actual event. If we trace the case home to the last resort, as it really lies in the experience developed in us by Christianity, we shall find that a deep faith in God is the basis of our belief, first in general immortality, and secondly in the special resurrection of Christ as related thereto. But, by a confusion, or a want, of thought, the former is mistakenly supposed to rest directly and solely on the latter. The doctrinal inferences built up around the resurrection of Christ fall within the province of faith, resting on moral grounds, not within that of knowledge, resting on logical grounds. For example: what direct proof is there that Christ, when he vanished from the disciples, went to the presence of God in heaven, to die no more? It was only seen that he disappeared: all beyond that—except as it rests on belief in the previous words of Christ himself—is an inference of faith, a faith kindled in the soul by God and not created by the miracle of the resurrection.

That imagination, tradition, feeling, and faith, have much more to do with the inferences commonly drawn from the resurrection of Christ than any strict investigation of its logical contents has, appears clearly enough from the universal neglect to draw any inferences from, or to attribute any didactic importance to, the other resurrections recorded in the New Testament. We refer especially to the resurrection narrated in the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew,—"the most stupendous miracle ever wrought upon earth,"—it has been termed; and yet hardly any one ever deigns to notice it. Thus the evangelist writes:—"And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose

and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Nothing is inferred from this alleged event but the power of God. Yet logically what separates it from the resurrection of Christ? In Greece there was the accredited account of the resurrection of Er, in Persia that of Virâf, in Judea that of Lazarus, in other nations those of other persons. None of these ever produced great results. Yet the resurrection of one individual from the dead *logically* contains all that that of any other individual can. Why, then, has that of Christ alone made such a change in the faith of the world? Because, through a combination of causes, it has appealed to the imagination and heart of the world and stirred their believing activity,—because the thought was here connected with a person, a history, a moral force, and a providential interposition, fit for the grandest deductions and equal to the mightiest effects. It is not accurate philosophical criticism that has done this, but humble love and faith.

In the experience of earnest Christians, a personal belief in the resurrection of Christ, vividly conceived in the imagination and taken home to the heart, is chiefly effective in its spiritual, not in its argumentative, results. It stirs up the powers and awakens the yearnings of the soul, opens heaven to the gaze, locates there, as it were visibly, a glorious ideal, and thus helps one to enter upon an inward realization of the immortal world. The one essential thing is not that Jesus appeared alive in the flesh after his physical death, the revealer of superhuman power and possessor of infallibility, but that he divinely lives now, the forerunner and type of our immortality.

CHAPTER VIII.

ESSENTIAL CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF DEATH AND LIFE.

Let us first notice the uncommon amount of meaning which Christ and the apostolic writers usually put into the words "death," "life," and other kindred terms. These words are scarcely ever used in their merely literal sense, but are charged with a vivid fulness of significance not to be fathomed without especial attention. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Obviously this means more than simple life; because those who neglect the laws of virtue may live. It signifies, distinctively, true life,—the experience of inward peace and of Divine favor. "Whosoever hateth his brother hath not eternal life abiding in him, but abideth in death;" that is to say, a soul rankling with bad passions is "in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity," but, when

converted from hatred to love, it passes from wretchedness to blessedness. "Let the dead bury their dead." No one reading this passage with its context can fail to perceive that it means, substantially, "Let those who are absorbed in the affairs of this world, and indifferent to the revelation I have brought from heaven, attend to the interment of the dead; but delay not thou, who art kindled with a lively interest in the truth, to proclaim the kingdom of God." When the returning prodigal had been joyfully received, the father said, in reply to the murmurs of the elder son, "Thy brother was dead and is alive again;" he was lost in sin and misery, he is found in penitence and happiness. Paul writes to the Romans, "Without the law sin was dead, and I was alive; but when the law was made known, sin came to life, and I died." In other words, when a man is ignorant of the moral law, immoral conduct does not prevent him from feeling innocent and being at peace; but when a knowledge of the law shows the wickedness of that conduct, he becomes conscious of guilt, and is unhappy. For instance, to state the thought a little differently, to a child knowing nothing of the law, the law, or its purposed violation, sin, does not exist,—is dead: he therefore enjoys peace of conscience; but when he becomes aware of the law and its authority, if he then break it, sin is generated and immediately stings, and spiritual happiness dies.

These passages are sufficient to show that Christianity uses the words "death" and "life" in a spiritual sense, penetrating to the hidden realities of the soul. To speak thus of the guilty, unbelieving man as dead, and only of the virtuous, believing man as truly alive, may seem at first a startling use of figurative language. It will not appear so when we notice its appropriateness to the case, or remember the imaginative nature of Oriental speech and recollect how often we employ the same terms in the same way at the present time. We will give a few examples of a similar use of language outside of the Scriptures. That which threatens or produces death is sometimes, by a figure, identified with death. Orpheus, in the Argonautika, speaks of "a terrible serpent whose yawning jaw is full of death." So Paul says he was "in deaths oft." Ovid says, "The priests poured out a dog's hot life on the altar of Hecate at the crossing of two roads." The Pythagoreans, when one of their number became impious and abandoned, were accustomed to consider him dead, and to erect a tomb to him, on which his name and his age at the time of his moral decease were engraved. The Roman law regarded an excommunicated citizen as *civilis mortuus*, legally dead. Fénélon writes, "God has kindled a flame at the bottom of every heart, which should always burn as a lamp for him who hath lighted it; and all other life is as death." Chaucer says, in one of his Canterbury Tales, referring to a man enslaved by dissolute habits,—

> "But certes, he that haunteth swiche delices
> Is ded while that he liveth in tho' vices."

And in a recent poem the following lines occur:—

"From his great eyes
The light has fled:
When faith departs, when honor dies,
The man is dead."

To be subjected to the lower impulses of our nature by degraded habits of vice and criminality is wretchedness and death. The true life of man consists, the Great Teacher declared, "not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, but rather in his being rich toward God,"—in conscious purity of heart, energy of faith, and union with the Holy Spirit. "He that lives in sensual pleasure is dead while he lives," Paul asserts; but he that lives in spiritual righteousness has already risen from the dead. To sum up the whole in a single sentence, the service and the fruits of sin form an experience which Christianity calls death, because it is a state of insensibility to the elements and results of true life, in the adequate sense of that term, meaning the serene activity and religious joy of the soul.

The second particular in the essential doctrine of Christianity concerning the states of human experience which it entitles death and life is their inherent, enduring nature, their independence on the objects and changes of this world. The gospel teaches that the elements of our being and experience are transferred from the life that now is into the life that is to come, or, rather, that we exist continuously forever, uninterrupted by the event of physical dissolution. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him," Jesus declares, "shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John affirms, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Paul writes to the Christians at Rome, "In that Christ died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Numerous additional texts of kindred import might be cited. They announce the immortality of man, the unending continuance of the Christian consciousness, unless forfeited by voluntary defection. They show that sin and woe are not arbitrarily bounded by the limits of time and sense in the grave, and that nothing can ever exhaust or destroy the satisfaction of true life, faith in the love of God: it abides, blessed and eternal, in the uninterrupted blessedness and eternity of its Object. The revelation and offer of all this to the acceptance of men, its conditions, claims, and alternative sanctions, were first divinely made known and planted in the heart of the world, as the Scriptures assert, by Jesus Christ, who promulgated them by his preaching, illustrated them by his example, proved them by his works, attested them by his blood, and crowned them by his resurrection. And now there is opened for all of us, through him,—that is to say, through belief and obedience of what he taught and exemplified,—an access unto the Father, an assurance of his forgiveness of us

and of our reconciliation with him. We thus enter upon the experience of that true life which is "joy and peace in believing," and which remains indestructible through all the vanishing vagrancy of sin, misery, and the world. "This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent:" that is, imperishable life is to be obtained by union with God in faith and love, through a hearty acceptance of the instructions of Christ.

The two points thus far considered are, first, that the sinful, unbelieving, wretched man abides in virtual death, while the righteous, happy believer in the gospel has the experience of genuine life; and, secondly, that these essential elements of human character and experience survive all events of time and place in everlasting continuance.

The next consideration prominent in the Christian doctrine of death and life is the distinction continually made between the body and the soul. Man is regarded under a twofold aspect, as flesh and spirit,—the one a temporal accompaniment and dependent medium, the other an immortal being in itself. The distinction is a fundamental one, and runs through nearly all philosophy and religion in their reference to man. In the Christian Scriptures it is not sharply drawn, with logical precision, nor always accurately maintained, but is loosely defined, with waving outlines, is often employed carelessly, and sometimes, if strictly taken, inconsistently. Let us first note a few examples of the distinction itself in the instructions of the Savior and of the different New Testament writers.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." "Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul." "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed." "He that soweth to his flesh shall reap corruption; he that soweth to the spirit shall reap life everlasting." "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit." "Knowing that I must shortly put off this tabernacle." "The body without the spirit is dead." It would be useless to accumulate examples. It is plain that these authors distinguish the body and the soul as two things conjoined for a season, the latter of which will continue to live when the other has mixed with the dust. The facts and phenomena of our being from which this distinction springs are so numerous and so influential, so profound and so obvious, that it is impossible they should escape the knowledge of any thinking person. Indeed, the distinction has found a recognition everywhere among men, from the ignorant savage, whose instincts and imagination shadow forth a dim world in which the impalpable images of the departed dwell, to the philosopher of piercing intellect and universal culture,

> "Whose lore detects beneath our crumbling clay
> A soul, exiled, and journeying back to day."

"Labor not for the meat which perisheth," Jesus exhorts his followers,

"but labor for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life." The body and the luxury that pampers it shall perish, but the spirit and the love that feeds it shall abide forever.

We now pass to examine some metaphorical terms often erroneously interpreted as conveying merely their literal force. Every one familiar with the language of the New Testament must remember how repeatedly the body and the soul, or the flesh and the spirit, are set in direct opposition to each other, sin being referred to the former, righteousness to the latter. "I know that in my flesh there is no good thing; but with my mind I delight in the law of God." "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit lusteth against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other." All this language—and it is extensively used in the epistles—is quite generally understood in a fixed, literal sense; whereas it was employed by its authors in a fluctuating, figurative sense, as the critical student can hardly help perceiving. We will state the real substance of Christian teaching and phraseology on this point in two general formulas, and then proceed to illustrate them. First, both the body and the soul may be corrupt, lawless, empty of Divine belief, full of restlessness and suffering, in a state of moral death; or both may be pure, obedient, acceptable in the sight of God, full of faith, peace, and joy, in a state of genuine life. Secondly, whatever tends in any way to the former result—to make man guilty, feeble, and wretched, to deaden his spiritual sensibilities, to keep him from union with God and from immortal reliances—is variously personified as "the Flesh," "Sin," "Death," "Mammon," "the World," "the Law of the Members," "the Law of Sin and Death;" whatever, on the contrary, tends in any way to the latter result—to purify man, to intensify his moral powers, to exalt and quicken his consciousness in the assurance of the favor of God and of eternal being—is personified as "the Spirit," "Life," "Righteousness," "the Law of God," "the Law of the Inward Man," "Christ," "the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ." Under the first class of terms are included all the temptations and agencies by which man is led to sin, and the results of misery they effect; under the second class are included all the aspirations and influences by which he is led to righteousness, and the results of happiness they insure. For example, it is written, in the Epistle to the Galatians, that "the manifest works of the flesh are excessive sensuality, idolatry, hatred, emulations, quarrels, heresies, murders, and such like." Certainly some of these evils are more closely connected with the mind than with the body. The term "flesh" is obviously used in a sense coextensive with the tendencies and means by which we are exposed to guilt and degradation. These personifications, it will therefore be seen, are employed with general rhetorical looseness, not with definite logical exactness.

It is self-evident that the mind is the actual agent and author of all sins and virtues, and that the body in itself is unconscious, irresponsible, incapable of guilt. "Every sin that man doeth is without the

body." In illustration of this point Chrysostom says, "If a tyrant or robber were to seize some royal mansion, it would not be the fault of the house." And how greatly they err who think that any of the New Testament writers mean to represent the flesh as necessarily sinful and the spirit as always pure, the following cases to the contrary from Paul, whose speech seems most to lean that way, will abundantly show. "Glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are [both] his." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" "Yield not your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but as instruments of righteousness unto God." "That the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." It is clear that the author of these sentences did not regard the body, or literal flesh, as necessarily unholy, but as capable of being used by the man himself in fulfilling the will of God. Texts that appear to contradict this must be held as figures, or as impassioned rhetorical exclamations. We also read of "the lusts of the mind," the "fleshly mind," "filthiness of the spirit," "seducing spirits," "corrupt minds," "mind and conscience defiled," "reprobate mind,"—showing plainly that the spirit was sometimes regarded as guilty and morally dead. The apostle writes, "I pray that your whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless." The scriptural declarations now cited teach explicitly that both the body and the soul may be subjected to the perfect law of God, or that both may abide in rebellion and wickedness, the latter state being called, metaphorically, "walking after the flesh," the former "walking after the spirit,"—that being sin and death, this being righteousness and life.

An explanation of the origin of these metaphors will cast further light upon the subject. The use of a portion of them arose from the fact that many of the most easily-besetting and pernicious vices, conditions and allurements of sin, defilements and clogs of the spirit, come through the body, which, while it is itself evidently fated to perish, does by its earthly solicitations entice, contaminate, and debase the soul that by itself is invited to better things and seems destined to immortality. Not that these evils originate in the body,—of course, all the doings of a man spring from the spirit of man which is in him,—but that the body is the occasion and the aggravating medium of their manifestation. This thought is not contradicted, it is only omitted, in the words of Peter:—"I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." For such language would be spontaneously suggested by the fact that to be in bondage to the baser nature is hostile alike to spiritual dignity and peace, and to physical health and strength. The principles of the moral nature are at war with the passions of the animal nature; the goading vices of the mind are at war with the organic harmonies of the body; and on the issues of these conflicts hang all the interests of life and death, in every sense the words can be made to bear.

Another reason for the use of these figures of speech, undoubtedly, was the philosophy of the ineradicable hostility of matter and spirit,—the doctrine, so prevalent in the East from the earliest times, that matter is wholly corrupt and evil, the essential root and source of all vileness. An old, unknown Greek poet embodies the very soul of this faith in a few verses which we find in the Anthology. Literally rendered, they run thus:—

> "The body is the torment, hell, fate, load, tyrant,
> Dreadful pest, and punishing trial, of the soul
> Which, when it quits the body, flies, as from the bonds
> Of death, to immortal God."

It was this idea that produced the wild asceticism prevalent in the Christian Church during the Middle Age and previously,—the fearful macerations, scourgings, crucifixions of the flesh. It should be understood that, though some of the phraseology of the Scriptures is tinged by the influence of this doctrine, the doctrine itself is foreign to Christianity. Christ came eating and drinking, not abjuring nature, but adopting its teachings, viewing it as a Divine work through which the providence of God is displayed and his glory gleams. He was no more of a Pharisee than nature is. As corn *grows* on the Sabbath, so it may be plucked and eaten on the Sabbath. The apostles never recommend self-inflicted torments. The ascetic expressions found in their letters grew directly out of the perils besetting them and their expectation of the speedy end of the world. Christianity, rightly understood, renders even the body of a good man sacred and precious, through the indwelling of the Infinite. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," and the poor, dying tenement of flesh is hallowed as

> "A vase of earth, a trembling clod,
> Constrain'd to hold the breath of God."

The chief secret, however, of the origin of the peculiar phrases under consideration consisted in their striking fitness to the nature and facts of the case, their adaptedness to express these facts in a bold and vivid manner. The revelation of the transcendent claims of holiness, of the pardoning love of God, of the splendid boon of immortality, made by Christ and enforced by the miraculous sanctions and the kindling motives presented in his example, thrilled the souls of the first converts, shamed them of their degrading sins, opened before their imaginations a vision that paled the glories of the world, and regenerated them, stirring up the depths of their religious sensibilities, and flooding their whole being with a warmth, an energy, a spirituality, that made their previous experience seem a gross carnal slumber, a virtual death. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." They were animated and raised to a new, pure, glad life, through the feeling of the hopes and the practice of the virtues of the gospel of Christ. Unto those who "were formerly in the flesh, the servants of sin, bringing forth fruit unto death," but now obeying the new form of doctrine delivered unto

them, with renewed hearts and changed conduct, it is written, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness;" that is, If Christian truth reign in you, the body may still be tormented, or powerless, owing to your previous bad habits; but the soul will be redeemed from its abandonment to error and vice, and be assured of pardon and immortal life by the witnessing spirit of God.

The apostle likewise says unto them, "If the Spirit of God dwell in you, it shall also quicken your mortal bodies." This remarkable expression was meant to convey a thought which the observation of common facts approves and explains. If the love of the pure principles of the gospel was established in them, their bodies, debilitated and deadened by former abandonment to their lusts, should be freed and reanimated by its influence. The body to a great extent reflects the permanent mind and life of a man. It is an aphorism of Solomon that "a sound heart is the life of the flesh." And Plotinus declares, "Temperance and justice are the saviors of the body so far as they are received by it." Deficiency of thought and knowledge, laziness of spirit, animality of habits, betray themselves plainly enough in the state and expression of the physical frame: they render it coarse, dim, and insensible; the person verges towards the condition of a clod; spiritual things are clouded, the beacon-fire of his destiny wanes, the possibilities of Christian faith lessen, "the external and the insensate creep in on his organized clay," he feels the chain of the brute earth more and more, and finally gives himself up to utter death. On the other hand, the assimilation of Divine truth and goodness by a man, the cherishing love of all high duties and aspirations, exert a purifying, energizing power both on the flesh and the mind, animate and strengthen them, like a heavenly flame burn away the defiling entanglements and spiritual fogs that fill and hang around the wicked and sensual, increasingly pervade his consciousness with an inspired force and freedom, illuminate his face, touch the magnetic springs of health and healthful sympathy, make him completely alive, and bring him into living connection with the Omnipresent Life, so that he perceives the full testimony that he shall never die. For, when brought into such a state by the experience of live spirits in live frames,

> "We feel through all this fleshly dresse
> Bright shootes of everlastingnesse."

Spiritual sloth and sensual indulgence stupefy, blunt, and confuse together in lifeless meshes, the vital tenant and the mortal tenement; they grow incorporate, alike unclean, powerless, guilty, and wretched. Then

> "Man lives a life half dead, a living death,
> Himself his sepulchre, a moving grave."

Active virtue, profound love, and the earnest pursuit, in the daily duties of life, of

> "Those lofty musings which within us sow
> The seeds of higher kind and brighter being,"

cleanse, vivify, and distinguish the body and the soul, so that, when this tabernacle of clay crumbles from around it, the unimprisoned spirit soars into the universe at once, and, looking back upon the shadowy king bearing his pale prey to the tomb, exclaims, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The facts, then, of sin, guilt, weakness, misery, unbelief, decay, insensibility, and death, joined with the opposite corresponding class of facts, and considered in their mutual spiritual and physical relations and results, originally suggested, and now interpret and justify, that peculiar phraseology of the New Testament which we have been investigating. It has no recondite meaning drawn from arbitrary dogmas, but a plain meaning drawn from natural truths.

It remains next to see what is the Christian doctrine concerning literal, physical death,—concerning the actual origin and significance of that solemn event. This point must be treated the more at length on account of the erroneous notions prevailing upon the subject. For that man's first disobedience was the procuring cause of organic, as well as of moral, death, is a doctrine quite generally believed. It is a fundamental article in the creeds of all the principal denominations of Christendom, and is traditionally held, from the neglect of investigation, by nearly all Christians. By this theory the words of James—who writes, "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"—are interpreted with strict literalness. It is conceived that, had not evil entered the first man's heart and caused him to fall from his native innocence, he would have roamed among the flowers of Eden to this day. But he violated the commandment of his Maker, and sentence of death was passed upon him and his posterity. We are now to prove that this imaginative theory is far from the truth.

1. The language in which the original account of Adam's sin and its punishment is stated shows conclusively that the penalty of transgression was not literal death, but spiritual,—that is, degradation, suffering. God's warning in relation to the forbidden tree was, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Of course, Jehovah's solemn declaration was fulfilled as he had said. But in the day that man partook of the prohibited fruit he did not die a physical death. He lived, driven from the delights of Paradise, (according to the account,) upwards of eight hundred years, earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. Consequently, the death with which he had been threatened must have been a moral death,—loss of innocence and joy, experience of guilt and woe.

2. The common usage of the words connected with this subject in the New Testament still more clearly substantiates the view here taken of it. There is a class of words, linked together by similarity of meaning and closeness of mutual relation, often used by the Christian writers loosely, figuratively, and sometimes interchangeably, as has been shown already in another connection. We mean the words "sin," "flesh," "misery," "death." The same remark may be made of another class of words of

precisely opposite signification,—"righteousness," "faith," "life," "blessedness," "eternal life." These different words frequently stand to represent the same idea. "As the law hath reigned through sin unto death, so shall grace reign through righteousness unto life." In other terms, as the recognition of the retributive law of God through rebellion and guilt filled the consciences of men with wretchedness, so the acceptance of the pardoning love of God through faith and conformity will fill them with blessedness. Sin includes conscious distrust, disobedience, and alienation; righteousness includes conscious faith, obedience, and reconciliation. Sin and death, it will be seen, are related just as righteousness and life are. The fact that they are sometimes represented in the relation of identity—"the minding of the flesh *is* death, but the minding of the spirit *is* life"—and sometimes in the relation of cause and effect —"the *fruit* of sin is death, the *fruit* of righteousness is life"—proves that the words are used metaphorically, and really mean conscious guilt and misery, conscious virtue and blessedness. No other view is consistent. We are urged to be "dead unto sin, but alive unto God;" that is, to be in a state of moral perfection which turns a deaf and invincible front to all the influences of evil, but is open and joyfully sensitive to every thing good and holy. Paul also wrote, in his letter to the Philippians, that he had "not yet attained unto the resurrection," but was striving to attain unto it; that is, he had not yet reached, but was striving to reach, that lofty state of holiness and peace invulnerable to sin, which no change can injure, with which the event of bodily dissolution cannot interfere, because its elements—faith, truth, justice, and love—are the immutable principles of everlasting life.

3. In confirmation of this conclusion, an argument amounting to certainty is afforded by the way in which the disobedience of Adam and its consequences, and the obedience of Christ and its consequences, are spoken of together; by the way in which a sort of antithetical parallel is drawn between the result of Adam's fall and the result of Christ's mission. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, so much more shall all receive the gift of God by one man, Jesus Christ, and reign unto eternal life." This means, as the writer himself afterwards explains, that "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners" and suffered the consequences of sin, figuratively expressed by the word "death," "so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" and enjoy the consequences of righteousness, figuratively expressed by the word "life." Give the principal terms in this passage their literal force, and no meaning which is not absolutely incompatible with the plainest truths can be drawn from it. Surely literal death had come equally and fully upon all men everywhere; literal life could do no more. But render the idea in this way,—the blessedness offered to men in the revelation of grace made by Jesus outweighs the wretchedness brought upon them through the sin introduced by Adam,—and the sense is satisfactory. That which Adam is repre-

sented as having lost, that, the apostle affirms, Christ restored; that which Adam is said to have incurred, that Christ is said to have removed. But Christ did not restore to man a physical immortality on the earth: therefore that is not what Adam forfeited; but he lost peace of conscience and trust in the Divine favor. Furthermore, Christ did not free his followers from natural decay and death: therefore that is not what Adam's transgression brought upon his children; but it entailed upon them proclivities to evil, spiritual unrest, and woe. The basis of the comparison is evidently this: Adam's fall showed that the consequences of sin, through the stern operation of the law, were strife, despair, and misery,—all of which is implied in the New Testament usage of the word "death;" Christ's mission showed that the consequences of righteousness, through the free grace of God, were faith, peace, and indestructible happiness,—all of which is implied in the New Testament usage of the word "life." In the mind of Paul there was undoubtedly an additional thought, connecting the descent of the soul to the under-world with the death of the sinful Adam, and its ascent to heaven with the resurrection of the immaculate Christ; but this does not touch the argument just advanced, because it does not refer to the *cause* of physical dissolution, but to what followed that event.

4. It will not be out of place here to demonstrate that sin actually was not the origin of natural decay, by the revelations of science, which prove that death was a monarch on the earth for ages before moral transgression was known. As the geologist wanders, and studies the records of nature, where earthquake, deluge, and volcano have exposed the structure of the globe and its organic remains in strata piled on strata, upon these, as upon so many pages of the earth's autobiography, he reads the history of a hundred races of animals which lived and died, leaving their bones layer above layer, in regular succession, centuries before the existence of man. It is evident, then, that, independent of human guilt, and from the very first, chemical laws were in force, and death was a part of God's plan in the material creation. As the previous animals perished without sin, so without sin the animal part of man too would have died. It was made perishable from the outset. The important point just here in the theology of Paul was, as previously implied, that death was intended to lead the soul directly to heaven in a new "spiritual body" or "heavenly house;" but sin marred the plan, and doomed the soul to go into the under-world, a naked *manes*, when "unclothed" of "the natural body" or "earthly house." The mission of Christ was to restore the original plan; and it would be consummated at his second coming.

5. There is a gross absurdity involved in the supposition that an earthly immortality was the intended destiny of man. That supposition necessarily implies that the whole groundwork of God's first design was a failure,—that his great purpose was thwarted and changed into one wholly different. And it is absurd to think such a result possible in the

providence of the Almighty. Besides, had there been no sin, could not man have been drowned if he fell into the water without knowing how to swim? If a building tumbled upon him, would he not have been crushed? Nor is this theory free from another still more palpable absurdity; for, had there been no interference of death to remove one generation and make room for another, the world could not support the multitudes with which it would now swarm. Moreover, the time would arrive when the earth could not only not afford sustenance to its so numerous inhabitants, but could not even contain them. So that if this were the original arrangement, unless certain other parts which were indisputable portions of it were cancelled, the surplus myriads would have to be removed to some other world. That is just what death accomplishes. Consequently, death was a part of God's primal plan, and not a contingence accidentally caused by sin.

6. If death be the result of sin, then, of course, it is a punishment inflicted upon man for his wickedness. In fact, this is an identical proposition. But death cannot be intended as a punishment, because, viewed in that light, it is unjust. It comes equally upon old and young, good and bad, joyous and wretched. It does not permit the best man to live longest; it does not come with the greatest terror and agony to the most guilty. All these things depend on a thousand contingencies strung upon an iron law, which inheres to the physical world of necessity, and has not its basis and action in the spiritual sphere of freedom, character, and experience. The innocent babe and the hardened criminal are struck at the same instant and die the same death. Solomon knew this when he said, "As dieth the fool, so the wise man dieth." Death regarded as a retribution for sin is unjust, because it is destitute of moral discrimination. It therefore is not a consequence of transgression, but an era, incident, and step in human existence, an established part of the visible order of things from the beginning. When the New Testament speaks of death as a punishment, it always uses the word in a symbolic sense, meaning spiritual deadness and misery,—which is a perfect retribution, because it discriminates with unerring exactness. This has been conclusively proved by Klaiber,[1] who shows that the peculiar language of Paul in regard to the trichotomist division of man into spirit, soul, and body necessarily involves the perception of physical death as a natural fact.

7. Finally, natural death cannot be the penalty of unrighteousness, because it is not a curse and a woe, but a blessing and a privilege. Epictetus wrote, "It would be a curse upon ears of corn not to be reaped; and we ought to know that it would be a curse upon man not to die."[2] It cannot be the effect of man's sin, because it is the improvement of man's condition. Who can believe it would be better for man to remain on earth forever, under any circumstances, than it is for him

[1] Die Neutestamentliche Lehre von der Sünde und Erlösung, ss. 22–45. [2] Dissert. ii. 6, 2.

to go to heaven to such an experience as the faithful follower of Christ supposes is there awaiting him? It is not to be thought by us that death is a frowning enemy thrusting us into the gloom of eternal night or into the flaming waves of irremediable torment, but rather a smiling friend ushering us into the endless life of the spiritual world and into the unveiled presence of God. According to the arrangement and desire of God, for us to die is gain: every personal exception to this—if there be any exception—is caused through the marring interference of personal wickedness with the Creator's intention and with natural order. Who has not sometimes felt the bondage of the body and the trials of earth, and peered with awful thrills of curiosity into the mysteries of the unseen world, until he has longed for the hour of the soul's liberation, that it might plume itself for an immortal flight? Who has not experienced moments of serene faith, in which he could hardly help exclaiming,—

"I would not live alway; I ask not to stay:
Oh, who would live alway away from his God?"

A favorite of Apollo prayed for the best gift Heaven could bestow upon man. The god said, "At the end of seven days it shall be granted: in the mean time, live happy." At the appointed hour he fell into a sweet slumber, from which he never awoke.[3] He who regards death as upon the whole an evil does not take the Christian's view of it,—not even the enlightened pagan's view,—but the frightened sensualist's view, the superstitious atheist's view. And if death be upon the whole normally a blessing, then assuredly it cannot be a punishment brought upon man by sin. The common hypothesis of our mortality—namely, that sin, hereditarily lodged in the centre of man's life, spreads its dynamic virus thence until it appears as death in the periphery, expending its final energy within the material sphere in the dissolution of the physical frame—is totally opposed to the spirit of philosophy and to the most lucid results of science. Science announces death universally as the initial point of new life.[4]

The New Testament does not teach that natural death, organic separation, is the fruit of sin,—that, if man had not sinned, he would have lived forever on the earth. But it teaches that moral death, misery, is the consequence of sin. The pains and afflictions which sometimes come upon the good without fault of theirs do yet spring from human faults somewhere, with those exceptions alone that result from the necessary contingencies of finite creatures, exposures outside the sphere of human accountability. With this qualification, it would be easy to show in detail that the sufferings of the private individual and of mankind at large are, directly or indirectly, the products of guilt, violated law. All the woes, for instance, of poverty are the results of selfishness, pride,

[3] Herod. i. 31; Cic. Tusc. Quæst. i. 47.

[4] Klencke, Das Buch vom Tode. Entwurf einer Lehre vom Sterben in der Natur und vom Tode des Menschen insbesondere. Für denkende Freunde der Wissenschaft.

ignorance, and vice. And it is the same with every other class of miseries.

"The world in Titanic immortality
Writhes beneath the burning mountain of its sins."

Had there been no sin, men's lives would have glided on like the placid rivers that flow through the woodlands. They would have lived without strife or sorrow, grown old without sadness or satiety, and died without a pang or a sigh. But, alas! sin so abounds in the world that "there is not a just man that lives and sins not;" and it is a truth whose omnipresent jurisdiction can neither be avoided nor resisted that every kind of sin, every offence against Divine order, shall somewhere, at some time, be judged as it deserves. He who denies this only betrays the ignorance which conceals from him a pervading law of inevitable application, only reveals the degradation and insensibility which do not allow him to be conscious of his own experience. A harmonious, happy existence depends on the practice of pure morals and communion with the love of God. This great idea—that the conscientious culture of the spiritual nature is the sole method of Divine life—is equally a fundamental principle of the gospel and a conclusion of observation and reason: upon the devout observance of it hinge the possibilities of true blessedness. The pursuit of an opposite course necessitates the opposite experience, makes its votary a restless, wretched slave, wishing for freedom but unable to obtain it.

The thought just stated, we maintain, strikes the key-note of the Christian Scriptures; and the voices of truth and nature accord with it. That Christianity declares sin to be the cause of spiritual death, in all the deep and wide meaning of the term, has been fully shown; that this is also a fact in the great order of things has been partially illustrated, but in justice to the subject should be urged in a more precise and adequate form. In the first place, there is a positive punishment flowing evidently from sin, consisting both in outward inflictions of suffering and disgrace through human laws and social customs, and in the private endurance of bodily and mental pains and of strange misgivings that load the soul with fear and anguish. Subjection to the animal nature in the obedience of unrighteousness sensibly tends to bring upon its victim a woeful mass of positive ills, public and personal, to put him under the vile tyranny of devouring lusts, to induce deathlike enervation and disease in his whole being, to pervade his consciousness with the wretched gnawings of remorse and shame, and with the timorous, tormenting sense of guilt, discord, alienation, and condemnation.

In the second place, there is a negative punishment for impurity and wrong-doing, less gross and visible than the former, but equally real and much more to be dreaded. Sin snatches from a man the prerogatives of eternal life, by brutalizing and deadening his nature, sinking the spirit with its delicate delights in the body and its coarse satisfactions, making him insensible to his highest good and glory, lowering him in the scale

of being away from God, shutting the gates of heaven against him, and leaving him to wallow in the mire. The *wages* of sin is misery, and its *gift* is a degradation which prevents any elevation to true happiness. These positive and negative retributions, however delayed or disguised, will come where they are deserved, and will not fail. Do a wrong deed from a bad motive, and, though you fled on the pinions of the inconceivable lightning from one end of infinite space to the other, the fated penalty would chase you through eternity but that you should pay its debt; or, rather, the penalty is grappling with you from within on the instant,—is a part of you.

Thirdly, if, by the searing of his conscience and absorption in the world, a sinner escapes for a season the penal consequences threatened in the law, and does not know how miserable he is, and thinks he is happy, yet let him remember that the remedial, restorative process through which he must pass, either in this life or in the next, involves a concentrated experience of expiatory pangs, as is shown both by the reason of the thing and by all relevant analogies. When the bad man awakes—as some time or other he will awake—to the infinite perfections and unalterable love of the Father whose holy commands he has trampled and whose kind invitations he has spurned, he will suffer agonies of remorseful sorrow but faintly shadowed in the bitterness of Peter's tears when his forgiving Master *looked* on him. Such is the common deadness of our consciences that the vices of our corrupt characters are far from appearing to us as the terrific things they really are. Angels, looking under the fleshly garment we wear, and seeing a falsehood or a sin assimilated as a portion of our being, turn away with such feeling as we should experience at beholding a leprous sore beneath the lifted ermine of a king. A well-taught Christian will not fail to contemplate physical death as a stupendous, awakening crisis, one of whose chief effects will be the opening to personal consciousness, in the most vivid manner, of all the realities of character, with their relations towards things above and things below himself.

This thought leads us to a fourth and final consideration, more important than the previous. The tremendous fact that all the inwrought elements and workings of our being are self-retributive, their own exceeding great and sufficient good or evil, independent of external circumstances and sequences, is rarely appreciated. Men overlook it in their superficial search after associations, accompaniments, and effects. When all tangible punishments and rewards are wanting, all outward penalties and prizes fail, if we go a little deeper into the mysterious facts of experience we shall find that still goodness is rewarded and evil is punished, because "the mind is its own place, and can itself," if virtuous, "make a heaven of hell," if wicked, "a hell of heaven." It is a truth, springing from the very nature of God and his irreversible relations towards his creatures, that his united justice and love shall follow both holiness and iniquity now and ever, pouring his beneficence upon them to be con-

verted by them into their food and bliss or into their bane and misery. There is, then, no essential need of adventitious accompaniments or results to justify and pay the good, or to condemn and torture the bad, here or hereafter. To be wise, and pure, and strong, and noble, is glory and blessedness enough in itself. To be ignorant, and corrupt, and mean, and feeble, is degradation and horror enough in itself. The one abides in true life, the other in moral death; and that is sufficient. Even now, in this world, therefore, the swift and diversified retributions of men's characters and lives are in them and upon them, in various ways, and to a much greater extent than they are accustomed to think. History preaches this with all her revealing voices. Philosophy lays it bare, and points every finger at the flaming bond that binds innocence to peace, guilt to remorse. It is the substance of the gospel, emphatically pronounced. And the clear experience of every sensitive soul confirms its truth, echoing through the silent corridors of the conscience the declarations which fell in ancient Judea from the lips of Jesus and the pen of Paul:—"The pure in heart shall see God;" "The wages of sin is death."

We will briefly sum up the principal positions of the ground we have now traversed. To be enslaved by the senses in the violation of the Divine laws, neglecting the mind and abusing the members, is to be dead to the goodness of God, the joys of virtue, and the hopes of heaven, and alive to guilt, anguish, and despair. To obey the will of God in love, keeping the body under, and cherishing a pure soul, is to be dead to the evil of the world, the goading of passions, and the fears of punishment, and alive to innocence, happiness, and faith. According to the natural plan of things from the dawn of creation, the flesh was intended to fall into the ground, but the spirit to rise into heaven. Suffering is the retributive result and accumulated merit of iniquity; while enjoyment is the gift of God and the fruit of conformity to his law. To receive the instructions of Christ and obey them with the whole heart, walking after his example, is to be quickened from that deadly misery into this living blessedness. The inner life of truth and goodness thus revealed and proposed to men, its personal experience being once obtained, is an immortal possession, a conscious fount springing up unto eternity through the beneficent decree of the Father, to play forever in the light of his smile and the shadow of his arm. Such are the great component elements of the Christian doctrine of life and death, both present and eternal.

The purely interior character of the genuine teachings of Christianity on this subject is strikingly evident in the foregoing epitome. The essential thing is simply that the hate-life of error and sin is inherent alienation from God, in slavery, wretchedness, death; while the love-life of truth and virtue is inherent communion with God, in conscious freedom and blessedness. Here pure Christianity leaves the subject, declaring this with authority, but not pretending to clear up the mysteries or set

forth the details of the subject. Whatever in the New Testament goes beyond this and meddles with minute external circumstances we regard as a corrupt addition or mixture drawn from various Gentile and Pharisaic sources and erroneously joined with the authentic words of Christ. What we maintain in regard to the apostles and the early Christians in general is not so much that they failed to grasp the deep spiritual principles of the Master's teaching, not that they were essentially in error, but that, while they held the substance of the Savior's true thoughts, they also held additional notions which were errors retained from their Pharisaic education and only partially modified by their succeeding Christian culture,—a set of traditional and mechanical conceptions. These errors, we repeat, concern not the heart and essence of ideas, but their form and clothing. For instance, Christ teaches that there is a heaven for the faithful; the apostles suppose that it is a located region over the firmament. The dying Stephen said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." Again: Christ teaches that there is a banishment for the wicked; the apostles suppose that it is into a located region under the earth. In accordance with the theological dogmas of their time and countrymen, with such modification as the peculiar character, teachings, and life of Jesus enforced, they believed that sin sent through the black gates of Sheol those who would otherwise have gone through the glorious doors of heaven; that Christ would return from heaven soon, raise the dead from the under-world, judge them, rebanish the reprobate, establish his perfect kingdom on earth, and reascend to heaven with his elect. That these distinctive notions came into the New Testament through the mistakes and imperfect knowledge of the apostles, how can any candid and competent scholar doubt?[6] In the first place, the process whereby these conceptions were transmitted and assimilated from Zoroastrian Persia to Pharisaic Judea is historically traceable. Secondly, the brevity and vagueness of the apostolic references to eschatology, and their perfect harmony with known Pharisaic beliefs, prove their mutual consonance and the derivation of the later from the earlier. If the supposed Christian views had been unheard of before, their promulgators would have taken pains to define them carefully and give detailed expositions of them. Thirdly, it was natural—almost inevitable—that the apostles would retain at least some of their original peculiarities of belief, and mix them with their new ideas, unless they were prevented by an infallible inspiration. Of the presence of any such infallibility there is not a shadow of evidence; but, on the contrary, there is a demonstration of its absence. For they differed among themselves,—carried on violent controversies on important points. Paul says of Peter, "I withstood him to the face."

[6] Eschatologie, oder die Lehre von den Letzten Dingen. Mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die gangbare Irrlehre vom Hades. Basel, 1840. De Wette interprets the doctrine of Christ's descent into Hades as a myth derived from the idea that he was the Savior not only of his living followers but also of the heathen and the dead. Bibl. Dogmatik, s. 272.

The Gentile and Judaic dissensions shook the very foundations of the Apostolic Church. Paul and Barnabas "had a sharp controversy, insomuch that they parted asunder." Almost every commentator and scholar worthy of notice has been compelled to admit the error of the apostles in expecting the visible return of Christ in their own day. And, if they erred in that, they might in other matters. The progress of positive science and the improvement of philosophical thought have rendered the mechanical dogmas popularly associated with Christianity incredible to enlightened minds. For this reason, as for many others, it is the duty of the Christian teacher to show that those dogmas are not an integral part of the gospel, but only an adventitious element imported into it from an earlier and unauthoritative system. Take away these incongruous and outgrown errors, and the pure religion of Christ will be seen, and will be seen to be the everlasting truth of God.

In attempting to estimate the actual influence of Christianity, wherever it has spread, in establishing among men a faith in immortality, we must specify six separate considerations. First, the immediate reception of the resurrection and ascension of Christ as a miraculous and typical fact, putting an infallible seal on his teachings, and demonstrating, even to the senses of men, the reality of a heavenly life, was an extremely potent influence in giving form and vigor to faith,—more potent for ages than every thing else combined. The image of the victorious Christ taken up to heaven and glorified there forever,—this image, pictured in every believer's mind, stimulated the imagination and kept an ideal vision of heaven in constant remembrance as an apprehended reality. "There is Jesus," they said, pointing up to heaven; "and there one day we shall be with him."

Secondly, the obloquy and desertion experienced by the early Christians threw them back upon a double strength of spiritual faith, and opened to them an intensified communion with God. As worldly goods and pleasures were sacrificed, the more powerful became their perception of moral truths and their grasp of invisible treasures. The more fiercely they were assailed, the dearer became the cause for which they suffered, and the more profoundly the moral springs of faith were stirred in their souls. The natural revulsion of their souls was from destitution, contempt, peril, and pain on earth to a more vivid and magnified trust in a great reward laid up for them in heaven.

Thirdly, the unflinching zeal kindled in the early confessors of Christianity, the sublime heroism shown by them amidst the awful tortures inflicted on them by the persecuting Jews and Romans, reacted on their brethren to give profounder firmness and new intensity to their faith in a glorious life beyond the grave. The Christians thrown into the amphitheatre to the lions calmly kneeled in prayer, and to the superstitious bystanders a bright *nimbus* seemed to play around their brows and heaven to be opened above. As they perished at the stake, amidst brutal jeers and shrivelling flames, serenely maintaining their profession, and calling

on Christ, over the lurid vista of smoke and fire broke on their rapt vision the blessed splendors of Paradise; and their joy seemed, to the enthusiastic believers around, no less than a Divine Inspiration, confirming their faith, and preaching, through the unquestionable truthfulness of martyrdom, the certainty of immortal life. The survivors celebrated the anniversaries of the martyrs' deaths as their birthdays into the endless life.

Fourthly, another means by which Christianity operated to deepen and spread a belief in the future life was, indirectly, through its influence in calling out and cultivating the affections of the heart. The essence of the gospel—in theory, as taught by all its teachers, in fact, as incarnated by Christ, and in practice, as working in history—is love. From the first it condemned and tended to destroy all the coldness and hatred of human hearts; and it strove to elicit and foster every kindly sentiment and generous impulse,—to draw its disciples together by those yearning ties of sympathy and devotion which instinctively demand and divinely prophesy an eternal union in a better world. The more mightily two human hearts love each other, the stronger will be their spontaneous longing for immortality. The unrivalled revelation of the disinterested love of God made by Christianity, and its effect in refining and increasing the love of men, have contributed in a most important degree to sanction and diffuse the faith in a blessed life reserved for men hereafter. One remarkable specification may be noticed. The only pagan description of children in the future life is that given by some of the classic poets, who picture the infant shades lingering in groups around the dismal gates of the under-world, weeping and wailing because they could never find admittance.

> "Continuo auditæ voces, vagitus et ingens,
> Infantumque animæ flentes in limine primo."

Go the long round of the pagan heavens, you will find no trace of a child. Children were withered blossoms blown to oblivion. The soft breezes that fanned the Blessed Isles and played through the perennial summer of Elysium blew upon no infant brows. The grave held all the children very fast. By the memorable words, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," Christ unbarred the portals of the future world and revealed therein hosts of angelic children. Ever since then children have been seen in heaven. The poet has sung that the angel-child is first on the wing to welcome the parent home. Painters have shown us, in their visions of the blessed realms, crowds of cherubs,—have shown us

> "How at the Almighty Father's hand,
> Nearest the throne of living light,
> The choirs of infant seraphs stand,
> And dazzling shine where all are bright.'

Fifthly, the triumphant establishment of Christianity in the world has thrown the prestige of public opinion, the imposing authority of general

affirmation and acceptance, around its component doctrines—chief among which is the doctrine of immortality—and secured in their behalf the resistless influences of current custom and education. From the time the gospel was acknowledged by a nation as the true religion, each generation grew up by habitual tutelage to an implicit belief in the future life. It became a dogma not to be questioned. And the reception of it was made more reasonable and easy by the great superiority of its moral features over those of the relative superstitions embodied in the ethnic religions which Christianity displaced.

Finally, Christianity has exerted no small influence both in expressing and imparting faith in immortality by means of the art to which it has given birth. The Christian ritual and symbolism, which culminated in the Middle Age, from the very first had their vitality and significance in the truth of another life. Every phase and article of them implied, and with mute or vocal articulation proclaimed, the superiority and survival of mind and heart, the truth of the gospel history, the reality of the opened heaven. Who, in the excited atmosphere, amidst the dangers, living traditions, and dramatic enactments of that time, could behold the sacraments of the Church, listen to a mighty chant, kneel beside a holy tomb, or gaze on a painting of a gospel scene, without feeling that the story of Christ's ascent to God was true, being assured that elsewhere than on earth there was a life for the believer, and in rapt imagination seeing visions of the supernatural kingdom unveiled?

The inmost thought or sentiment of mediæval art—to adapt a remarkable passage from Heine[6]—was the depression of the body and the elevation of the soul. Statues of martyrs, pictures of crucifixions, dying saints, pale, faint sufferers, drooping heads, long, thin arms, meager bones, poor, awkwardly-hung dresses, emaciated features celestially illuminated by faith and love, expressed the Christian self-denial and unearthliness. Architecture enforced the same lesson as sculpture and painting. Entering a cathedral, we at once feel the soul exalted, the flesh degraded. The inside of the dome is itself a hollow cross, and we walk there within the very witness-work of martyrdom. The gorgeous windows fling their red and green lights upon us like drops of blood and decay. Funereal music wails and fades away along the dim arches. Under our feet are gravestones and corruption. With the colossal columns the soul climbs aloft, loosing itself from the body, which sinks to the floor as a weary weed. And when we look on one of these vast Gothic structures from without, so airy, graceful, tender, transparent, it seems cut out of one piece, or may be taken for an ethereal lace-work of marble. Then only do we feel the power of the inspiration which could so subdue even stone that it shines spectrally possessed, and make the most insensate of materials voice forth the grand teaching of Christianity, —the triumph of the spirit over the flesh.

[6] Die Romantische Schule, buch i.

In these six ways, therefore,—by placing a tangible image of it in the imagination through the resurrection of Christ,—by the powerful stirring of the springs of moral faith through the persecutions that attended its confession,—by the apparent inspiration of the martyrs who died in its strength,—by calling out the latent force of the heart's affections that crave it,—by the moulding power of establishment, custom, and education,—by the spiritualizing, vision-conjuring effect of its worship and art,—has Christianity done a work of incalculable extent in strengthening the world's belief in a life to come.[7]

A remarkable evidence of the impression Christianity carried before it is furnished by an incident in the history of the missionary Paulinus. He had preached before Edwin, King of Northumbria. An old earl stood up and said, "The life of man seems, when compared with what is hidden, like the sparrow, who, as you sit in your hall, with your thanes and attendants, warmed by the blazing fire, flies through. As he flies through from door to door, he enjoys a brief escape from the chilling storms of rain and snow without. Again he goes forth into the winter and vanishes. So seems the short life of man. If this new doctrine brings us something more certain, in my mind it is worthy of adoption."[8]

The most glorious triumph of Christianity in regard to the doctrine of a future life was in imparting a character of impartialness and universality to the proud, oligarchic faith which had previously excluded from it the great multitude of men. The lofty conceptions of the fate of the soul cherished by the illustrious philosophers of Greece and Rome were not shared by the commonalty until the gospel—its right hand touching the throne of God, its left clasping humanity—announced in one breath the resurrection of Jesus and the brotherhood of man.

> "Their highest lore was for the few conceived,
> By schools discuss'd, but not by crowds believed.
> The angel-ladder climb the heavenly steep,
> But at its foot the priesthoods lay, asleep.
> They did not preach to nations, 'Lo, your God!'
> No thousands follow'd where their footsteps trod:
> Not to the fishermen they said, 'Arise!'
> Not to the lowly offer'd they the skies.
> Wisdom was theirs: alas! what men most need
> Is no sect's wisdom, but the people's creed.
> Then, not for schools, but for the human kind,
> The uncultured reason, the unletter'd mind,
> The poor, the oppress'd, the laborer, and the slave,
> God said, 'Be light!'—and light was on the grave!
> No more alone to sage and hero given,—
> For all wide oped the impartial gates of heaven."[9]

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[7] Compare Bengel's essay, Quid Doctrina de Animarum Immortalitate Religioni Christianæ debeat.

[8] Venerable Bede, book ii. ch. xiv.

[9] Bulwer, New Timon, part iv.

PART FOURTH.

CHRISTIAN THOUGHTS CONCERNING A FUTURE LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

PATRISTIC DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

With reference to the present subject, we shall consider the period of the Church Fathers as including the nine centuries succeeding the close of the apostolic age. It extends from Clement, Barnabas, and Hermas to Œcumenius and Gerbert.

The principal components of the doctrine of the future life held during this period, though showing some diversities and changes, are in their prevailing features of one consistent type, constituting the belief which would in any of those centuries have been generally recognised by the Church as orthodox.

For reasons previously given, we believe that Jesus himself taught a purely moral doctrine concerning the future life,—a doctrine free from arbitrary, mechanical, or sacerdotal peculiarities. With experimental knowledge, with inspired insight, with fullest authority, he set forth conclusions agreeing with the wisest philosophy and confirmatory of our noblest hopes,—namely, that a conscious immortality awaits the soul in the many mansions of the Father's house, which it enters on leaving the body, and where its experience will depend upon ethical and spiritual conditions. To this simple and sublime doctrine announced by Jesus, so rational and satisfactory, we believe—for reasons already explained—that the apostles joined various additional and modifying notions, Judaic and Gentile, such as the local descent of Christ into the prison-world of the dead, his mission there, his visible second coming, a bodily resurrection, a universal scenic judgment, and other kindred views. The sum of results thus reached the Fathers developed in greater detail, distinguishing and emphasizing them, and also still further corrupting them with some

additional conceptions and fancies, Greek and Oriental, speculative and imaginative. The peculiar theological work of the apostles in regard to this subject was the organizing of the Persian-Jewish doctrine of the Pharisees, with a Christian complement and modifications, around the person of Christ, and fixing so near in the immediate future the period when it was to be consummated that it might be looked for at any time. The peculiar theological work of the Fathers in regard to the doctrine thus formed by the apostles was twofold. First, being disappointed of the expected speedy second coming of Christ, they developed the intermediate state of the dead more fully, and made it more prominent. Secondly, in the course of the long and vehement controversies which sprang up, they were led to complete and systematize their theology, to define their terms, to explain and defend their doctrines, comparing them together and attempting to harmonize them with history, reason, and ethics, as well as with Scripture and tradition. In this way the patristic mind became familiar with many processes of thought, with many special details, and with some general principles, quite foreign to the apostolic mind. Meanwhile, defining and systematizing went on, loose notions hardened into rigid dogmas, free thought was hampered by authority, the scheme generally received assumed the title of orthodox, anathematizing all who dared to dissent, and the fundamental outlines of the patristic eschatology were firmly established.[1]

In seeking to understand and to give an exposition of this scheme of faith, we have, besides various collateral aids, three chief guidances. First, we possess the symbols or confessions of faith put forth by several of the leading theologians of those times, or by general councils, and openly adopted as authority in many of the churches,—the creed falsely called the Apostles', extant as early as the close of the third century, the creed of Arius, that of Cyril, the Nicene creed, the creed falsely named the Athanasian, and others. Secondly, we have the valuable assistance afforded by the treatises of Irenæus, Tertullian, Epiphanius, Augustine, and others still later, on the heresies that had arisen in the Church,—treatises which make it easy to infer, by contrast and construction, what was considered orthodox from the statement of what was acknowledged heretical. And, thirdly, abundant resources are afforded us in the extant theological dissertations and historical documents of the principal ecclesiastical authors of the time in review,—a cycle of well-known names, sweeping from Theophilus of Antioch to Photius of Byzantium, from Cyprian of Carthage to Maurus of Mentz. We think that any candid person, mastering these sources of information in the illustrating and discriminating light of a sufficient knowledge of the previous and the succeeding related opinions, will recognise in the following abstract

[1] Bretschneider, Was lehren die ältesten Kirchenväter über die Entstehung der Sünde und des Todes, Adam's Vergehen und die Versöhnung durch Christum. Oppositionsschrift, band viii. hft. 3, ss. 380–407.

a fair representation of the doctrine of a future life as it was held by the orthodox Fathers of the Christian Church in the period extending from the first to the tenth century.

Before proceeding to set forth the common patristic scheme, a few preliminary remarks are necessary in relation to some of the peculiar, prominent features of Origen's theology, and in relation to the rival systems of Augustine and Pelagius. Origen was a man of vast learning, passionately fond of philosophy; and he modifyingly mingled a great many Oriental and Platonic notions with his theology. He imagined that innumerable worlds like this had existed and perished before it, and that innumerable others will do so after it in endless succession.[2] He held that all souls—whether devils, men, angels, or of whatever rank—were of the same nature; that all who exist in material bodies are imprisoned in them as a punishment for sins committed in a previous state; the fig-leaves in which Adam and Eve were dressed after their sin were the fleshly bodies they were compelled to assume on being expelled from the Paradise of their previous existence; that in proportion to their sins they are confined in subtile or gross bodies of adjusted grades until by penance and wisdom they slowly win their deliverance,—this gradual descent and ascent of souls being figuratively represented by Jacob's ladder; that all punishments and rewards are exactly fitted to the degree of sin or merit, without possibility of failure; that all suffering—even that in the lowest hell—is benevolent and remedial, so that even the worst spirits, including Satan himself, shall after a time be restored to heaven; that this alternation of fall and restoration shall be continued so often as the cloy and satiety of heavenly bliss, or the preponderant power of temptation, pervert free will into sin.[3] He declared that it was impossible to explain the phenomena and experience of human life, or to justify the ways of God, except by admitting that souls sinned in a pre-existent state. He was ignorant of the modern doctrine of vicarious atonement, considered as placation or satisfaction, and regarded Christ's suffering not as a substitute for ours, but as having merely the same efficacy in kind as the death of any innocent person, only more eminent in degree. He represents the mission of Christ to be to show men that God can forgive and recall them from sin, banishment, and hell, and to furnish them, in various ways, helps and incitements to win salvation. The foregoing assertions, and other kindred points, are well established by Mosheim, in his exposition of the characteristic views of Origen.[4]

The famous controversy between Augustine and Pelagius shook Christendom for a century and a half, and has rolled its echoing results even to the theological shores of to-day. Augustine was more Calvinistic in

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[2] De Principiis, lib. iii. cap. 5. [3] Ibid. lib. ii. cap. 9, 10.

[4] Commentaries on the Affairs of the Christians in the First Three Centuries: Third Century sects. 27–29.

his doctrines than the Fathers before him, and even than most of those after him. In a few particulars perhaps a majority of the Fathers really agreed more nearly with Pelagius than with him. But his system prevailed, and was publicly adopted for all Christendom by the third general council at Ephesus in the year 431. Yet some of its principles, in their full force, were actually not accepted. For instance, his dogma of unconditional election—that some were absolutely predestinated to eternal salvation, others to eternal damnation—has never been taught by the Roman Catholic Church. When Gottschalk urged it in the ninth century, it was condemned as a heresy;[5] and among the Protestants in the sixteenth century Calvin was obliged to fight for it against odds. Augustine's belief must therefore be taken as a representation of the general patristic belief only with caution and with qualifications. The distinctive views of Augustine as contrasted with those of Pelagius were as follow.[6] Augustine held that, by Adam's fault, a burden of sin was entailed on all souls, dooming them, without exception, to an eternal banishment in the infernal world. Pelagius denied the doctrine of "original sin," and made each one responsible only for his own personal sins. Augustine taught that baptism was necessary to free its subject from the power which the devil had over the soul on account of original sin, and that all would infallibly be doomed to hell who were not baptized, except, first, the ancient saints, who foreknew the evangelic doctrines and believed, and, secondly, the martyrs, whose blood was their baptism. Pelagius claimed that Christian baptism was only necessary to secure an entrance into heaven: infants and good men, if unbaptized, would enjoy a happy immortality in Paradise, but they never could enter the kingdom of heaven. Augustine affirmed that Adam's sin destroyed the freedom of the will in the whole human race. Pelagius asserted the freedom of the individual will. Augustine declared that a few were arbitrarily elected to salvation from eternity, and that Christ died only for them. Pelagius taught that salvation or reprobation depended on personal deserts, and that the Divine election was merely through prescience of merits. Augustine said that saving grace was supernatural, irresistible, unattainable by human effort. Pelagius said it might be won or resisted by conformity to certain conditions in each person's power. Augustine believed that bodily death was inflicted as a punishment for sin;[7] Pelagius, that it was the result of a natural law. The extensive, various learning, massive, penetrating mind, and remorseless logical consistency, of Augustine, enabled him to gather up the loose, floating theological elements and notions of the time, and generalize them into a complete system, in striking harmony, indeed, with the general character and

[5] Hagenbach, Dogmengeschichte, sect. 183.

[6] Wiggers, Augustinism and Pelagianism, trans. from the German by R. Emerson, ch. xix.; also pp. 62, 68, 75, 79.

[7] In Gen. lib. ix. cap. 10, 11: "Parents would have yielded to children not by death, but by translation, and would have become as the angels."

drift of patristic thought, but carried out more fully in its details and applied more unflinchingly in its principles than had been done before, and therefore in some of its dogmas outstripping the current convictions of his contemporaries. His dogma of election was too revolting and immoral ever to win universal assent; and few could have the heart to unite with him in stigmatizing the whole human race in their natural state as "one damned batch and mass of perdition!" (*conspersio damnata, massa perditionis.*) With these hints, we are ready to advance to the general patristic scheme of eschatology. The exceptional variations and heresies will be referred to afterwards.

First, in regard to the natural state of men under the law, from the time of Adam's sin to the time of Christ's suffering,—their moral condition and destination,—no one can deny that the Fathers commonly supposed that the dissolution of the body and the descent of the soul to the under-world were a penalty brought on all men through the sin of the first man. Wherever the lengthening line of human generations wandered, the trail of the serpent, stamp of depravity, was on them, sealing them as Death's and marking them for the Hadean prison. This was the indiscriminate and the inevitable doom. There is no need of citing proofs of this statement, as it is well known that the writings of the Fathers are thronged both with indirect implications and with explicit avowals of it.

Secondly, they thought that Christ came from heaven to redeem men from their lost state and subterranean bondage and to guide them to heaven. Augustine, and perhaps some others, maintained that he came merely to effectuate the salvation of a foreordained few; but undoubtedly the common belief was that he came to redeem all who would conform to certain conditions which he proposed and made feasible. The important question here is, What did the Fathers suppose the essence of Christ's redemptive work to be? and how, in their estimation, did he achieve that work? Was it the renewal and sanctification of human character by the melting power of a proclamation of mercy and love from God, by the regenerating influences and motives of the truths and appeals spoken by his lips, illustrated in his life, and brought to a focus in his martyr-death? Certainly this was too plainly and prominently a part of the mission of Christ ever to be wholly overlooked. And yet one acquainted with the writings of the Fathers can hardly mistake so widely as to think that they esteemed this the principal element in Christ's redemptive work. Was the essence of that work, then, the making of a vicarious atonement, according to the Calvinistic interpretation of that phrase, the offering of a substitutional anguish sufficient to satisfy the claims of inexorable justice, so that the guilty might be pardoned? No. The modern doctrine of the atonement—the satisfaction-theory, as it is called—was unknown to the Fathers. It was developed, step by step, after many centuries.[8] It did not receive its acknowledged

[8] Hagenbach, Dogmengeschichte, sect. 68.

form until it came from the mind of the great Archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm, as late as the twelfth century. No scholar will question this confessed fact. What, then, were the essence and method of Christ's redemptive mission according to the Fathers? In brief, they were these. He was, as they believed, a superangelic being, the only-begotten Son of God, possessing a nature, powers, and credentials transcending those delegated to any other being below God himself. He became flesh, to seek and to save the lost. This saving work was done not by his mortal sufferings alone, but by the totality of labors extending through the whole period of his incarnation. The subjective or moral part of his redemptive mission was to regenerate the characters of men and fit them for heaven by his teachings and example; the objective or physical part was to deliver their souls from the fatal confinement of the underworld and secure for them the gracious freedom of the sky, by descending himself as the suppressing conqueror of death and then ascending as the beckoning pioneer of his followers. The Fathers did not select the one point or act of Christ's death as the pivot of human redemption; but they regarded that redemption as wrought out by the whole of his humiliation, instruction, example, suffering, and triumph,—as the resultant of all the combined acts of his incarnate drama. Run over the relevant writings of Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Lactantius, Cyril, Ambrose, Augustine himself, Jerome, Chrysostom, and the rest of the prominent authors of the first ten centuries, and you cannot fail to be struck with the fact that they invariably speak of redemption, not in connection with Christ's death alone, but emphatically in connection with the group of ideas, his incarnation, death, descent, resurrection, and ascension! For the most part, they received it by tradition as a fact, without much philosophizing, that, in consequence of the sin of Adam, all men were doomed to die,—that is, to leave their bodies and descend into the shadowy realm of death. They also accepted it as a fact, without much attempt at theoretical explanation, that when Christ, the sinless and resistless Son of God, died and went thither, before his immaculate Divinity the walls fell, the devils fled, the prisoners' chains snapped, and the power of Satan was broken. They received it as a fact that through the mediation of Christ the original boon forfeited by Adam was to be restored, and that men, instead of undergoing death and banishment to Hades, should be translated to heaven. So far as they had a theory about the cause, it turned on two simple points: first, the free grace and love of God; second, the self-sacrifice and sufficient power of Christ. In the progressive course of dogmatic controversy, metaphysical speculation, and desire for system, explanations have been devised in a hundred different forms, from that of Aquinas to that of Calvin; from that of Anselm to that of Grotius; from that of Socinus to that of Bushnell. Tertullian describes the profound abyss beneath the grave, in the bowels of the earth, where, he says, all the dead are detained unto the day of judgment, and where Christ in his descent

made the patriarchs and prophets his companions.[9] Augustine says that nearly the whole Church agreed in believing that Christ delivered Adam from the under-world when he rose thence himself.[10] One must be very ignorant on the subject to doubt that the Fathers attributed unrivalled importance to the literal descent of Christ into the abode of the departed.[11]

Thirdly, after the advent of Christ, what were the conditions proposed for the actual attainment of personal salvation? It was the orthodox belief that Christ led up into Paradise with him the ancient saints who were awaiting his appearance in the under-world:[12] but with this exception it was not supposed that he saved any outright: he only put it in their power to save themselves, removing the previously insuperable obstacles. In the faith of those who accepted the dogma of predestination, of course, the presupposed condition of actual personal salvation was that the given individual should become one of the elect number. But it seems to have been usually believed that baptism was indispensable to give final efficacy to the decree of election in each individual case.[13] Augustine says, "All are born under the power of the devil, held in chains by him as a jailer: baptism alone, through the force of Christ's redemptive work, breaks these chains and secures heaven." In regard to this necessity of baptism Pelagius agreed with his great adversary, saving an unessential modification, as we have seen before. The same may be said of Cyprian, Tertullian, and many other leading Fathers. Again, the so-called Athanasian Creed, which shows the prevalent opinion of the Church in the fifth and sixth centuries, asserts that whoso believes not in the Trinity and kindred dogmas as therein laid down "without doubt shall perish everlastingly." In other words, assent of mind to the established creed of the Church is a vital condition of salvation. Finally, in the writings of nearly all of the Fathers we find frequent declarations of the necessity of moral virtue, righteous conduct, and piety, as a condition of admission into the kingdom of heaven. For example, Augustine says, "Such as have been baptized, partaken of the sacraments, and remained always in the catholic faith, but have led wicked lives, can have no hope of escaping eternal damnation."[14] These points were not sharply defined, authoritatively established, and consistently adhered to; and yet there was a pretty general agreement among the body of the Fathers that for actual salvation there were three practical necessary conditions,—baptism, a sound faith, a good life.

Fourthly, the Fathers believed that none of the righteous dead could be admitted into heaven itself, the abode of God and his angels, until

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[9] De Anima, sects. 7 et 55. [10] Epist. CLXIV.

[11] Huidekoper, Belief of the First Three Centuries concerning Christ's Mission to the Under-World.

[12] Augustine, De Civ. Dei. lib. xx. cap. xv.

[13] Wiedenfeld, De Exorcismi Origine, Mutatione, deque hujus Actus peragendi Ratione Neander, Church History, vol. i. p. 313, Torrey's trans.

[14] De Civ. Dei., lib. xxi. cap. xxv.

after the second coming of Christ and the holding of the general judgment; neither were any of the reprobate dead, according to their view, to be thrust into hell itself until after those events; but meanwhile all were detained in an intermediate state,—the justified in a peaceful region of the under-world enjoying some foretaste of their future blessedness, the condemned in a dismal region of the same under-world suffering some foretaste of their future torment.[15] After the numerous evidences given in previous chapters of the prevalence of this view among the Fathers, it would be superfluous to cite further authorities here. We will only reply to an objection which may be urged. It may be said, the Fathers believed that Enoch and Elijah were translated to heaven, also that the patriarchs, whom Christ rescued on his descent to Hades, were admitted thither, and, furthermore, that the martyrs by special privilege were granted entrance there. The point is an important one. The reply turns on the broad distinction made by the Fathers between heaven and Paradise. Some of the Fathers regarded Paradise as one division of the under-world; some located it in a remote and blessed region of the earth; others thought it was high in the air, but below the dwelling-place of God.[16] Now, it was to "Paradise," not to heaven, that the dying thief, penitent on the cross, was promised admission. It was of "Paradise," not of heaven, that Tertullian said "the blood of the martyrs is the perfect key." So, too, when Jerome, Chrysostom, and others speak of a few favored ones delivered from the common fate before the day of judgment, it is "Paradise," and not heaven, that is represented as being thrown open to them. Irenæus says, "Those who were translated were translated to the Paradise whence disobedient Adam was driven into the world."[17]

A notable attempt has been repeatedly made—for example, by the famous Dr. Coward, by Dodwell, and by some other more obscure writers—to prove that the Fathers of the Greek Church, in opposition to the Latin Fathers, denied the consciousness of the soul during the interval from death to the resurrection, and maintained that the soul died with the body and would be restored with it at the last day. But this is an error arising from the misinterpretation of the figurative terms in which the Greek Fathers express themselves. Tatian, Justin, Theophilus, and Irenæus do not differ from the others in reality, but only in words. The opinion that the soul is literally mortal is erroneously attributed to those Greek Fathers, who in truth no more held it than Tertullian did. "The death" they mean is, to borrow their own language, "deprived of the rays of Divine light, to bear a deathly immortality," (*in immortalitate mortem tolerantes,*) an eternal existence in the ghostly under-world.[18]

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[15] They feel, as Novatian says, (De Trinitate, 1,) a *præjudicium futuri judicii*. See also Ernesti, Excurs. de Veter. Patrum Opinione de Statu Medio Animor. a Corpore sejunctorum. In his Lect. Acad. in Ep. ad Hebr.

[16] E.g., see Ambrose, De Paradiso.

[17] Adv. Hæres., lib. v. cap. v.

[18] See this point ably argued in an academic dissertation published at Königsberg, 1837, bearing

The concordant doctrine of the Fathers as to the intermediate state of the dead was that, with the exception of a few admitted to Paradise, they were in the under-world waiting the fulness of time, when the world should be judged and their final destination be assigned to them. As Tertullian says, "*constituimus omnem animam apud inferos sequestrari in diem Domini.*"

Finally, the Fathers expected that Christ would return from heaven, hold a general day of judgment, and consummate all things. The earliest disciples seem to have looked anxiously, almost from hour to hour, for that awful crisis. But, as years rolled on and the last apostle died, and it came not, the date was fixed more remotely; and, as other years passed away, and still no clear signs of its arrival appeared, the date grew more and more indefinite. Some still looked for the solemn dawn speedily to break; others assigned it to the year 1000; others left the time utterly vague; but none gave up the doctrine. All agreed that sooner or later a time would come when the deep sky would open, and Christ, clothed in terrors and surrounded by pomp of angels, would alight on the globe, —when

> "The angel of the trumpet
> Shall split the charnel earth
> With his blast so clear and brave,
> And quicken the charnel birth
> At the roots of the grave,
> Till the dead all stand erect."

Augustine, representing the catholic faith, says, "The coming of Elias, the conversion of the Jews, Antichrist's persecution, the setting-up of Christ's tribunal, the raising of the dead, the severing of the good and the bad, the burning of the world, and its renovation,—this is the destined order of events."[19] The saved were to be transported bodily to the eternal bliss of heaven; the damned, in like manner, were to be banished forever to a fiery hell in the centre of the earth, there to endure uncomprehended agonies, both physical and spiritual, without any respite, without any end. There were important, and for a considerable period quite extensive, exceptions, to the belief in this last dogma: nevertheless, such was undeniably the prevailing view, the orthodox doctrine, of the patristic Church. The strict literality with which these doctrines were held is strikingly shown in Jerome's artless question:— "If the dead be not raised with flesh and bones, how can the damned, after the judgment, *gnash their teeth* in hell?"

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the title "Antiquissimorum Ecclesiæ Græcæ Patrum de Immortalitate Animæ Sententiæ Recensentur." They held that the inner man was originally a spirit (πνεῦμα) and a soul (ψυχή) blended and immortal,—that is, indestructibly united and blessed. But by sin the soul loses the spirit and becomes subject to death,—that is, to ignorance of its Divine origin, alienation from God, darkness, and an abode in Hades. By the influences flowing from the mission of Christ, man is elevated again to conscious communion with God, and the spirit is restored to the soul. "Si restituitur, manet ψυχή, fit autem πνευματική; si non restituitur, manet ψυχή, fit autem σαρκική, quod haud differt a morte."

[19] De Civ. Dei, lib. xx. cap. 30, sect. 5.

During the period now under consideration there were great fluctuations, growths, changes, of opinion on three subjects in regard to which the public creeds did not prevent all freedom of thought by laying down definite propositions. We refer to baptism, the millennium, and purgatory. Christian baptism was first simply a rite of initiation into the Christian religion. Then it became more distinctly a symbol of faith in Christ and in his gospel, and an emblem of a new birth. Next it was imagined to be literally efficacious to personal salvation, solving the chains of the devil, washing off original sin, and opening the door of heaven.[20] To trace the doctrine through its historical variations and its logical windings would require a large volume, and is not requisite for our present purpose.

Almost all the early Fathers believingly looked for a millennium, a reign of Christ on earth with his saints for a thousand years. Daillé has shown that this belief was generally held, though with great diversities of conception as to the form and features of the doctrine.[21] It was a Jewish notion which crept among the Christians of the first century and has been transmitted even to the present day. Some supposed the millennium would precede the destruction of the world, others that it would follow that terrible event, after a general renovation. None but the faithful would have part in it; and at its close they would pass up to heaven. Irenæus quotes a tradition, delivered by Papias, that "in the millennium each vine will bear ten thousand branches, each branch ten thousand twigs, each twig ten thousand clusters, each cluster ten thousand grapes, each grape yielding a hogshead of wine; and if any one plucks a grape its neighbors will cry, Take me: I am better!" This, of course, was a metaphor to show what the plenty and the joy of those times would be. According to the heretics Cerinthus and Marcion, the millennium was to consist in an abundance of all sorts of sensual riches and delights. Many of the orthodox Fathers held the same view, but less grossly; while others made its splendors and its pleasures mental and moral.[22] Origen attacked the whole doctrine with vehemence and cogency. His admirers continued the warfare after him, and the belief in this celestial Cocaigne suffered much damage and sank into comparative neglect. The subject rose into importance again at the approaching close of the first chiliad of Christianity, but soon died away as the excitement of that ominous epoch passed with equal disappointment to the hopes and the fears of the believers. A galvanized controversy has been carried on about it again in the present century, chiefly excited by the modern sect of Second-Adventists. Large volumes have recently appeared, principally aiming to decide whether the millennium is to pre-

[20] Neander, Planting and Training, Eng. trans. p. 102.

[21] De Usu Patrum, lib. ii. cap. 4.

[22] Münscher, Entwickelung der Lehre vom Tausendjährigen Reiche in den Drei Ersten Jahrhunderten. In Henke's Magaz. b. vi. ss. 233–254.

cede or to follow the second coming of Christ![23] The doctrine itself is a Jewish-Christian figment supported only by a shadowy basis of fancy. The truth contained in it, though mutilated and disguised, is that when the religion of Christ is truly enthroned over the earth, when his real teachings and life are followed, the kingdom of God will indeed cover the world, and not for a thousand years only, but unimaginable glory and happiness shall fill the dwellings of the successive generations of men forever.[24]

The doctrine of a purgatory—a place intermediate between Paradise and hell, where souls not too sinful were temporarily punished, and where their condition and stay were in the power of the Church on earth,—a doctrine which in the Middle Age became practically the foremost instrument of ecclesiastical influence and income—was through the age of the Fathers gradually assuming shape and firmness. It seems to have been first openly avowed as a Church-dogma and effectively organized as a working power by Pope Gregory the Great, in the latter part of the sixth century.[25] No more needs to be said here, as the subject more properly belongs to the next chapter.

It but remains in close to notice those opinions relating to the future life which were generally condemned as heresies by the Fathers. One of the earliest of these was the destruction of the intermediate state and the denial of the general judgment by the assertion, which Paul charges so early as in his day upon Hymeneus and Philetus, "that the resurrection has passed already;" that is, that the soul, when it leaves the body, passes immediately to its final destination. This opinion reappeared faintly at intervals, but obtained very little prevalence in the early ages of the Church. Hierax, an author who lived at Leontopolis in Egypt early in the fourth century, denied the resurrection of the body, and excluded from the kingdom of heaven all who were married and all who died before becoming moral agents.

Another heretical notion which attracted some attention was the opposite extreme from the foregoing,—namely, that the soul totally dies with the body, and will be restored to life with it in the general resurrection at the end of the world; an opinion held by an Arabian sect of Christians, who were vanquished in debate upon it by Origen, and renounced it.[26]

Still another doctrine known among the Fathers was the belief that Christ, when he descended into the under-world, saved and led away in triumph all who were there,—Jews, pagans, good, bad, all, indiscriminately. This is number seventy-nine in Augustine's list of the heresies.

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[23] See *e. g.* The End, by Dr. Cumming. The Second Advent, by D. Brown.

[24] Bush, On the Millennium. Bishop Russell, Discourses on the Millennium. Corrodi, Geschichte des Chiliasmus.

[25] Flügge, Geschichte der Lehre vom Zustande des Menschen nach dem Tode in der Christlichen Kirche, absch. v. ss. 320–352.

[26] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. cap. 37.

And there is now extant among the writings of Pope Boniface VI., of the ninth century, a letter furiously assailing a man who had recently maintained this "damnable doctrine."

The numerous Gnostic sects represented by Valentinus, Cerinthus, Marcion, Basilides, and other less prominent names, held a system of speculation copious, complex, and of intensely Oriental character. That portion of it directly connected with our subject may be stated in few words. They taught that all souls pre-existed in a world of pure light, but, sinning through the instigation and craft of demons, they fell, were mixed with darkness and matter, and bound in bodies. Through sensual lusts and ignorance, they were doomed to suffer after death in hell for various periods, and then to be born again. Jehovah was the enemy of the true God, and was the builder of this world and of hell, wherein he contrives to keep his victims imprisoned by deceiving them to worship him and to live in errors and indulgences. Christ came, they said, to reveal the true God, unmask the infernal character and wiles of Jehovah, rescue those whom he had cruelly shut up in hell, and teach men the real way of salvation. Accordingly, Marcion declared that when Christ descended into the under-world he released and took into his own kingdom Cain, and the Sodomites, and all the Gentiles who had refused to obey the demon worshipped by the Jews, but left there, unsaved, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and the other patriarchs, together with all the prophets.[27] The Gnostics agreed in attributing evil to matter, and made the means of redemption to consist in fastings and scourgings of the flesh, with denial of all its cravings, and in lofty spiritual contemplations. Of course, with one accord they vehemently assailed the dogma of the resurrection of the flesh. Their views, too, were inconsistent with the strict eternity of future hell-punishments. The fundamental basis of their system was the same as that of nearly all the Oriental philosophies and religions, requiring an ascetic war against the world of sense. The notion that the body is evil, and the cause of evil, was rife even among the orthodox Fathers; but they stopped guardedly far short of the extreme to which the Gnostics carried it, and indignantly rejected all the strange imaginations which those heretics had devised to explain the subject of evil in a systematic manner.[28] Augustine said, "If we say all sin comes from the flesh, we make the fleshless devil sinless!" Hermogenes, some of whose views at least were tinged with Gnosticism, believed the abyss of hell was formed by the confluence of matter, and that the devil and all his demons would at last be utterly resolved into matter.[29]

The theological system of the Manichæan sect was in some of its cardinal principles almost identical with those of the Gnostics, but it was

[27] Irenæus, Adv. Hæres., lib. i. cap. 22.

[28] Account of the Gnostic Sects, in Mosheim's Comm., II. Century, sect. 65.

[29] Lardner's Hist. of Heretics, ch. xviii. sect. 9.

still more imaginative and elaborate.[30] It started with the Persian doctrine of two antagonist deities, one dwelling with good spirits in a world of light and love, the other with demons in a realm of darkness and horror. Upon a time the latter, sallying forth, discovered, far away in the vastness of space, the world of light. They immediately assailed it. They were conquered after a terrible struggle and driven back; but they bore with them captive a multitude of the celestial souls, whom they instantly mixed with darkness and gross matter. The good God built this world of mingled light and darkness to afford these imprisoned souls an opportunity to purge themselves and be restored to him. In arranging the material substances to form the earth, a mass of evil fire, with no particle of good in it, was found. It had been left in their flight by the vanquished princes of darkness. This was cast out of the world and shut up somewhere in the dark air, and is the Manichæan hell, presided over by the king of the demons. If a soul, while in the body, mortify the flesh, observe a severe ascetic moral discipline, fix its thoughts, affections, and prayers on God and its native home, it will on leaving the body return to the celestial light. But if it neglect these duties and become more deeply entangled in the toils of depraved matter, it is cast into the awful fire of hell, where the cleansing flames of torture partially purify it; and then it is born again and put on a new trial. If after ten successive births—twice in each of five different forms—the soul be still unreclaimed, then it is permanently remanded to the furnace of hell. At last, when all the celestial souls seized by the princes of darkness have returned to God, save those just mentioned, this world will be burned. Then the children of God will lead a life of everlasting blessedness with him in their native land of light; the prince of evil, with his fiends, will exist wretchedly in their original realm of darkness. Then all those souls whose salvation is hopeless shall be drawn out of hell and be placed as a cordon of watchmen and a phalanx of soldiers entirely around the world of darkness, to guard its frontiers forever and to see that its miserable inhabitants never again come forth to invade the kingdom of light.[31]

The Christian after Christ's own pattern, trusting that when the soul left the body it would find a home in some other realm of God's universe where its experience would be according to its deserts, capacity, and fittedness, sought to do the Father's will in the present, and for the future committed himself in faith and love to the Father's disposal. The apostolic Christian, conceiving that Christ would soon return to raise the dead and reward his own, eagerly looked for the arrival of that day, and strove that he might be among the saints who, delivered or exempt from the Hadean imprisonment, should reign with the triumphant Messiah on earth and accompany him back to heaven. The patristic

[30] Baur, Das Manichäische Religionssystem.

[31] Mosheim, Comm., III. Century, sects. 44–52.

Christian, looking forward to the divided under-world where all the dead must spend the interval from their decease to the general resurrection, shuddered at the thought of Gehenna, and wrestled and prayed that his tarrying might be in Paradise until Christ should summon his chosen ones, justified from the great tribunal, to the Father's presence. The Manichæan Christian, believing the soul to be imprisoned in matter by demons who fought against God in a previous life, struggled, by fasting, thought, prayer, and penance, to rescue the spirit from its fleshly entanglements, from all worldly snares and illusions, that it might be freed from the necessity of any further abode in a material body, and, on the dissolution of its present tabernacle, might soar to its native light in the blissful pleroma of eternal being.

CHAPTER II.

MEDIÆVAL DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

The period of time covered by the present chapter reaches from the close of the tenth century to the middle of the sixteenth,—from the first full establishment of the Roman Catholic theology and the last general expectation of the immediate end of the world to the commencing decline of mediæval faith and the successful inauguration of the Protestant Reformation. The principal mental characteristic of that age, especially in regard to the subject of the future life, was fear. "Never," says Michelet, "can we know in what terrors the Middle Age lived." There was all abroad a living fear of men, fear of the State, fear of the Church, fear of God, fear of the devil, fear of hell, fear of death. Preaching consisted very much in the invitation, "Submit to the guidance of the Church while you live," enforced by the threat, "or you shall go to hell when you die." Christianity was practically reduced to some cruel metaphysical dogmas, a mechanical device for rescuing the devil's captives from him, and a system of ritual magic in the hands of a priesthood who wielded an authority of supernatural terrors over a credulous and shuddering laity. It is true that the genuine spirit and contents of Christianity were never wholly suppressed. The love of God, the blessed mediation of the benignant Jesus, the lowly delights of the Beatitudes, the redeeming assurance of pardon, the consoling, triumphant expectation of heaven, were never utterly banished even from the believers of the Dark Age. Undoubtedly many a guilty but repentant soul found forgiveness and rest, many a meek and spotless breast was filled with pious rapture, many a dying disciple was comforted and inspired, by the good tidings proclaimed from priestly lips even then. No doubt the

sacred awe and guarded peace surrounding their precincts, the divine lessons inculcated within their walls, the pathetic prayers breathed before their altars, the traditions of saintly men and women who had drawn angelic visitants down to their cells and had risen long ago to be angels themselves, the strains of unearthly melody bearing the hearts of the kneeling crowd into eternity,—no doubt these often made cathedral and convent seem "islands of sanctity amidst the wild, roaring, godless sea of the world." Still, the chief general feeling of the time in relation to the future life was unquestionably fear springing from belief,—the wedlock of superstitious faith and horror.

During the six centuries now under review the Roman Catholic Church and theology were the only Christianity publicly recognised. The heretics were few and powerless, and the papal system had full sway. Since the early part of the period specified, the working theology of the Roman Church has undergone but few, and, as pertaining to our subject, unimportant, changes or developments. Previous to that time her doctrinal scheme was inchoate, gradually assimilating foreign elements and developing itself step by step. The principal changes now concerning us to notice in the passage from patristic eschatology—as deducible, for instance, from the works of Chrysostom, or as seen in the "Apostles' Creed"—to mediæval eschatology—as displayed in the "Summa" of Thomas Aquinas or in the Catechism of Trent—are these. The supposititious details of the under-world have been definitely arranged in greater subdivision; heaven has been opened for the regular admission of certain souls; the loose notions about purgatory have been completed and consolidated; and the whole combined scheme has been organized as a *working instrument* of ecclesiastical power and profit. These changes seem to have been wrought out, first, by continual assimilations of Christianity to paganism,[1] both in doctrine and ceremony, to win over the heathen; and, secondly, by modifications and growths to meet the exigencies of doctrinal consistency and practical efficiency,—exigencies repeatedly arising from philosophical discussion and political opposition.

The degree in which papal Christianity was conformed to the prejudices and customs of the heathen believers, whose allegiance was sought, is astonishing. It extended to hundreds of particulars, from the most fundamental principles of theological speculation to the most trivial details of ritual service. We shall mention only a few instances of this kind immediately belonging to the subject we are treating. In the first place, the hierophant in the pagan Mysteries, and the initiatory rites, were the prototypes of the Roman Catholic bishop and the ceremonies under his direction.[2] Christian baptism was made to be the same as the pagan initiation: both were supposed to cleanse from sin and to secure for their

[1] Middleton, Letter from Rome, showing an exact conformity between Popery and Paganism.
[2] Lobeck, Aglaophamus, lib. i. sect. 6. Mosheim's Comm., ch. i. sect. 13.

subject a better fate in the future life: they were both, therefore, sometimes delayed until just before death.[3] The custom of initiating children into the Mysteries was also common, as infant baptism became.[4] When the public treasury was low, the magistrates sometimes raised a fund by recourse to the initiating fees of the Mysteries, as the Christian popes afterwards collected money from the sale of pardons.

In the second place, the Roman Catholic canonization was the same as the pagan apotheosis. Among the Gentiles, the mass of mankind were supposed to descend to Hades at death; but a few favored ones were raised to the sky, deified, and a sort of worship paid to them. So the Roman Church taught that nearly all souls passed to the subterranean abodes, but that martyrs and saints were admitted to heaven and might lawfully be prayed to.[5]

Thirdly, the heathen under-world was subdivided into several regions, wherein different persons were disposed according to their deserts. The worst criminals were in the everlasting penal fire of Tartarus; the best heroes and sages were in the calm meadows of Elysium; the hapless children were detained in the dusky borders outside the grim realm of torture; and there was a purgatorial place where those not too guilty were cleansed from their stains. In like manner, the Romanist theologians divided the under-world into four parts: hell for the final abode of the stubbornly wicked; one limbo for the painless, contented tarrying of the good patriarchs who died before the advent of Christ had made salvation possible, and another limbo for the sad and pallid resting-place of those children who died unbaptized; purgatory, in which expiation is offered in agony for sins committed on earth and unatoned for.[6]

Before proceeding further, we must trace the prevalence and progress of the doctrine of purgatory a little as it was known before its embodiment in mediæval mythology, and then as it was embodied there. The fundamental doctrine of the Hindu hell was that a certain amount of suffering undergone there would expiate a certain amount of guilt incurred here. When the disembodied soul had endured a sufficient quantity of retributive and purifying pain, it was loosed, and sent on earth in a new body. It was likewise a Hindu belief that the souls of deceased parents might be assisted out of this purgatorial woe by the prayers and offerings of their surviving children.[7] The same doctrine was held by the Persians. They believed souls could be released from purgatory by the prayers, sacrifices, and good deeds of righteous surviving descendants and friends. "Zoroaster said he could, by prayer, send any one he chose to heaven or to hell."[8] Such representations are found obscurely in the Vendidad and more fully in the Bundehesh. The

[3] Warburton, Div. Leg., book ii. sect. 4. [4] Terence, Phormio, act i. scene 1.

[5] Council of Trent, sess. vi. can. xxx. Sess. xxv.: Decree on Invocation of Saints.

[6] See Milman, Hist. Latin Christianity, book xiv. ch. ii.

[7] See references to "Sraddha" in index to Vishnu Purana.

[8] Atkinson's trans. of the Shâh-Nâmeh, p. 886.

Persian doctrine that the living had power to affect the condition of the dead is further indicated in the fact that, from a belief that married persons were peculiarly happy in the future state, they often hired persons to be espoused to such of their relatives as had died in celibacy.[9] The doctrine of purgatory was known and accepted among the Jews too. In the Second Book of Maccabees we read the following account:—"Judas sent two thousand pieces of silver to Jerusalem to defray the expense of a sin-offering to be offered for the sins of those who were slain,—doing therein very well and honestly, in that he was mindful of the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that they who were slain should rise again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. Whereupon he made an atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin."[10] The Rabbins taught that children by sin-offerings could help their parents out of their misery in the infernal world.[11] They taught, furthermore, that all souls except holy ones, like those of Rabbi Akiba and his disciples, must lave themselves in the fire-river of Gehenna; that therein they shall be like salamanders; that the just shall soon be cleansed in the fire-river, but the wicked shall be lastingly burned.[12] Again, we find this doctrine prevailing among the Romans. In the great Forum was a stone called "Lapis Manalis," described by Festus, which was supposed to cover the entrance to hell. This was solemnly lifted three times a year, in order to let those souls flow up whose sins had been purged away by their tortures or had been remitted in consideration of the offerings and services paid for them by the living. Virgil describes how souls are purified by the action of wind, water, and fire.[13] The feast-day of purgatory observed by papal Rome corresponds to the Lemuria celebrated by pagan Rome, and rests on the same doctrinal basis. In the Catholic countries of Europe at the present time, on All Saints' Day, festoons of sweet-smelling flowers are hung on the tombstones, and the people kneeling there repeat the prayer prescribed for releasing the souls of their relatives and friends from the plagues of purgatory. There is a notable coincidence between the Buddhist and the Romanist usages. Throughout the Chinese Empire, during the seventh moon of every year, prayers are offered up—accompanied by illuminations and other rites—for the release of souls in purgatory. At these times the Buddhist priests hang up large pictures, showing forth the frightful scenes in the other world, to induce the people to pay them money for prayers in behalf of their suffering relatives and friends in purgatory.[14]

Traces of belief in a purgatory early appear among the Christians. Many of the gravest Fathers of the first five centuries naturally con-

[9] Richardson, Dissertation on the Language, Literature, and Manners of the Eastern Nations, p. 347.

[10] Cap. xii. 42–45.

[11] Eisenmenger, Entdecktes Judenthum, th. ii. kap. vi. s. 357.

[12] Kabbala Denudata, tom. ii. pars. i. pp. 108, 109, 113.

[13] Æneid, lib. vi. l. 739.

[14] Asiatic Journal, 1840, p. 210, note.

ceived and taught,—as is indeed intrinsically reasonable,—that after death some souls will be punished for their sins until they are cleansed, and then will be released from pain. The Manichæans imagined that all souls, before returning to their native heaven, must be borne first to the moon, where with good waters they would be washed pure from outward filth, and then to the sun, where they would be purged by good fires from every inward stain.[15] After these lunar and solar lustrations, they were fit for the eternal world of light. But the conception of purgatory as it was held by the early Christians, whether orthodox Fathers or heretical sects, was merely the just and necessary result of applying to the subject of future punishment the two ethical ideas that punishment should partake of degrees proportioned to guilt, and that it should be restorative. Jeremy Taylor conclusively argues that the prayers for the dead used by the early Christians do not imply any belief in the Papal purgatory.[16] The severity and duration of the sufferings of the dead were not supposed to be in the power of the living,—either their relatives or the clergy,—but to depend on the moral and physical facts of the case according to justice and necessity, qualified only by the mercy of God.

Pope Gregory the Great, in the sixth century,—either borrowing some of the more objectionable features of the purgatory-doctrine previously held by the heathen, or else devising the same things himself from a perception of the striking adaptedness of such notions to secure an enviable power to the Church,—constructed, established, and gave working efficiency to the dogmatic scheme of purgatory ever since firmly defended by the papal adherents as an integral part of the Roman Catholic system.[17] The doctrine as matured and promulgated by Gregory, giving to the representatives of the Church an almost unlimited power over purgatory, rapidly grew into favor with the clergy and sank with general conviction into the hopes and fears of the laity. Venerable Bede, in the eighth century, gives a long account of the fully-developed doctrine concerning purgatory, hell, paradise, and heaven. It is narrated in the form of a vision seen by Drithelm, who, in a trance, visits the regions which, on his return, he describes. The whole thing is gross, literal, horrible, closely resembling several well-known descriptions given under similar circumstances and preserved in ancient heathen writers.[18] The Church, seeing how admirably this instrument was calculated to promote her interest and deepen her power, left hardly any means untried to enlarge its sweep and intensify its operation. Accordingly, from the ninth to the sixteenth century, no doctrine was so central, prominent, and effective in the common teaching and practice of the Church, no fear was so widely spread

[15] Mosheim, Comm., III. Century, sect. 49, note 3.
[16] Dissuasive from Popery, part ii. book ii. sect. 2.
[17] Edgar, Variations of Popery, ch. xvi.
[18] Hist. Ecc., lib. v. cap. xii. See also lib. iii. cap. xix.

and vividly felt in the bosom of Christendom, as the doctrine and the fear of purgatory.

The Romanist theory of man's condition in the future life is this, in brief. By the sin of Adam, heaven was closed against him and all his posterity, and the devil acquired a right to shut up their disembodied souls in the under-world. In consequence of the "original sin" transmitted from Adam, every human being, besides suffering the other woes flowing from sin, was helplessly doomed to the under-world after death. In addition to this penalty, each one must also answer for his own personal sins. Christ died to "deliver mankind from sin," "discharge the punishment due them," and "rescue them from the tyranny of the devil." He "descended into the under-world," "subdued the devil," "despoiled the depths," "rescued the Fathers and just souls," and "opened heaven."[19] "Until he rose, heaven was shut against every child of Adam, as it still is to those who die indebted." "The price paid by the Son of God far exceeded our debts." The surplus balance of merits, together with the merits accruing from the supererogatory good works of the saints and from the Divine sacrifice continually offered anew by the sacrament of the mass, constituted a reserved treasure upon which the Church was authorized to draw in behalf of any one she chose to favor. The localities of the future life were these:[20]—Limbus Patrum, or Abraham's Bosom, a place of peace and waiting, where the good went who died before Christ; Limbus Infantum, a mild, palliated hell, where the children go who, since Christ, have died unbaptized; Purgatory, where all sinners suffer until they are purified, or are redeemed by the Church, or until the last day; Hell, or Gehenna, whither the hopelessly wicked have always been condemned; and Heaven, whither the spotlessly good have been admitted since the ascension of Jesus. At the day of judgment the few human souls who have reached Paradise, together with the multitudes that crowd the regions of Gehenna, Purgatory, and Limbo, will reassume their bodies: the intermediate states will then be destroyed, and when their final sentence is pronounced all will depart forever,—the acquitted into heaven, the condemned into hell. In the mean time, the poor victims of purgatory, by the prayers of the living for them, by the transfer of good works to their account,—above all, by the celebration of masses in their behalf,—may be relieved, rescued, translated to paradise. The words breathed by the spirit of the murdered King of Denmark in the ears of the horror-stricken Hamlet paint the popular belief of that age in regard to the grisly realm where guilty souls were plied with horrors whereof, but that they were forbidden

> "To tell the secrets of their prison-house,
> They could a tale unfold whose lightest word

[19] Catechism of the Council of Trent.

[20] Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiæ, pars iii. Suppl. Quæst. 69.

> Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
> Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
> Thy knotted and combinéd locks to part,
> And each particular hair to stand on end
> Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

A few specimens of the stories embodying the ideas and superstitions current in the Middle Age may better illustrate the characteristic belief of the time than much abstract description. An unquestioning faith in the personality, visibility, and extensive agency of the devil was almost universal. Ascetics, saints, bishops, peasants, philosophers, kings, Gregory the Great, Martin Luther, all testified that they had often seen him. The mediæval conception of the devil was sometimes comical, sometimes awful. Grimm says, "He was Jewish, heathenish, Christian, idolatrous, elfish, titanic, spectral, all at once." He was "a soul-snatching wolf," a "hell-hound," a "whirlwind hammer;" now an infernal "parody of God" with "a mother who mimics the Virgin Mary," and now the "impersonated soul of evil."[n] The well-known story of Faust and the Devil, which in so many forms spread through Christendom, is so deeply significant of the faith and life of the age in which it arose that a volume would be required to unfold all its import. There was an old tradition that the students of necromancy or the black art, on reaching a certain pitch of proficiency, were obliged to run through a subterranean hall, where the devil literally caught the hindmost unless he sped so swiftly that the arch-enemy could only seize his *shadow*, and in that case, a veritable Peter Schlemihl, he never cast a shadow afterwards! A man stood by his furnace one day casting eyes for buttons. The devil came up and asked what he was doing. "Casting eyes," replied the man. "Can you cast a pair for me?" quoth the devil. "That I can," says the man: "will you have them large or small?" "Oh, very large," answered the devil. He then ties the fiend on a bench and pours the molten lead into his eyes. Up jumps the devil, with the bench on his back, flees howling, and has never been *seen* since! There was also in wide circulation a wild legend to the effect that a man made a compact with the devil on the condition that he should secure a new victim for hell once in a century. As long as he did this he should enjoy life, riches, power, and a limited ubiquity; but failing a fresh victim at the end of each hundred years his own soul should be the forfeit. He lived four or five centuries, and then, in spite of his most desperate efforts, was disappointed of his expected victim on the last night of the century; and when the clock struck twelve the devil burst into his castle on a black steed and bore him off in a storm of lightning amidst the crash of thunders and the shrieks of fiends. St. Britius once during mass saw the devil in church taking account of the sins the congregation were committing. He covered the parchment all over, and, afraid of forgetting some of the offences, seized the scroll in his teeth and claws to stretch it out. It snapped, and his head was smartly bumped against the wall. St. Britius laughed aloud. The offi-

[n] Deutsche Mythologie, cap. xxxiii.: Teufel.

ciating priest rebuked him, but, on being told what had happened, improved the accident for the edification of his hearers.[22] On the bursting of a certain glacier on the Alps, it is said the devil was seen swimming down the Rhone, a drawn sword in one hand, a golden ball in the other: opposite the town of Martigny, he cried, "Rise," and instantly the obedient river swelled above its banks and destroyed the town.

Ignes-fatui, hovering about marshes and misty places, were thought to be the spirits of unbaptized children endeavoring to guide travellers to the nearest water. A kindred fancy also heard a spectral pack, called "yell-hounds," afterwards corrupted to "hell-hounds," composed of the souls of unbaptized children, which could not rest, but roamed and howled through the woods all night.[23] A touching popular myth said, the robin's breast is so red because it flies into hell with drops of water in its bill to relieve the children there, and gets scorched.

In 1171, Silo, a philosopher, implored a dying pupil of his to come back and reveal his state in the other world. A few days after his death the scholar appeared in a cowl of flames covered with logical propositions. He told Silo that he was from purgatory, that the cowl weighed on him worse than a tower, and said he was doomed to wear it for the pride he took in sophisms. As he thus spoke he let fall a drop of sweat on his master's hand, piercing it through. The next day Silo said to his scholars, "I leave croaking to frogs, cawing to crows, and vain things to the vain, and hie me to the logic which fears not death."

"Linquo coax ranis, cras corvis, vanaque vanis,
Ad logicen pergo quæ mortis non timet ergo."[24]

In the long, quaint poem, "Vision of William concerning Piers Ploughman," written probably by Robert Langland about the year 1362, there are many things illustrative of our subject. "I, Trojanus, a true knight, after death was condemned to hell for dying unbaptized. But, on account of my mercy and truth in administering the laws, the pope wished me to be saved; and God mercifully heard him and saved me without the help of masses."[25] "Ever since the fall of Adam, Age has shaken the Tree of Human Life, and the devil has gathered the fruit into hell."[26] The author gives a most spirited account of Christ's descent into the under-world after his death, his battle with the devils there, his triumph over them, his rescue of Adam, and other particulars.[27] In this poem, as in nearly all the extant productions of that period, there are copious evidences of the extent and power of the popular faith in the devil and in purgatory, and in their close connection with the present life,—a faith nourishingly embodied in thousands of singular tales. Thomas Wright has collected many of these in his antiquarian works. He relates an amusing incident that once befell a minstrel who had been

[22] Quarterly Review, Jan. 1820: Pop. Myth. of the Middle Ages.
[23] Allies, Antiquities of Worcestershire, 2d ed. p. 256.
[24] Michelet, Hist. de France, livre iv. chap. ix.
[25] Vision of Dowell, part iii.
[26] Vision of Dobet, part ii.
[27] Ibid., part iv.

borne into hell by a devil. The devils went forth in a troop to ensnare souls on earth. Lucifer left the minstrel in charge of the infernal regions, promising, if he let no souls escape, to treat him on the return with a fat monk roasted, or a usurer dressed with hot sauce. But while the fiends were away St. Peter came, in disguise, and allured the minstrel to play at dice, and to stake the souls which were in torture under his care. Peter won, and carried them off in triumph. The devils, coming back and finding the fires all out and hell empty, kicked the hapless minstrel out, and Lucifer swore a big oath that no minstrel should ever darken the door of hell again!

The mediæval belief in a future life was practically concentrated, for the most part, around the ideas of Satan, purgatory, the last judgment, hell. The faith in Christ, God, heaven, was much rarer and less influential. Neander says, "The inmost distinction of mediæval experience was an awful sense of another life and an invisible world." A most piteous illustration of the conjoined faith and fear of that age is furnished by an old dialogue between the "Soul and the Body" recently edited by Halliwell, an expression of humble trust and crouching horror irresistibly pathetic in its simplicity.[28] A flood of revealing light is given as to the energy with which the doctrine of purgatory impressed itself on the popular mind, by the two facts, first, that the Council of Auxerre, in 1578, prohibited the administration of the eucharist *to the dead;* and, secondly, that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries "crosses of absolution"—that is, crosses cut out of sheet lead, with the formula of absolution engraved on them—were quite commonly buried with the dead.[29] The eager sincerity of the mediæval belief in another life is attested, too, by the correspondence of the representations of the dead in their legends to the appearance, disposition, and pursuits they had in life. No oblivious draught, no pure spiritualization, had freed the departed souls from earthly bonds and associations. Light pretexts drew them back to their wonted haunts. A buried treasure allowed them no rest till they had led some one to raise it. An unfinished task, an uncancelled obligation, forced them again to the upper-world. In ruined castles the ghosts of knights, in their accustomed habiliments, held tournaments and carousals. The priest read mass; the hunter pursued his game; the spectre-robber fell on the benighted traveller.[30] It is hard for us now to reproduce, even in imagination, the fervid and frightful earnestness of the popular faith of the Middle Age in the ramifying agency of the devil and in the horrors of purgatory. We will try to do it, in some degree, by a series of illustrations aiming to show at once how prevalent such a belief and fear were, and how they became so prevalent.

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[28] Early English Miscellanies, No. 2.

[29] London Antiquaries' Archæologia, vol. xxxv. art. 22.

[30] Thorpe, Northern Mythology, vol. i., appendix.

First, we may specify the teaching of the Church whose authority in spiritual concerns bore almost unquestioned sway over the minds of more than eighteen generations. By the logical subtleties of her scholastic theologians, by the persuasive eloquence of her popular preachers, by the frantic ravings of her fanatic devotees, by the parading proclamation of her innumerable pretended miracles, by the imposing ceremonies of her dramatic ritual,—almost visibly opening heaven and hell to the overawed congregation,—by her wonder-working use of the relics of martyrs and saints to exorcise demons from the possessed and to heal the sick, and by her anathemas against all who were supposed to be hostile to her formulas, she infused the ideas of her doctrinal system into the intellect, heart, and fancy of the common people, and nourished the collateral horrors, until every wave of her wand convulsed the world. In a pastoral letter addressed to the Carlovingian prince Louis, the grandson of Charlemagne,—a letter probably composed by the famous Hincmar, bearing date 858, and signed by the Bishops of Rheims and Rouen,—a Gallic synod authoritatively declared that Charles Martel was damned; "that on the opening of his tomb the spectators were affrighted by a smell of fire and the aspect of a horrid dragon, and that a saint of the times was indulged with a pleasant vision of the soul and body of this great hero burning to all eternity in the abyss of hell." A tremendous impulse, vivifying and emphasizing the eschatological notions of the time,—an impulse whose effects did not cease when it died,—was imparted by that frightful epidemic expectation of the impending end of the world which wellnigh universally prevailed in Christendom about the year 1000. Many of the charters given at that time commence with the words, "As the world is now drawing to a close."[31] This expectation drew additional strength from the unutterable sufferings—famine, oppression, pestilence, war, superstition—then weighing on the people. "The idea of the end of the world,"—we quote from Michelet,—"sad as that world was, was at once the hope and the terror of the Middle Age. Look at those antique statues of the tenth and eleventh centuries, mute, meager, their pinched and stiffened lineaments grinning with a look of living suffering allied to the repulsiveness of death. See how they implore, with clasped hands, that desired yet dreaded moment when the resurrection shall redeem them from their unspeakable sorrows and raise them from nothingness into existence and from the grave to God."

Furthermore, this superstitious character of the mediæval belief in the future life acquired breadth and intensity from the profound general ignorance and trembling credulousness of that whole period on all subjects. It was an age of marvels, romances, fears, when every landscape of life "wore a strange hue, as if seen through the sombre medium of a stained casement." While congregations knelt in awe beneath the lifted

[31] Hallam, Middle Ages, ch. ix.

Host, and the image of the dying Savior stretched on the rood glimmered through clouds of incense, perhaps an army of Flagellants would march by the cathedral, shouting, "The end of the world is at hand!" filling the streets with the echoes of their torture as they lashed their naked backs with knotted cords wet with blood; and no soul but must shudder with the infection of horror as the dreadful notes of the "*Dies Iræ*" went sounding through the air. The narratives of the desert Fathers, the miracles wrought in convent-cells, the visions of pillar-saints, the thrilling accompaniments of the Crusades, and other kindred influences, made the world a perpetual mirage. The belching of a volcano was the vomit of uneasy hell. The devil stood before every tempted man. Ghosts walked in every nightly dell. Ghastly armies were seen contending where the aurora borealis hung out its bloody banners. The Huns under Attila, ravaging Southern Europe, were thought to be literal demons who had made an irruption from the pit. The metaphysician was in peril of the stake as a heretic, the natural philosopher as a magician. A belief in witchcraft and a trust in ordeals were universal, even from Pope Eugenius, who introduced the trial by cold water, and King James, who wrote volumes on magic, to the humblest monk who shuddered when passing the church-crypt, and the simplest peasant who quaked in his homeward path at seeing a will-o'-the-wisp. "Denounced by the preacher and consigned to the flames by the judge, the wizard received secret-service-money from the Cabinet to induce him to destroy the hostile armament as it sailed before the wind." As a vivid writer has well said, "A gloomy mist of credulity enwrapped the cathedral and the hall of justice, the cottage and the throne. In the dank shadows of the universal ignorance a thousand superstitions, like foul animals of night, were propagated and nourished."

The beliefs and excitements of the mediæval period partook of a sort of epidemic character, diffusing and working like a contagion.[32] There were numberless throngs of pilgrims to famous shrines, immense crowds about the localities of popular legends, relics, or special grace. In the magnetic sphere of such a fervid and credulous multitude, filled with the kindling interaction of enthusiasm, of course prodigies would abound, fables would flourish, and faith would be doubly generated and fortified. In commemoration of a miraculous act of virtue performed by St. Francis, the pope offered to all who should enter the church at Assisi between the eve of the 1st and the eve of the 2d of August each year—that being the anniversary of the saint's achievement—a free pardon for all the sins committed by them since their baptism. More than sixty thousand pilgrims sometimes flocked thither on that day. Every year some were crushed to death in the suffocating pressure at the entrance of the church. Nearly two thousand friars walked in procession; and for a series of

[32] Hecker, Epidemics of the Middle Ages.

years the pilgrimage to Portiuncula might have vied with that to the temple of Juggernaut.[33]

Nothing tends more to strengthen any given belief than to see it everywhere carried into practice and to act in accordance with it. Thus was it with the mediæval doctrine of the future life. Its applications and results were constantly and universally thrust into notice by the sale of indulgences and the launching of excommunications. Early in the ninth century, Charlemagne complained that the bishops and abbots forced property from foolish people by promises and threats:—"*Suadendo de cælestis regni beatitudine, comminando de æterno supplicio inferni.*"[34] The rival mendicant orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans, acquired great riches and power by the traffic in indulgences. They even had the impudence to affirm that the members of their orders were privileged above all other men in the next world. Milton alludes to those who credited these monstrous assumptions:—

> "And they who, to be sure of Paradise,
> Dying, put on the weeds of Dominic,
> Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised."

The Council of Basle censured the claim of the Franciscan monks that their founder annually descended to purgatory and led thence to heaven the souls of all those who had belonged to his order. The Carmelites also asserted that the Virgin Mary appeared to Simon Stockius, the general of their order, and gave him a solemn promise that the souls of such as left the world with the Carmelite scapulary upon their shoulders should be infallibly preserved from eternal damnation. Mosheim says that Pope Benedict XIV. was an open defender of this ridiculous fiction.[35]

If any one would appreciate the full mediæval doctrine of the future life, whether with respect to the hair-drawn scholastic metaphysics by which it was defended, or with respect to the concrete forms in which the popular apprehension held it, let him read the Divina Commedia of Dante; for it is all there. Whoso with adequate insight and sympathy peruses the pages of the immortal Florentine—at whom the people pointed as he walked the streets, and said, "There goes the man who has been in hell"—will not fail to perceive with what a profound sincerity the popular breast shuddered responsive to ecclesiastical threats and purgatorial woes.

The tremendous moral power of this solitary work lies in the fact that it is a series of terrific and fascinating tableaux, embodying the idea of inflexible poetic justice impartially administered upon king and varlet, pope and beggar, oppressor and victim, projected amidst the unalterable necessities of eternity, and moving athwart the lurid abyss and the azure

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[33] Quarterly Review, July, 1819: article on Monachism.

[34] Perry, History of the Franks, p. 467.

[35] Eccl. Hist., XIII. Century, part ii. ch. 2, sect. 29.

cope with an intense distinctness that sears the gazer's eyeballs. The Divina Commedia, with a wonderful truth, also reflects the feeling of the age when it was written in this respect,—that there is a grappling force of attraction, a compelling realism, about its "Purgatory" and "Hell" which are to be sought in vain in the delineations of its "Paradise." The mediæval belief in a future life had for its central thought the day of judgment, for its foremost emotion terror.[36]

The roots of this faith were unquestionably fertilized, and the development of this fear quickened, to a very great extent, by deliberate and systematic delusions. One of the most celebrated of these organized frauds was the gigantic one perpetrated under the auspices of the Dominican monks at Berne in 1509, the chief actors in which were unmasked and executed. Bishop Burnet has given an extremely interesting account of this affair in his volume of travels. Suffice it to say, the monks appeared at midnight in the cells of various persons, now impersonating devils, in horrid attire, breathing flames and brimstone, now claiming to be the souls of certain sufferers escaped from purgatory, and again pretending to be celebrated saints, with the Virgin Mary at their head. By the aid of mechanical and chemical arrangements, they wrought miracles, and played on the terror and credulity of the spectators in a frightful manner.[37] There is every reason to suppose that such deceptions—miracles in which secret speaking-tubes, asbestos, and phosphorus were indispensable[38]—were most frequent in those ages, and were as effective as the actors were unscrupulous and the dupes unsuspicious. Here is revealed one of the foremost of the causes which made the belief of the Dark Age in the numerous appearances of ghosts and devils so common and so intense that it gave currency to the notion that the swarming spirits of purgatory were disembogued from dusk till dawn. So the Danish monarch, revisiting the pale glimpses of the moon, says to Hamlet,—

> "I am thy father's spirit,
> Doom'd for a certain time to walk the night,
> And for the day confined to fast in fires,
> Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
> Are burnt and purged away."

When the shadows began to fall thick behind the sunken sun, these poor creatures were thought to spring from their beds of torture, to wander amidst the scenes of their sins or to haunt the living; but at the earliest scent of morn, the first note of the cock, they must hie to their fire again. Midnight was the high noon of ghostly and demoniac revelry on the earth. As the hour fell with brazen clang from the tower, the belated traveller, afraid of the rustle of his own dress, the echo of his

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[36] If any one would see in how many forms the faith in hell and in the devil appeared, let him look over the pages of the "Dictionnaire Infernal," by J. Collin de Plancy.

[37] Maclaine's trans. of Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., vol. ii. p. 10, note.

[38] Manufactures of the Ancients, pub. by Harper and Brothers, 1845, part iv. ch. 3.

own footfall, the wavering of his own shadow, afraid of his own thoughts, would breathe the suppressed invocation,—

> "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"

as the idea crept curdling over his brain and through his veins,—

> "It is the very witching time of night,
> When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
> Contagion to this world."

Working in alliance with the foregoing forces of superstition was the powerful influence of the various forms of insanity which remarkably abounded in the Middle Age. The insane person, it was believed, was possessed by a demon. His ravings, his narratives, were eagerly credited; and they were usually full of infernal visions, diabolical interviews, encounters with apparitions, and every thing that would naturally arise in a deranged and preternaturally sensitive mind from the chief conceptions then current concerning the invisible world.[39]

The principal works of art exposed to the people were such as served to impress upon their imaginations the Church-doctrine of the future life in all its fearfulness, with its vigorous dramatic points. In the cathedral at Antwerp there is a representation of hell carved in wood, whose marvellous elaborateness astonishes, and whose painful expressiveness oppresses, every beholder. With what excruciating emotions the pious crowds must have contemplated the harrowingly vivid paintings of the Inferno, by Orcagna, still to be seen in the Campo Santo of Pisa! In the cathedral at Canterbury there was a window on which was painted a detailed picture of Christ vanquishing the devils in their own domain; but we believe it has been removed. However, the visitor still sees on the fine east window of York Cathedral the final doom of the wicked, hell being painted as an enormous mouth; also in the west front of Lincoln Cathedral an ancient bas-relief representing hell as a monstrous mouth vomiting flame and serpents, with two human beings walking into it. The minster at Freyburg has a grotesque bas-relief over its main portal, representing the Judgment. St. Nicholas stands in the centre, and the Savior is seated above him. On the left, an angel weighs mankind in a huge pair of scales, and a couple of malicious imps try to make the human scale kick the beam. Underneath, St. Peter is ushering the good into Paradise. On the right is shown a devil, with a pig's head, dragging after him a throng of the wicked. He also has a basket on his back filled with figures whom he is in the act of flinging into a reeking caldron stirred by several imps. Hell is typified, on one side, by the jaws of a monster crammed to the teeth with reprobates, and Satan is seen sitting on his throne above them. A recent traveller writes from Naples, "The favorite device on the church-walls here is a vermilion picture of a male and a female soul, respectively up to the waist [the *waist* of a *soul!*] in fire, with an angel over each watering them from a water-pot. This is meant

[39] De Boismont, Rational Hist. of Hallucinations, ch. xiv.

to get money from the compassionate to pay for the saying of masses in behalf of souls in purgatory." Ruskin has described some of the church-paintings of the Last Judgment by the old masters as possessing a power even now sufficient to stir every sensibility to its depths. Such works, gazed on day after day, while multitudes were kneeling beneath in the shadowy aisles, and clouds of incense were floating above, and the organ was pealing and the choir chanting in full accord, must produce lasting effects on the imagination, and thus contribute in return to the faith and fear which inspired them.

Villani—as also Sismondi—gives a description of a horrible representation of hell shown at Florence in 1304 by the inhabitants of San Priano, on the river Arno. The glare of flames, the shrieks of men disguised as devils, scenes of infernal torture, filled the night. Unfortunately, the scaffolding broke beneath the crowd, and many spectators were burned or drowned, and that which began as an entertaining spectacle ended as a direful reality. The whole affair is a forcible illustration of the literality with which the popular mind and faith apprehended the notion of the infernal world.

Another means by which the views we have been considering were both expressed and recommended to the senses and belief of the people was those miracle-plays that formed one of the most peculiar features of the Middle Age. These plays, founded on, and meant to illustrate, Scripture narratives and theological doctrines, were at first enacted by the priests in the churches, afterwards by the various trading-companies or guilds of mechanics. In 1210, Pope Gregory "forbade the clergy to take any part in the plays in churches or in the mummings at festivals." A similar prohibition was published by the Council of Treves, in 1227. The Bishop of Worms, in 1316, issued a proclamation against the abuses which had crept into the festivities of Easter, and gives a long and curious description of them.[49] There were two popular festivals,—of which Michelet gives a full and amusing description,—one called the "Fête of the Tipsy Priests," when they elected a Bishop of Unreason, offered him incense of burned leather, sang obscene songs in the choir, and turned the altar into a dice-table; the other called the "Fête of the Cuckolds," when the laymen crowned each other with leaves, the priests wore their surplices wrong side out and threw bran in each others' eyes, and the bell-ringers pelted each other with biscuits. There is a religious play by Calderon, entitled "The Divine Orpheus," in which the entire Church-scheme of man's fall—the devil's empire, Christ's descent there, and the victorious sequel—is embodied in a most effective manner. In the priestly theology and in the popular heart of those times there was no other single particular one-tenth part so prominent and vivid as that of Christ's entrance after his death into hell to rescue the old saints and break down Satan's

[49] Early Mysteries and Latin Poems of the XII. and XIII. Centuries, edited by Thomas Wright.

power.[41] Peter Lombard says, "What did the Redeemer do to the despot who had us in his bonds? He offered him the cross as a mouse-trap, and put his blood on it as bait."[42] About that scene there was an incomparable fascination for every believer. Christ laid aside his Godhead and died. The devil thought he had secured a new victim, and humanity swooned in grief and despair. But, lo!. the Crucified, descending to the inexorable dungeons, puts on all his Divinity, and suddenly

> "The captive world awakt, and founde
> The pris'ner loose, the jailer bounde!"[43]

A large proportion of the miracle-plays, or Mysteries, turned on this event. In the "Mystery of the Resurrection of Christ" occurs the following couplet:—

> "This day the angelic King has risen,
> Leading the pious from their prison."[44]

The title of one of the principal plays in the Towneley Mysteries is "Extractio Animarum ab Inferno." It describes Christ descending to the gates of hell to claim his own. Adam sees afar the gleam of his coming, and with his companions begins to sing for joy. The infernal porter shouts to the other demons, in alarm,—

> "Since first that hell was made and I was put therein,
> Such sorrow never ere I had, nor heard I such a din.
> My heart begins to start; my wit it waxes thin;
> I am afraid we can't rejoice,—these souls must from us go.
> Ho, Beelzebub! bind these boys: such noise was never heard in hell."

Satan vows he will dash Beelzebub's brains out for frightening him so. Meanwhile, Christ draws near, and says, "Lift up your gates, ye princes, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." The portals fly asunder. Satan shouts up to his friends, "Dyng the dastard down;" but Beelzebub replies, "That is easily said." Jesus and the devil soon meet, face to face. A long colloquy ensues, in the course of which the latter tells the former that he knew his Father well by sight! At last Jesus frees Adam, Eve, the prophets, and others, and ascends, leaving the devil in the lowest pit, resolving that hell shall soon be fuller than before; for he will walk east and he will walk west, and he will seduce thousands from their allegiance. Another play, similar to the foregoing, but much more extensively known and acted, was called the "Harrowing of Hell." Christ and Satan appear on the stage and argue in the most approved scholastic style for the right of possession in the human race. Satan says,—

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[41] See the eloquent sermon on this subject preached by Luis de Granada in the sixteenth century. Ticknor's Hist. Spanish Lit., vol. iii. pp. 123–127.

[42] Sententiæ, lib. iii. distinctio 19.

[43] Hone, Ancient Mysteries.

[44] "Resurrexit hodie Rex angelorum
Ducitur de tenebris turba piorum."

"Whoever purchases any thing,
It belongs to him and to his children.
Adam, hungry, came to me;
I made him do me homage:
For an apple, which I gave him,
He and all his race belong to me."

But Christ instantly puts a different aspect on the argument, by replying,—

"Satan! it was mine,—
The apple thou gavest him.
The apple and the apple-tree
Both were made by me.
As he was purchased with my goods,
With reason will I have him."[45]

In a religious Mystery exhibited at Lisbon as late as the close of the eighteenth century, the following scene occurs. Cain kicks his brother Abel badly and kills him. A figure like a Chinese mandarin, seated in a chair, condemns Cain and is drawn up into the clouds. The mouth of hell then appears, like the jaws of a great dragon: amid smoke and lightning it casts up three devils, one of them having a wooden leg. These take a dance around Cain, and are very jocose, one of them inviting him to hell to take a cup of brimstone coffee, and another asking him to make up a party at whist. Cain snarls, and they tumble him and themselves headlong into the squib-vomiting mouth.

Various books of accounts kept by the trading-companies who celebrated these Mysteries of the expenses incurred have been published, and are exceedingly amusing. "Item: payd for kepyng of fyer at hellmothe, four pence." "For a new hoke to hang Judas, six pence." "Item: payd for mendyng and payntyng hellmouthe, two pence." "Girdle for God, nine pence." "Axe for Pilatte's son, one shilling." "A staff for the demon, one penny." "God's coat of white leather, three shillings." The stage usually consisted of three platforms. On the highest sat God, surrounded by his angels. On the next were the saints in Paradise,—the intermediate state of the good after death. On the third were mere men yet living in the world. On one side of the lowest stage, in the rear, was a fearful cave or yawning mouth filled with smoke and flames, and denoting hell. From this ever and anon would issue the howls and shrieks of the damned. Amidst hideous yellings, devils would rush forth and caper about and snatch hapless souls into this pit to their doom.[46] The actors, in their mock rage, sometimes leaped from the pageant into the midst of the laughing, screaming, trembling crowd. The *dramatis personæ* included many queer characters, such as a "Worm of Conscience," "Deadman," (representing a soul delivered from hell at the descent of Christ,) numerous "Damned Souls," dressed in flame-colored garments, "Theft," "Lying," "Gluttony." But the devil himself was the favorite character; and often,

[45] Halliwell's edition of the Harrowing of Hell, p. 18.
[46] Sharp, Essay on the Dramatic Mysteries, p. 24.

when his personified vices jumped on him and pinched and cudgelled him till he roared, the mirth of the honest audience knew no bounds. For there were in the Middle Age two sides to the popular idea of the devil and of all appertaining to him. He was a soul-harrowing bugbear or a rib-shaking jest according to the hour and one's humor. Rabelais's Pantagruel is filled with irresistible burlesques of the doctrine of purgatory. The ludicrous side of this subject may be seen by reading Tarlton's "Jests" and his "Newes out of Purgatorie."[47] Glimpses of it are also to be caught through many of the humorous passages in Shakspeare. Dromio says of an excessively fat and greasy kitchen-wench, "If she lives till doomsday she'll burn a week longer than the whole world!" And Falstaff, cracking a kindred joke on Bardolph's carbuncled nose, avows his opinion that it will serve as a flaming beacon to light lost souls the way to purgatory! Again, seeing a flea on the same flaming proboscis, the doughty knight affirmed it was "a black soul burning in hell-fire." In this element of mediæval life, this feature of mediæval literature, a terrible belief lay under the gay raillery. Here is betrayed, on a wide scale, that natural reaction of the faculties from excessive oppression to sportive wit, from deep repugnance to superficial jesting, which has often been pointed out by philosophical observers as a striking fact in the psychological history of man.

One more active and mighty cause of the dreadful faith and fear with which the Middle Age contemplated the future life was the innumerable and frightful woes, crimes, tyrannies, instruments of torture, engines of persecution, insane superstitions, which then existed, making its *actual life a hell*. The wretchedness and cruelty of the present world were enough to generate frightful beliefs and cast appalling shadows over the future. If the *earth* was full of devils and phantoms, surely hell must swarm worse with them. The Inquisition sat shrouded and enthroned in supernatural obscurity of cunning and awfulness of power, and thrust its invisible daggers everywhere. The facts men knew here around them gave credibility to the imagery in which the hereafter was depicted. The flaming stakes of an Auto da Fe around which the victims of ecclesiastical hatred writhed were but faint emblems of what awaited their souls in the realm of demons whereto the tender mercies of the Church consigned them. Indeed, the fate of myriads of heretics and traitors could not fail to project the lurid vision of hell with all its paraphernalia into the imaginations of the people of the Dark Age. The glowing lava of purgatory heated the soil they trod, and a smell of its sulphur surcharged the air. A stupendous revelation of terror, bearing whole volumes of direful meaning, is given in the single fact that it was a common belief of that period that the holy Inquisitors would sit with Christ in the judgment at the last day.[48] If king or noble took offence at some uneasy

[47] Recently edited by Halliwell and published by the Shakspeare Society.

[48] Hagenbach, Dogmengeschichte, sect. 205.

retainer or bold serf, he ordered him to be secretly buried in the cell of some secluded fortress, and he was never heard of more. So, if pope or priest hated or feared some stubborn thinker, he straightway

> "Would banish him to wear a burning chain
> In the great dungeons of the unforgiven,
> Beneath the space-deep castle-walls of heaven."

It was an age of cruelty, never to be restored, when the world was boiling in tempest and men rode on the crests of fear.

Researches made within the last century among the remains of famous mediæval edifices, both ecclesiastic and state, have brought to light the dismal records of forgotten horrors. In many a royal palace, priestly building, and baronial castle, there were secret chambers full of infernal machinery contrived for inflicting tortures, and under them concealed trap-doors opening into rayless dungeons with no outlet and whose floors were covered with the mouldering bones of unfortunate wretches who had mysteriously disappeared long ago and tracelessly perished there. Sometimes these trap-doors were directly above profound pits of water, in which the victim would drown as he dropped from the mangling hooks, racks, and pincers of the torture-chamber. There were horrible rumors current in the Middle Age of a machine called the "Virgin," used for putting men to death; but little was known about it, and it was generally supposed to be a fable, until, some years ago, one of the identical machines was discovered in an old Austrian castle. It was a tall wooden woman, with a painted face, which the victim was ordered to kiss. As he approached to offer the salute, he trod on a spring, causing the machine to fly open, stretch out a pair of iron arms, and draw him to its breast covered with a hundred sharp spikes, which pierced him to death.[49]

Ignorance and alarm, in a suffering and benighted age, surrounded by sounds of superstition and sights of cruelty, must needs breed and foster a horrid faith in regard to the invisible world. Accordingly, the common doctrine of the future life prevailing in Christendom from the ninth century till the sixteenth was as we have portrayed it. Of course there are exceptions to be admitted and qualifications to be made; but, upon the whole, the picture is faithful. Fortunately, intellect and soul could not slumber forever, nor the mediæval nightmares always keep their torturing seat on the bosom of humanity. Noble men arose to vindicate the rights of reason and the divinity of conscience. The world was circumnavigated, and its revolution around the sun was demonstrated. A thousand truths were discovered, a thousand inventions introduced. Papacy tottered, its prestige waned, its infallibility sunk. The light of knowledge shone, the simplicity of nature was seen, and the benignity of God was surmised. Thought, throwing off many restrictions and accumulating much material, began to grow free, and began to grow wise. And so, before the calm, steady gaze of enlightened and cheerful reason,

[49] The Kiss of the Virgin, in the Archæologia published by the Antiquaries of London, vol. xxviii.

the live and crawling smoke of hell, which had so long enwreathed the mind of the time with its pendent and breathing horrors, gradually broke up and dissolved,—

> "Like a great superstitious snake, uncurled
> From the pale temples of the awakening world."

CHAPTER III.

MODERN DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

The folly and paganism of some of the Church-dogmas, the rapacious haughtiness of its spirit, the tyranny of its rule, and the immoral character of many of its practices, had often awakened the indignant protests and the determined opposition of men of enlightened minds, vigorous consciences, and generous hearts, both in its bosom and out of it. Many such men, vainly struggling to purify the Church from its iniquitous errors or to relieve mankind from its outrageous burdens, had been silenced and crushed by its relentless might. Arnold, Wickliffe, Wessel, Savonarola, and a host of others, are to be gratefully remembered forever as the heroic though unsuccessful forerunners of the mighty monk of Wittenberg.[1] The corruption of the mediæval Church grew worse, and became so great as to stir a very extensive disgust and revulsion. Wholesale pardons for all their sins were granted indiscriminately to those who accepted the terms of the papal officials; while every independent thinker, however evangelical his faith and exemplary his character, was hopelessly doomed to hell. Especially were these pardons given to pilgrims and to the Crusaders. Bernard of Clairvaux, exhorting the people to undertake a new Crusade, tells them that "God condescends to invite into his service murderers, robbers, adulterers, perjurers, and those sunk in other crimes; and whosoever falls in this cause shall secure pardon for the sins which he has never confessed with contrite heart."[2] At the opening of "Piers the Ploughman's Crede" a person is introduced saying, "I saw a company of pilgrims on their way to Rome, who came home with leave to lie all the rest of their lives!" Nash, in his "Lenten Stuff," speaks of a proclamation which caused "three hundred thousand people to roam to Rome for purgatorie-pills." Ecclesiasticism devoured ethics. Allegiance to morality was lowered into devotion to a ritual. The sale of indulgences at length became too impudent and blasphemous to be any longer endured, when John Tetzel, a Dominican

[1] Ullmann, Reformatoren vor der Reformation.

[2] Epist. CCCLXIII. ad Orientalis Francise Clerum et Populum.

monk, travelled over Europe, and, setting up his auction-block in the churches, offered for sale those famous indulgences of Leo X. which promised, to every one rich enough to pay the requisite price, remission of all sins, however enormous, and whether past, present, or future![3] This brazen but authorized charlatan boasted that "he had saved more souls from hell by the sale of indulgences than St. Peter had converted to Christianity by his preaching." He also said that "even if any one had ravished the Mother of God he could sell him a pardon for it!" The soul of Martin Luther took fire. The consequence—to which a hundred combining causes contributed—was the Protestant Reformation.

This great movement produced, in relation to our subject, three important results. It noticeably modified the practice and the popular preaching of the Roman Catholic Church. The dogmas of the Romanist theology remained as they were before. But a marked change took place in the public conduct of the papal functionaries. Morality was made more prominent, and mere ritualism less obtrusive. Comparatively speaking, an emphasis was taken from ecclesiastic confession and indulgence, and laid upon ethical obedience and piety. The Council of Trent, held at this time, says, in its decree concerning indulgences, "In granting indulgences, the Church desires that moderation be observed, lest, by excessive facility, ecclesiastical discipline be enervated." Imposture became more cautious, threats less frequent and less terrible; the teeth of persecution were somewhat blunted; miracles grew rarer; the insufferable glare of purgatory and hell faded, and the open traffic in forgiveness of sins, or the compounding for deficiencies, diminished. But among the more ignorant papal multitudes the mediæval superstition holds its place still in all its virulence and grossness. "Heaven and hell are as much a part of the Italian's geography as the Adriatic and the Apennines; the Queen of Heaven looks on the streets as clear as the morning-star; and the souls in purgatory are more readily present to conception than the political prisoners immured in the dungeons of Venice."

A second consequence of the Reformation is seen in the numerous dissenting sects to which its issues gave rise. The chief peculiarities of the Protestant doctrines of the future life are embodied in the four leading denominations commonly known as Lutheran, Calvinistic, Unitarian, and Universalist. Each of these includes a number of subordinate parties bearing distinctive names, (such as Arminian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Restorationist, and many others;) but these minor differences are too trivial to deserve distinctive characterization here. The Lutheran formula is that, through the sacrifice of Christ, salvation is offered to all who will accept it by a sincere faith. Some will comply with these terms and secure heaven; others will not, and so will be lost forever. Luther's views were not firmly defined and consistent throughout his career; they were often obscure, and they fluctuated much. It

[3] D'Aubigné, Hist. Reformation, book iii.

is true he always insisted that there was no salvation without faith, and that all who had faith should be saved. But, while he generally seems to believe in the current doctrine of eternal damnation, he sometimes appears to encourage the hope that all will finally be saved. In a remarkable letter to Hansen von Rechenberg, dated 1522, he says, in effect, "Whoso hath faith in Christ shall be saved. God forbid that I should limit the time for acquiring this faith to the present life! In the depths of the Divine mercy, there may be opportunity to win it in the future state."

The Calvinistic formula is that heaven is attainable only for those whom the arbitrary predestination of God has elected; all others are irretrievably damned. Calvin was the first Christian theologian who succeeded in giving the fearful doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation a lodgment in the popular breast. The Roman Catholic Church had earnestly repudiated it. Gotteschalk was condemned and died in prison for advocating it, in the ninth century. But Calvin's character enabled him to believe it, and his talents and position gave great weight to his advocacy of it, and it has since been widely received. Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, all agreed in the general proposition that by sin physical death came into the world, heaven was shut against man, and all men utterly lost. They differed only in some unessential details concerning the condition of that lost state. They also agreed in the general proposition that Christ came, by his incarnation, death, descent to hell, resurrection, and ascension, to redeem men from their lost state. They only differed in regard to the precise grounds and extent of that redemption. The Catholic said, Christ's atonement wiped off the whole score of original sin, and thus enabled man to win heaven by moral fidelity and the help of the Church. The Lutheran said, Christ's atonement made all the sins of those who have faith, pardonable; and all may have faith. The Calvinist said, God foresaw that man would fall and incur damnation, and he decreed that a few should be snatched as brands from the burning, while the mass should be left to eternal torture; and Christ's atonement purchased the predestined salvation of the chosen few. Furthermore, Lutherans and Calvinists, in all their varieties, agree with the Romanist in asserting that Christ shall come again, the dead be raised bodily, a universal judgment be held, and that then the condemned shall sink into the everlasting fire of hell, and the accepted rise into the endless bliss of heaven.

The Socinian doctrine relative to the future fate of man differed from the foregoing in the following particulars. First, it limited the redeeming mission of Christ to the enlightening influences of the truths which he proclaimed with Divine authority, the moral power of his perfect example, and the touching motives exhibited in his death. Secondly, it asserted a natural ability in every man to live a life conformed to right reason and sound morality, and promised heaven to all who did this in obedience to the instructions and after the pattern of Christ. Thirdly,

it declared that the wicked, after suffering excruciating agonies, would be annihilated. Respecting the second coming of Christ, a physical resurrection of the dead, and a day of judgment, the Socinians believed with the other sects.[4] Their doctrine scarcely corresponds with that of the present Unitarians in any thing. The dissent of the Unitarian from the popular theology is much more fundamental, detailed, and consistent than that of the Socinian was, and approaches much closer to the Rationalism of the present day.

The Universalist formula—every soul created by God shall sooner or later be saved from sin and woe and inherit everlasting happiness—has been publicly defended in every age of the Christian Church.[5] It was first publicly condemned as a heresy at the very close of the fourth century. It ranks among its defenders the names of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and several other prominent Fathers. Universalism has been held in four forms, on four grounds. First, it has been supposed that Christ died for all, and that, by the infinite efficacy of his redeeming merits, all sins shall be cancelled and every soul be saved. This was the scheme of those early Universalist Christians whom Epiphanius condemns as heretics; also of a few in more modern times. Secondly, it has been thought that each person would be punished in the future state according to the deeds done in the body, each sin be expiated by a proportionate amount of suffering, the retribution of some souls being severe and long, that of others light and brief; but, every penalty being at length exhausted, the last victim would be restored. This was the notion of Origen, the basis of the doctrine of purgatory, and the view of most of the Restorationists. Thirdly, it has been imagined that, by the good pleasure and fixed laws of God, all men are destined to an impartial, absolute, and instant salvation beyond the grave: all sins are justly punished, all moral distinctions equitably compensated, in this life; in the future an equal glory awaits all men, by the gracious and eternal election of God, as revealed to us in the benignant mission of Christ. This is the peculiar conception distinguishing some members of the denomination now known as Universalists. Finally, it has been believed that the freedom and probation granted here extend into the life to come; that the aim of all future punishment will be remedial, beneficent, not revengeful; that stronger motives will be applied for producing repentance, and grander attractions to holiness be felt; and that thus, at some time or other, even the most sunken and hardened souls will be regenerated and raised up to heaven in the image of God. Almost all Universalists, most Unitarians, and large numbers of individual Christians outwardly affiliated with other denominations, now accept and cherish this theory.

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[4] Flügge gives a full exposition of these points with references to the authorities. Geschichte der Lehre vom Zustande, u. s. f., abth. ii. ss. 243–260.

[5] Dietelmaier, Commenti Fanatici (ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων) Hist. Antiquar.

One important variation from the doctrine of the dominant sects, in connection with the present subject, is worthy of special notice. We refer to the celebrated controversy waged in England, in the first part of the eighteenth century, in regard to the intermediate state of the dead. The famous Dr. Coward and a few supporters labored, with much zeal, skill, and show of learning, to prove the natural mortality of the soul. They asserted this to be both a philosophical truth proved by scientific facts and a Christian doctrine declared in Scripture and taught by the Fathers. They argued that the soul is not an independent entity, but is merely the life of the body. Proceeding thus far on the principles of a materialistic science, they professed to complete their theory from Scripture, without doing violence to any doctrine of the acknowledged religion.[6] The finished scheme was this. Man was naturally mortal; but, by the pleasure and will of God, he would have been immortally preserved alive had he not sinned. Death is the consequence of sin, and man utterly perishes in the grave. But God will restore the dead, through Christ, at the day of the general resurrection which he has foretold in the gospel.[7] Some of the writers in this copious controversy maintained that previous to the advent of Christ death was eternal annihilation to all except a few who enjoyed an inspired anticipatory faith in him, but that all who died after his coming would be restored in the resurrection,—the faithful to be advanced to heaven, the wicked to be the victims of unending torture.[8] Clarke and Baxter both wrote with extreme ability in support of the natural immortality and separate existence of the soul. On the other hand, the learned Henry Dodwell cited, from the lore of three thousand years, a plausible body of authorities to show that the soul is in itself but a mortal breath. He also contended, by a singular perversion of figurative phrases from the New Testament and from some of the Fathers, that, in counteraction of man's natural mortality, all who undergo baptism at the hands of the ordained ministers of the Church of England—the only true priesthood in apostolic succession—thereby receive an immortalizing spirit brought into the world by Christ and committed to his successors. This immortalizing spirit conveyed by baptism would secure their resurrection at the last day. Those destitute of this spirit would never awake from the oblivious sleep of death, unless—as he maintained will actually be the case with a large part of the dead—they are arbitrarily immortalized by the pleasure of God, in order to suffer eternal misery in hell! Absurd and shocking as this fancy was, it obtained quite a number of converts, and made no slight impression at the time. One of the writers in this controversy asserted that Luther himself had been a believer in the death

[6] Coward, Search after Souls.

[7] Hallet, No Resurrection, no Future State.

[8] Coward, Defence of the Search after Souls. Dodwell, Epistolary Discourse. Peckard, Observations. Fleming, Survey of the Search after Souls. Law, State of Separate Spirits. Layton, Treatise of Departed Souls.

or sleep of the soul until the day of judgment.[9] Certain it is that such a belief had at one period a considerable prevalence. Its advocates were called Psychopannychians. Calvin wrote a vehement assault on them. The opinion has sunk into general disrepute and neglect, and it would be hard to find many avowed disciples of it. The nearly universal sentiment of Christendom would now exclaim, in the quaint words of Henry More,—

> "What! has old Adam snorted all this time
> Under some senseless clod, with sleep ydead?"[10]

John Asgill printed, in the year 1700, a tract called "An argument to prove that by the new covenant man may be translated into eternal life without tasting death." He argues that the law of death was a consequence of Adam's sin and was annulled by Christ's sacrifice. Since that time men have died only because of an obstinate habit of dying formed for many generations. For his part, he has the independence and resolution to withstand the universal pusillanimity and to refuse to die. He has discovered "an engine in Divinity to convey man from earth to heaven." He will "play a trump on death and show himself a match for the devil!"

While treating of the various Protestant views of the future life, it would be a glaring defect to overlook the remarkable doctrine on that subject published by Emanuel Swedenborg and now held by the intelligent, growing body of believers called after his name. It would be impossible to exhibit this system adequately in its scientific bases and its complicated details without occupying more space than can be afforded here. Nor is this necessary, now that his own works have been translated and are easily accessible everywhere. His "Heaven and Hell," "Heavenly Arcana," "Doctrine of Influx," and "True Christian Religion," contain manifold statements and abundant illustrations of every thing important bearing on his views of the theme before us. We shall merely attempt to present a brief synopsis of the essential principles, accompanied by two or three suggestions of criticism.

Swedenborg conceives man to be an organized receptacle of truth and love from God. He is an imperishable spiritual body placed for a season of probation in a perishable material body. Every moment receiving the essence of his being afresh from God, and returning it through the fruition of its uses devoutly rendered in conscious obedience and joyous worship, he is at once a subject of personal, and a medium of the Divine,

[9] Blackburne, View of the Controversy Concerning an Intermediate State: appendix. It is probable that the great Reformer's opinion on this point was not always the same. For he says, distinctly, "The first man who died, when he awakes at the last day, will think he has been asleep but an hour." Beste, Dr. M. Luther's Glaubenslehre, cap. iv.: Die Lehre von den Letzen Dingen. Yet J. S. Müller seems conclusively to prove the truth of the proposition which forms the title of his book,—"Dass Luther die Lehre vom Seelenschlafe nie geglaubt habe."

[10] The controversy concerning the natural immortality of the soul has within a few years raged afresh. The principal combatants were Dobney, Storrs, White, Morris, and Hinton. See Athanasia, by J. H. Hinton, London, 1849.

happiness. The will is the power of man's life, and the understanding is its form. When the will is disinterested love and the understanding is celestial truth, then man fulfils the end of his being, and his home is heaven; he is a spirit-frame into which the goodness of God perpetually flows, is humbly acknowledged, gratefully enjoyed, and piously returned. But when his will is hatred or selfishness and his understanding is falsehood or evil, then his powers are abused, his destiny inverted, and his fate hell. While in the body in this world he is placed in freedom, on probation, between these two alternatives.

The Swedenborgian universe is divided into four orders of abodes. In the highest or celestial world are the heavens of the angels. In the lowest or infernal world are the hells of the demons. In the intermediate or spiritual world are the earths inhabited by men, and surrounded by the transition-state through which souls, escaping from their bodies, after a while soar to heaven or sink to hell, according to their fitness and attraction. In this life man is free, because he is an energy in equilibrium between the influences of heaven and hell. The middle state surrounding man is full of spirits, some good and some bad. Every man is accompanied by swarms of both sorts of spirits, striving to make him like themselves. Now, there are two kinds of influx into man. Mediate influx is when the spirits in the middle state flow into man's thoughts and affections. The good spirits are in communication with heaven, and they carry what is good and true; the evil spirits are in communication with hell, and they carry what is evil and false. Between these opposed and reacting agencies man is in an equilibrium whose essence is freedom. Deciding for himself, if he turns with embracing welcome to the good spirits, he is thereby placed and lives in conjunction with heaven; but if he turns, on the contrary, with predominant love to the bad spirits, he is placed in conjunction with hell and draws his life thence. From heaven, therefore, through the good spirits, all the elements of saving goodness flow sweetly down and are appropriated by the freedom of the good man; while from hell, through the bad spirits, all the elements of damning evil flow foully up and are appropriated by the freedom of the bad man.

The other kind of influx is called immediate. This is when the Lord himself, the pure substance of truth and good, flows into every organ and faculty of man. This influx is perpetual, but is received as truth and good only by the true and good. It is rejected, suffocated, or perverted by those who are in love with falsities and evils. So the light of the sun produces colors varying with the substances it falls on, and water takes forms corresponding to the vessels it is poured into.

The whole invisible world—heaven, hell, and the middle state—is peopled solely from the different families of the human race occupying the numerous material globes of the universe. The good, on leaving the fleshly body, are angels, the bad, demons. There is no angel nor demon who was created such at first. Satan is not a personality, but is a figura-

tive term standing for the whole complex of hell. In the invisible world, time and space in one sense cease to be; in another sense they remain unchanged. They virtually cease because all our present measures of them are annihilated;[11] they virtually remain because exact correspondences to them are left. To spirits, time is no longer measured by the revolution of planets, but by the succession of inward states; space is measured not by way-marks and the traversing of distances, but by inward similitudes and dissimilitudes. Those who are unlike are sundered by gulfs of difference. Those who are alike are together in their interiors. Thought and love, forgetfulness and hate, are not hampered by temporal and spatial boundaries. Spiritual forces and beings spurn material impediments, and are united or separate, reciprocally visible or invisible, mutually conscious or unconscious, according to their own laws of kindred or alien adaptedness.

The soul—the true man—is its own organized and deathless body, and when it leaves its earthly house of flesh it knows the only resurrection, and the cast-off frame returns to the dust forever. Swedenborg repeatedly affirms with emphasis that no one is born for hell, but that all are born for heaven, and that when any one comes into hell it is from his own free fault. He asserts that every infant, wheresoever born, whether within the Church or out of it, whether of pious parents or of impious, when he dies is received by the Lord, and educated in heaven, and becomes an angel. A central principle of which he never loses sight is that "a life of charity, which consists in acting sincerely and justly in every function, in every engagement, and in every work, from a heavenly motive, according to the Divine laws, is possible to every one, and infallibly leads to heaven." It does not matter whether the person leading such a life be a Christian or a Gentile. The only essential is that his ruling motive be divine and his life be in truth and good.

The Swedenborgian doctrine concerning Christ and his mission is that he was the infinite God incarnate,—not incarnate for the purpose of expiating human sin and purchasing a ransom for the lost by vicarious sufferings, but for the sake of suppressing the rampant power of the hells, weakening the influx of the infernal spirits, setting an example to men, and revealing many important truths. The advantage of the Christian over the pagan is that the former is enlightened by the celestial knowledge contained in the Bible, and animated by the affecting motives presented in the drama of the Divine incarnation. There is no probation after this life. Just as one is on leaving the earth he goes into the spiritual world. There his ruling affection determines his destiny,

[11] Philo the Jew says, (vol. i. p. 277, ed. Mangey,) "God is the Father of the world: the world is the father of time, begetting it by its own motion: time, therefore, holds the place of grandchild to God." But the world is only one measure of time; another, and a more important one, is the inward succession of the spirit's states of consciousness. Between Philo and Swedenborg, it may be remarked here, there are many remarkable correspondences both of thought and language. For example, Philo says, (vol. i. p. 494,) "Man is a small kosmos, the kosmos is a grand man."

and that affection can never be extirpated or changed to all eternity. After death, evil life cannot in any manner or degree be altered to good life, nor infernal love be transmuted to angelic love, inasmuch as every spirit from head to foot is in quality such as his love is, and thence such as his life is, so that to transmute this life into the opposite is altogether to destroy the spirit. It were easier, says Swedenborg, to change a night-bird into a dove, an owl into a bird of paradise, than to change a subject of hell into a subject of heaven after the line of death has been crossed. But why the crossing of that line should make such an infinite difference he does not explain; nor does he prove it as a fact.

The moral reason and charitable heart of Swedenborg vehemently revolted from the Calvinistic doctrines of predestination and vicarious atonement, and the group of thoughts that cluster around them. He always protests against these dogmas, refutes them with varied power and consistency; and the leading principles of his own system are creditable to human nature, and attribute no unworthiness to the character of God. A debt of eternal gratitude is due to Swedenborg that his influence, certainly destined to be powerful and lasting, is so clearly calculated to advance the interests at once of philosophic intelligence, social affection, and true piety. The superiorities of his view of the future life over those which it seeks to supplant are weighty and numerous. The following may be reckoned among the most prominent.

First, without predicating of God any aggravated severity or casting the faintest shadow on his benevolence, it gives us the most appalling realization of the horribleness of sin and of its consequences. God is commonly represented—in effect, at least—as flaming with anger against sinners, and forcibly flinging them into the unappeasable fury of Tophet, where his infinite vengeance may forever satiate itself on them. But, Swedenborg says, God is incapable of hatred or wrath: he casts no one into hell; but the wicked go where they belong by their own election, from the inherent fitness and preference of their ruling love. The evil man desires to be in hell because there he finds his food, employment, and home; in heaven he would suffer unutterable agonies from every circumstance. The wicked go into hell by the necessary and benignant love of God, not by his indignation; and their retributions are in their own characters, not in their prison-house. This does not flout and trample all magnanimity, nor shock the heart of piety; and yet, showing us men compelled to prefer wallowing in the filth and iniquities of hell, clinging to the very evils whose pangs transfix them, it gives us the direst of all the impressions of sin, and beneath the lowest deep of the popular hell opens to our shuddering conceptions a deep of loathsomeness immeasurably lower still.

Secondly, the Swedenborgian doctrine of the conditions of salvation or reprobation, when compared with the popular doctrine, is marked by striking depth of insight, justice, and liberality. Every man is free. Every man has power to receive the influx of truth and good from the

Lord and convert it to its blessed and saving uses,—piety towards God, good will towards the neighbor, and all kinds of right works. Who does this, no matter in what land or age he lives, becomes an heir of heaven. Who perverts those Divine gifts to selfishness and unrighteous deeds becomes a subject of hell. No mere opinion, no mere profession, no mere ritual services, no mere external obedience,—not all these things together,—can save a man, nor their absence condemn him; but the controlling motive of his life, the central and ruling love which constitutes the substance of his being,—this decides every man's doom. The view is simple, reasonable, just, necessary. And so is the doctrine of degrees accompanying it; namely, that there are in heaven different grades and qualities of exaltation and delight, and in hell of degradation and woe, for different men according to their capacities and deserts. A profoundly ethical character pervades the scheme, and the great stamp of law is over it all.

Thirdly, a manifest advantage of Swedenborg's doctrine over the popular doctrine is the intimate connection it establishes between the present and the future, the visible and the invisible, God and man. Heaven and hell are not distant localities, entrance into which is to be won or avoided by moral artifices or sacramental subterfuges, but they are states of being depending on personal goodness or evil. God is not throned at the heart or on the apex of the universe, where at some remote epoch we hope to go and see him, but he is the Life feeding our lives freshly every instant. The spiritual world, with all its hosts, sustains and arches, fills and envelops us. Death is the dropping of the outer body, the lifting of an opaque veil, and we are among the spirits, unchanged, as we were before. Judgment is not a tribunal dawning on the close of the world's weary centuries, but the momentary assimilation of a celestial or an infernal love leading to states and acts, rewards and retributions, corresponding. Before this view the dead universe becomes a live transparency overwritten with the will, tremulous with the breath, and irradiate with the illumination of God.

We cannot but regret that the Swedenborgian view of the future life should be burdened and darkened with the terrible error of the dogma of eternal damnation, spreading over the state of all the subjects of the hells the pall of immitigable hopelessness, denying that they can ever make the slightest ameliorating progress. We have never been able to see force enough in any of the arguments or assertions advanced in support of this tremendous horror to warrant the least hesitation in rejecting it. For ourselves, we must regard it as incredible, and think that God cannot permit it. Instruction, reformation, progress, are the final aims of punishment. Aspiration is the concomitant of consciousness, and the authentic voice of God. Surely, sooner or later, in the boonful eternities of being, every creature capable of intelligence, allied to the moral law, drawing life from the Infinite, must begin to travel the ascending path of virtue and blessedness, and never retrograde again.

Neither can we admit in general the claim made by Swedenborg and by his disciples that the way in which he arrived at his system of theology elevates it to the rank of a Divine revelation. It is asserted that God opened his interior vision, so that he saw what had hitherto been concealed from the eyes of men in the flesh,—namely, the inhabitants, laws, contents, and experiences of the spiritual world,—and thus that his statements are not speculations or arguments, but records of unerring knowledge, his descriptions not fanciful pictures of the imagination, but literal transcripts of the truth he saw. This, in view of the great range of known experience, is not intrinsically probable, and we have seen no proof of it. Judging from what we know of psychological and religious history, it is far more likely that a man should confound his intangible reveries with solid fact than that he should be inspired by God to reveal a world of mysterious truths. Furthermore, while we are impressed with the reasonableness, probability, and consistency of most of the general principles of Swedenborg's exposition of the future life, we cannot but shrink from many of the details and forms in which he carries them out. Notwithstanding the earnest avowals of able disciples of his school that all his details are strictly necessitated by his premises, and that all his premises are laws of truth, we are compelled to regard a great many of his assertions as purely arbitrary and a great many of his descriptions as purely fanciful. But, denying that his scheme of eschatology is a scientific representation of the reality, and looking at it as a poetic structure reared by co-working knowledge and imagination on the ground of reason, nature, and morality,—whose foundation-walls, columns, and grand outlines are truth, while many of its details, ornaments, and images are fancy,—it must be acknowledged to be one of the most wonderful examples of creative power extant in the literature of the world. No one who has mastered it with appreciative mind will question this. There are, expressed and latent, in the totality of Swedenborg's accounts of hell and heaven, more variety of imagery, power of moral truth and appeal, exhibition of dramatic justice, transcendent delights of holiness and love, curdling terrors of evil and woe, strength of philosophical grasp, and sublimity of emblematic conception, than are to be found in Dante's earth-renowned poem. We say this of the substance of his ideas, not of the shape and clothing in which they are represented. Swedenborg was no poet in language and form, only in conception.

Take this picture. In the topmost height of the celestial world the Lord appears as a sun, and all the infinite multitudes of angels, swarming up through the innumerable heavens, wherever they are, continually turn their faces towards him in love and joy. But at the bottom of the infernal world is a vast ball of blackness, towards which all the hosts of demons, crowding down through the successive hells, forever turn their eager faces away from God. Or consider this. Every thing consists of a great number of perfect leasts like itself: every heart is an aggregation of little hearts, every lung an aggregation of little lungs, every eye an

aggregation of little eyes. Following out the principle, every society in the spiritual world is a group of spirits arranged in the form of a man, every heaven is a gigantic man composed of an immense number of individuals, and all the heavens together constitute one Grand Man,—a countless number of the most intelligent angels forming the head, a stupendous organization of the most affectionate making the heart, the most humble going to the feet, the most useful attracted to the hands, and so on through every part.

With exceptions, then, we regard Swedenborg's doctrine of the future life as a free poetic presentment, not as a severe scientific statement,—of views true in moral principle, not of facts real in literal detail. His imagination and sentiment are mathematical and ethical instead of æsthetic and passionate. Milk seems to run in his veins instead of blood, but he is of truthfulness and charity all compact. We think it most probable that the secret of his supposed inspiration was the abnormal frequent or chronic turning of his mind into what is called the ecstatic or clairvoyant state. This condition being spontaneously induced, while he yet, in some unexplained manner, retained conscious possession and control of his usual faculties, he treated his subjective conceptions as objective realities, believed his interior contemplations were accurate visions of facts, and took the strange procession of systematic reveries through his teeming brain for a scenic revelation of the exhaustive mysteries of heaven and hell.

> "Each wondrous guess *beheld* the truth it sought,
> And inspiration flash'd from what was thought."

This hypothesis, taken in conjunction with the comprehensiveness of his mind, the vastness of his learning, the integral correctness of his conscience, and his disciplined habits of thought, will go far towards explaining the unparalleled phenomenon of his theological works; and, though it leaves many things unaccounted for, it seems to us more credible than any other which has yet been suggested.

The last of the three prominent phenomena which—as before said—followed the Protestant Reformation was rationalism,—an attempt to try all religious questions at the tribunal of reason and by the tests of conscience. The great movement led by Luther was but one element in a numerous train of influences and events all yielding their different contributions to that resolute rationalistic tendency which afterwards broke out so powerfully in England, France, and Germany, and, spreading thence into every country in Christendom, has been, in secret and in public, with slow, sure steps, irresistibly advancing ever since. In the history of scholasticism there were three distinct epochs. The first period was characterized by the servile submission and conformity of philosophy to the theology dictated by the Church. The second period was marked by the formal alliance and attempted reconciliation of philosophy and theology. The third period saw an ever-increasing jealousy

and separation between the philosophers and the theologians.[13] Many an adventurous thinker pushed his speculations beyond the limits of the established theology, and deliberately dissented from the orthodox standards in his conclusions. Perhaps Abelard, who openly strove to put all the Church-dogmas in forms acceptable to philosophy, and who did not hesitate to reject in many instances what seemed to him unreasonable, deserves to be called the father of rationalism. The works of Des Cartes, Leibnitz, Wolf, Kant's "Religion within the Bounds of Pure Reason," together with the influence and the writings of many other eminent philosophers, gradually gave momentum to the impulse and popularity to the habits of free thought and criticism even in the realm of theology. The dogmatic scheme of the dominant Church was firmly seized, many errors shaken out to the light and exposed, and many long-received opinions questioned and flung into doubt.[14] The authenticity of many of the popular doctrines regarding the future life could not fail to be denied as soon as it was attempted—as was extensively done about the middle of the eighteenth century—to demonstrate them by mathematical methods, with all the array of axioms, theorems, lemmas, doubts, and solutions. Flügge has historically illustrated the employment of this method at considerable length.[15]

The essence of rationalism is the affirmation that neither the Fathers, nor the Church, nor the Scriptures, nor all of them together, can rightfully establish any proposition opposed to the logic of sound philosophy, the principles of reason, and the evident truth of nature. Around this thesis the battle has been fought and the victory won; and it will stand with spreading favor as long as there are unenslaved and cultivated minds in the world. This position is, in logical necessity, and as a general thing in fact, that of the large though loosely-cohering body of believers known as "Liberal Christians;" and it is tacitly held by still larger and ever-growing numbers nominally connected with sects that officially eschew it with horror. The result of the studies and discussions associated with this principle, so far as it relates to the subject before us, has been the rejection of the following popular doctrines:—the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures as an ultimate authority in matters of belief; unconditional predestination; the satisfaction-theory of the vicarious atonement; the visible second coming of Christ, in person, to burn up the world and to hold a general judgment; the intermediate state of souls; the resurrection of the body; a local hell of material fire in the bowels of the earth; the eternal damnation of the wicked. These old dogmas,[16]

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[13] Cousin, Hist. Mod. Phil., lect. ix.

[14] Staüdlin, Geschichte des Rationalismus. Saintes, Histoire Critique du Rationalisme en Allemagne, Eng. trans. by Dr. Beard.

[15] Geschichte des Glaubens an Unsterblichkeit, u. s. f., th. iii. abth. ii. ss. 281–289.

[16] They are defended in all their literal grossness in the two following works, both recent publications. The World to Come; by the Rev. James Cochrane. Der Tod, das Todtenreich, und der Zustand der abgeschiedenen Seelen; von P. A. Maywahlen.

scarcely changed, still remain in the stereotyped creeds of all the prominent denominations; but they slumber there to an astonishing extent unrealized, unnoticed, unthought of, by the great multitude of common believers, while every consciously rational investigator vehemently repudiates them. To every candid mind that has really studied their nature and proofs their absurdity is now transparent on all the grounds alike of history, metaphysics, morals, and science.

The changes of the popular Christian belief in regard to three salient points have been especially striking. First, respecting the immediate fate of the dead,—an intermediate state. The predominant Jewish doctrine was that all souls went indiscriminately into a sombre under-world, where they awaited a resurrection. The earliest Christian view prevalent was the same, with the exception that it divided that place of departed spirits into two parts,—a painful for the bad, a pleasant for the good. The next opinion that prevailed—the Roman Catholic—was the same as the foregoing, with two exceptions: it established a purgatory in addition to the previous paradise and hell, and it opened heaven itself for the immediate entrance of a few spotless souls. Pope John XXII., as Gieseler shows, was accused of heresy by the theological doctors of Paris because he declared that no soul could enter heaven and enjoy the beatific vision until after the resurrection. Pope Benedict XII. drew up a list of one hundred and seventeen heretical opinions held by the Armenian Christians. One of these notions was that the souls of all deceased adults wander in the air until the Day of Judgment, neither hell, paradise, nor heaven being open to them until after that day. Thomas Aquinas says, "Each soul at death immediately flies to its appointed place, whether in hell or in heaven, being without the body until the resurrection, with it afterwards."[16] Then came the dogma of the orthodox Protestants, slightly varying in the different sects, but generally agreeing that at death all redeemed souls pass instantly to heaven and all unredeemed souls to hell.[17] The principal variation from this among believers within the Protestant fellowship has been the notion that the souls of all men die or sleep with the body until the Day of Judgment,—a notion which peeps out here and there in superstitious spots along the pages of ecclesiastical history, and which has found now and then an advocate during the last century and a half. The Council of Elvin, in Spain, forbade the lighting of tapers in churchyards, lest it should disturb the souls of the deceased buried there. At this day, in prayers and addresses at funerals, no phrases are more common than those alluding to death as a sleep, and implying that the departed one is to slumber peacefully in his grave until the resurrection. And yet, at the same time, by the same persons contrary ideas are frequently expressed. The truth is, the sub-

[16] Summa iii. in Suppl. 69. 2.

[17] Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland, ch. xxxii. Calvin, Institutes, lib. iii. cap. xxv.; and his Psychopannychia. Quenstedt also affirms it. Likewise the Confession of Faith of the Westminster Divines, art. xxxii., says, "Souls neither die nor sleep, but go immediately to heaven or hell."

ject, owing to the contradictions between their creed and their reason, is left by most persons in hopeless confusion and uncertainty. They have no determinately reconciled and conscious views of their own. Rationalism sweeps away all the foregoing incongruous medley at once, denying that we know any thing about the precise localities of heaven and hell, or the destined order of events in the hidden future of separate souls; affirming that all we should dare to say is simply that the souls whether of good or of bad men, on leaving the body, go at once into a spiritual state of being, where they will live immortally, as God decrees, never returning to be reinvested with the vanished charnel-houses of clay they once inhabited.

Secondly, the thought that Christ after his death descended into the under-world to ransom mankind, or a part of mankind, from the doom there, is in the foundation of the apostolic theology. It was a central element in the belief of the Fathers, and of the Church for fourteen hundred years. None of the prominent Protestant reformers thought of denying it. Calvin lays great stress on it.[18] Æpinus and others, at Hamburg, maintained that Christ's descent was a part of his humiliation, and that in it he suffered unutterable pains for us. On the other hand, Melancthon and the Wittenbergers held that the descent was a part of Christ's triumph, since by it he won a glorious victory over the powers of hell.[19] But gradually the importance and the redeeming effects attached to Christ's *descent into hell* were transferred to his *death on the cross*. Slowly the primitive dogma dwindled away, and finally sunk out of sight, through an ever-encroaching disbelief in the physical conditions on which it rested and in the pictorial environments by which it was recommended. And now it is scarcely ever heard of, save when brought out from old scholastic tomes by some theological delver. Baumgarten-Crusius has learnedly illustrated the important place long held by this notion, and well shown its gradual retreat into the unnoticed background.[20]

The other particular doctrine which we said had undergone remarkable change is in regard to the number of the saved. A blessed improvement has come over the popular Christian feeling and teaching in respect to this momentous subject. The Jews excluded from salvation all but their own strict ritualists. The apostles, it is true, excluded none but the stubbornly wicked. But the majority of the Fathers virtually allowed the possibility of salvation to few indeed. Chrysostom doubted if out of the hundred thousand souls constituting the Christian population of Antioch in his day one hundred would be saved![21] And when we read, with shuddering soul, the calculations of Cornelius à Lapide, or the celebrated sermon of Massillon on the "Small Number of the Saved,"

[18] Institutes, lib. ii. cap. 16, sects. 16, 19.

[19] Ledderhose, Life of Melancthon, Eng. trans. by Krotel, ch. xxx.

[20] Compendium der Christliche Dogmengeschichte, thl. ii. sects. 100–109.

[21] In Acta Apostolorum, homil. xxiv.

we are compelled to confess that they fairly represent the almost universal sentiment and conviction of Christendom for more than seventeen hundred years. A quarto volume published in London in 1680, by Du Moulin, called "Moral Reflections upon the Number of the Elect," affirmed that not one in a million, from Adam down to our times, shall be saved. A flaming execration blasted the whole heathen world,[22] and a metaphysical quibble doomed ninety-nine of every hundred in Christian lands. Collect the whole relevant theological literature of the Christian ages, from the birth of Tertullian to the death of Jonathan Edwards, strike the average pitch of its doctrinal temper, and you will get this result:—that in the field of human souls Satan is the harvester, God the gleaner; hell receives the whole vintage in its wine-press of damnation, heaven obtains only a few straggling clusters plucked for salvation. The crowded wains roll staggering into the iron doorways of Satan's fire-and-brimstone barns; the redeemed vestiges of the world-crop of men are easily borne to heaven in the arms of a few weeping angels. How different is the prevailing tone of preaching and belief now! What a cheerful ascent of views from the mournful passage of the dead over the river of oblivion fancied by the Greeks, or the excruciating passage of the river of fire painted by the Catholics, to the happy passage of the river of balm, healing every weary bruise and sorrow, promised by the Universalists! It is true, the old harsh exclusiveness is still organically imbedded in the established creeds, all of which deny the possibility of salvation beyond the little circle who vitally appropriate the vicarious atonement of Christ; but then this is, for the most part, a dead letter in the creeds. In the hearts and in the candid confessions of all but one in a thousand it is discredited and sincerely repelled as an abomination to human nature, a reflection against God, an outrage upon the substance of ethics. Remorseless bigots may gloat and exult over the thought that those who reject their dogmas shall be thrust into the roaring fire-gorges of hell; but a better spirit is the spirit of the age we live in; and, doubtless, a vast majority of the men we daily meet really believe that all who try to the best of their ability, according to their light and circumstances, to do what is right, in the love of God and man, shall be saved. In that moving scene of the great dramatist where the burial of the innocent and hapless Ophelia is represented, and Laertes vainly seeks to win from the Church-official the full funeral-rites of religion over her grave, the priest may stand for the false and cruel ritual spirit, the brother for the just and native sentiment of the human heart. Says the priest,—

> "We should *profane* the service of the dead
> To sing a requiem and such rest to her
> As to peace-parted souls."

[22] Götze, Ueber die Neue Meinung von der Seligkeit der angeblich guten und redlichen Seelen unter Juden, Heiden, und Türken durch Christum, ohne dass sie an Ihn glauben.

And Laertes replies,—

> "Lay her in the earth;
> And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
> Shall violets spring. I tell thee, churlish priest,
> A ministering angel shall my sister be
> When thou liest howling."

Indeed, who that has a heart in his bosom would not be ashamed not to sympathize with the gentle-hearted Burns when he expresses even to the devil himself the quaint and kindly wish,—

> "Oh wad ye tak' a thought and mend!"

The creeds and the priests, in congenial alliance with many evil things, may strive to counteract this progressive self-emancipation from cruel falsehoods and superstitions, but in vain. The terms of salvation are seen lying in the righteous will of a gracious God, not in the heartless caprice of a priesthood nor in the iron gripe of a set of dogmas. The old priestly monopoly over the way to heaven has been taken off in the knowledge of the enlightened present, and, for all who have unfettered feet to walk with, the passage to God is now across a free bridge. The ancient exactors may still sit in their toll-house creeds and confessionals; but their authority is gone, and the virtuous traveller, stepping from the ground of time upon the planks that lead over into eternity, smiles as he passes scot-free by their former taxing terrors. The reign of sacramentalists and dogmatists rapidly declines. Reason, common sentiment, the liberal air, the best and strongest tendencies of the people, are against them to-day, and will be more against them in every coming day. Every successive explosion of the Second-Adventist fanaticism will leave less of that element behind. Its rage in America, under the auspices of Miller, in the nineteenth century, was tame and feeble when compared with the terror awakened in Europe in the fifteenth century by Stofler's prediction of an approaching comet.[28] Every new discovery of the harmonies of science, and of the perfections of nature, and of the developments of the linear logic of God consistently unfolding in implicated sequences of peaceful order unperturbed by shocks of failure and epochs of remedy, will increase and popularize an intelligent faith in the original ordination and the intended permanence of the present constitution of things. Finally men will cease to be looking up to see the blue dome cleave open for the descent of angelic squadrons headed by the majestic Son of God, the angry breath of his mouth consuming the world,—cease to expect salvation by any other method than that of earnest and devout truthfulness, love, good works, and pious submissiveness to God,—cease to fancy that their souls, after waiting through the long sleep or separation of death, will return and take on their old bodies again. Recognising the Divine plan for training souls in this lower and transient state for a higher and immortal state, they will endeavor, in

[28] Bayle, Historical Dictionary, art. Stofler, note B.

natural piety and mutual love, while they live, to exhaust the genuine uses of the world that now is, and thus prepare themselves to enter with happiest auspices, when they die, the world prepared for them beyond these mortal shores.

These cheerful prophecies must be verified in the natural course of things. The rapid spread of the doctrine of a future life taught by the "Spirit-rappers" is a remarkable revelation of the great extent to which the minds of the common people have at last become free from the long domination of the ecclesiastical dogmas on that subject. The leading representatives of the "Spiritualists" affirm, with much unanimity, the most comforting conclusions as to the condition of the departed. They exclude all wrath and favoritism from the disposition of the Deity. They have little—in fact, they often have nothing whatever—to say of hell. They emphatically repudiate the ordinarily-taught terms of salvation, and deny the doctrine of hopeless reprobation. All death is beautiful and progressive. "Every form and thing is constantly growing lovelier and every sphere purer." The abode of each soul in the future state is determined, not by decrees or dogmas or forms of any kind, but by qualities of character, degrees of love, purity, and wisdom. There are seven ascending spheres, each more abounding than the one below it in beauties, glories, and happiness. "The first sphere is the natural; the second, the spiritual; the third, the celestial; the fourth, the supernatural; the fifth, the superspiritual; the sixth, the supercelestial; the seventh, the Infinite Vortex of Love and Wisdom."[34] Whatever be thought of the pretensions of this doctrine to be a Divine revelation, whatever be thought of its various psychological, cosmological, and theological characteristics, its ethics are those of natural reason. It is wholly irreconcilable with the popular ecclesiastical system of doctrines. Its epidemic diffusion until now—burdened as it is with such nauseating accompaniments of crudity and absurdity, it reckons its adherents by millions—is a tremendous evidence of the looseness with which the old, cruel dogmas sit on the minds of the masses of the people, and of their eager readiness to welcome more humane views.

In science the erroneous doctrines of the Middle Age are now generally discarded. The mention of them but provokes a smile or awakens surprise. Yet, as compared with the historic annals of our race, it is but recently that the true order of the solar system has been unveiled, the weight of the air discovered, the circulation of the blood made known, the phenomena of insanity intelligently studied, the results of physiological chemistry brought to light, the symmetric domain and sway of calculable law pushed far out in every direction of nature and experience. It used to be supposed that digestion was effected by means of a mechanical power equal to many tons. Borelli asserted that the muscular force of the heart was one hundred and eighty thousand pounds. These

[34] Andrew Jackson Davis, Nature's Divine Revelations, secta. 192–203.

absurd estimates only disappeared when the properties of the gastric juice were discerned. The method in which we distinguish the forms and distances of objects was not understood until Berkeley published his "New Theory of Vision." Few persons are aware of the opposition of bigotry, stolidity, and authority against which the brilliant advances of scientific discovery and mechanical invention and social improvement have been forced to contend, and in despite of which they have slowly won their way. Excommunications, dungeons, fires, sneers, polite persecution, bitter neglect, tell the story, from the time the Athenians banned Anaxagoras for calling the sun a mass of fire, to the day an English mob burned the warehouses of Arkwright because he had invented the spinning-jenny. But, despite all the hostile energies of establishment, prejudice, and scorn, the earnest votaries of philosophical truth have studied and toiled with ever-accumulating victories, until now a hundred sciences are ripe with emancipating fruits and perfect freedom to be taught. Railroads gird the lands with ribs of trade, telegraphs thread the airs with electric tidings of events, and steamships crease the seas with channels of foam and fire. There is no longer danger of any one being put to death, or even being excluded from the "best society," for saying that the earth moves. An eclipse cannot be regarded as the frown of God when it is regularly foretold with certainty. The measurement of the atmosphere exterminated the wiseacre proverb, "Nature abhors a vacuum," by the burlesque addition, "but only for the first thirty-two feet." The madman cannot be looked on as divinely inspired, his words to be caught as oracles, or as possessed by a devil, to be chained and scourged, since Pinel's great work has brought insanity within the range of organic disease. When Franklin's kite drew electricity from the cloud to his knuckle, the superstitious theory of thunder died a natural death.

The vast progress effected in all departments of physical science during the last four centuries has not been made in any kindred degree in the prevailing theology. Most of the harsh, unreasonable tenets of the elaborately morbid and distorted mediæval theology are still retained in the creeds of the great majority of Christendom. The causes of this difference are plain. The establishment of newly-discovered truths in material science being less intimately connected with the prerogatives of the ruling classes, less clearly hostile to the permanence of their power, they have not offered so pertinacious an opposition to progress in this province: they have yielded a much larger freedom to physicists than to moralists, to discoverers of mathematical, chemical, and mechanical law than to reformers of political and religious thought. Livy tells us that, in the five hundred and seventy-third year of Rome, some concealed books of Numa were found, which, on examination by the priests, —being thought *injurious to the established religion*,—were ordered to be burned.[25] The charge was not that they were ungenuine, nor that their

[25] Lib. xl. cap. xxix.

contents were false; but they were dangerous. In the second century, an imperial decree forbade the reading of the Sibylline Oracles, because they contained prophecies of Christ and doctrines of Christianity. By an act of the English Parliament, in the middle of the seventeenth century, every copy of the Racovian Catechism (an exposition of the Socinian doctrine) that could be obtained was burned in the streets. The Index Expurgatorius for Catholic countries is still freshly filled every year. And in Protestant countries a more subtle and a more effectual influence prevents, on the part of the majority, the candid perusal of all theological discussions which are not pitched in the orthodox key. Certain dogmas are the *absorbed thought* of the sects which defend them: no fresh and independent thinking is to be expected on those subjects, no matter how purely fictitious these secretions of the brain of the denomination or of some ancient leader may be, no matter how glaringly out of keeping with the intelligence and liberty which reign in other realms of faith and feeling. There is nowhere else in the world a tyranny so pervasive and despotic as that which rules in the department of theological opinion. The prevalent slothful and slavish surrender of the grand privileges and duties of individual thought, independent personal conviction and action in religious matters, is at once astonishing, pernicious, and disgraceful. The effect of entrenched tradition, priestly directors, a bigoted, overawing, and persecuting sectarianism, is nowhere else a hundredth part so powerful or so extensive.

In addition to the bitter determination by interested persons to suppress reforming investigations of the doctrines which hold their private prejudices in supremacy, and to the tremendous social prestige of old establishment, another cause has been active to keep theology stationary while science has been making such rapid conquests. Science deals with tangible quantities, theology with abstract qualities. The cultivation of the former yields visible practical results of material comfort; the cultivation of the latter yields only inward spiritual results of mental welfare. Accordingly, science has a thousand resolute votaries where theology has one unshackled disciple. At this moment, a countless multitude, furnished with complex apparatus, are ransacking every nook of nature, and plucking trophies, and the world with honoring attention reads their reports. But how few with competent preparation and equipment, with fearless consecration to truth, unhampered, with fresh free vigor, are scrutinizing the problems of theology, enthusiastically bent upon refuting errors and proving verities! And what reception do the conclusions of those few meet at the hands of the public? Surely not prompt recognition, frank criticism, and grateful acknowledgment or courteous refutation. No; but studied exclusion from notice, or sophistical evasions and insulting vituperation. What a striking and painful contrast is afforded by the generous encouragement given to the students of science by the annual bestowment of rewards by the scientific societies—such as the Cuvier Prize, the Royal Medal, the Rumford Medal—

and the jealous contempt and assaults visited by the sectarian authorities upon those earnest students of theology who venture to propose any innovating improvement! Suppose there were annually awarded an Aquinas Prize, a Fénélon Medal, a Calvin Medal, a Luther Medal, a Channing Medal, not to the one who should present the most ingenious defence of any peculiar tenet of one of those masters, but to him who should offer the most valuable fresh contribution to theological truth! What should we think if the French Institute offered a gold medal every year to the astronomer who presented the ablest essay in support of the Ptolemaic system, or if the Royal Society voted a diploma for the best method of casting nativities? Such *is* the course pursued in regard to dogmatic theology. The consequence has been that while elsewhere the ultimate standard by which to try a doctrine is, What do the most competent judges say? What does unprejudiced reason dictate? What does the great harmony of truth require? in theology it is, What do the committed priests say? How does it comport with the old traditions?

We read in the Hak-ul-Yakeen that the envoy of Herk, Emperor of Rûm, once said to the prophet, "You summon people to a Paradise whose extent includes heaven and earth: where, then, is hell?" Mohammed replied, "When day comes, where is night?" That is to say,—according to the traditionary glossers,—as day and night are opposite, so Paradise is at the zenith and hell at the nadir. Yes; but if Paradise be above the heavens, and hell below the seventh earth, then how can Sirât be extended over hell for people to pass to Paradise? "We reply," say the authors of the Hak-ul-Yakeen, "that speculation on this subject is not necessary, nor to be regarded. Implicit faith in what the prophets have revealed must be had; and explanatory surmises, which are the occasion of Satanic doubts, must not be indulged."[26] Certainly this exclusion of reason cannot always be suffered. It is fast giving way already. And it is inevitable that, when reason secures its right and bears its rightful fruits in moral subjects as it now does in physical subjects, the mediæval theology must be rejected as mediæval science has been. It is the common doctrine of the Church that Christ now sits in heaven in a human body of flesh and blood. Calvin separated the Divine nature of Christ from this human body; but Luther made the two natures inseparable and attributed ubiquity to the body in which they reside, thus asserting the omnipresence of a material human body, a bulk of a hundred and fifty pounds' weight more or less. He furiously assailed Zwingle's objection to this monstrous nonsense, as "a devil's mask and grandchild of that old witch, mistress Reason."[27] The Roman Church teaches, and her adherents devoutly believe, that the house of the Virgin Mary was conveyed on the wings of angels from Nazareth to the eastern slope of the Apennines above the Adriatic Gulf.[28] The English Church, consistently interpreted, teaches that there is no salvation without baptism

[26] Merrick, Hyât-ul-Kuloob, note 74.
[27] Hagenbach, Dogmengeschichte, sect. 265, note 2.
[28] Christian Remembrancer, April, 1855. A full and able history of the "Holy House of Loretto."

by priests in the line of apostolic succession. These are but ordinary specimens of teachings still humbly received by the mass of Christians. The common distrust with which the natural operations of reason are regarded in the Church, the extreme reluctance to accept the conclusions of mere reason, seem to us discreditable to the theological leaders who represent the current creeds of the approved sects. Many an influential theologian could learn invaluable lessons from the great guides in the realm of science. The folly which acute learned wise men will be guilty of the moment they turn to theological subjects, where they do not allow reason to act, is both ludicrous and melancholy. The victim of lycanthropy used to be burned alive; he is now placed under the careful treatment of skilful and humane physicians. But the heretic or infidel is still thought to be inspired by the devil,—a fit subject for discipline here and hell hereafter. The light shed abroad by the rising spirit of rational investigation must gradually dispel the delusions which lurk in the vales of theology, as it already has dispelled those that formerly haunted the hills of science. The spectres which have so long terrified a childish world will successively vanish from the path of man as advancing reason, in the name of the God of truth, utters its imperial "Avaunt!"

Henry More wrote a book on the "Immortality of the Soul," printed in London in 1659, just two hundred years ago. It is full of beauty, acumen, and power. He was one of the first men of the time. Yet he seriously elaborates an argument like this:—"The scum and spots that lie on the sun are as great an Argument that there is no Divinity in him as the dung of Owls and Sparrows that is found on the faces and shoulders of Idols in Temples are clear evidences that they are no true Deities."[28] He also in good faith tells a story like this:—"That a Woman with child, seeing a Butcher divide a Swine's head with a Cleaver, brought forth her Child with its face cloven in the upper jaw, the palate, and upper lip to the very nose."[29] The progress marked by the contrast of the scientific spirit of the present time with the ravenous credulity of even two centuries back must continue and spread into every province. Some may vilify it; but in vain. Some may sophisticate against it; but in vain. Some may invoke authority and social persecution to stop it; but in vain. Some may appeal to the prejudices and fears of the timid; but in vain. Some may close their own eyes, and hold their hands before their neighbors' eyes, and attempt to shut out the light; but in vain. It will go on. It is the interest of the world that it should go on. It is the manly and the religious course to help this progress with prudence and reverence. Truth is the will of God, the way he has made things to be and to act, the way he wishes free beings to exist and to act. He has ordained the gradual discovery of truth. And despite the struggles of selfish tyranny, and the complacence of luxurious ease, and the terror of ignorant cowardice, truth will be more and more brought to universal acceptance.

[28] Preface, p. 10. [29] Ibid. p. 392.

Some men have fancied their bodies composed of butter or of glass; but when compelled to move out into the sunlight or the crowd they did not melt nor break.[31] Esquirol had a patient who did not dare to bend her thumb, lest the world should come to an end. When forced to bend it, she was surprised that the crack of doom did not follow.

The mechanico-theatrical character of the popular theology is enough to reveal its origin and its fundamental falsity. The difference between its lurid and phantasmal details and the calm eternal verities in the divinely-constituted order of nature is as great as the difference between those stars which one sees in consequence of a blow on the forehead and those he sees by turning his gaze to the nightly sky. To every competent thinker, the bare appreciation of such a passage as that which closes Chateaubriand's chapter on the Last Judgment, with the huge bathos of its incongruous mixture of sublime and absurd, is its sufficient refutation:—"The globe trembles on its axis; the moon is covered with a bloody veil; the threatening stars hang half detached from the vault of heaven, and the agony of the world commences. Now resounds the trump of the angel. The sepulchres burst: the human race issues all at once, and fills the Valley of Jehoshaphat! The Son of Man appears in the clouds; the powers of hell ascend from the infernal depths; the goats are separated from the sheep; the wicked are plunged into the gulf; the just ascend to heaven; God returns to his repose, and the reign of eternity begins."[32] Nothing saves this whole scheme of doctrine from instant rejection except neglect of thought, or incompetence of thought, on the part of those who contemplate it. The peculiar dogmas of the exclusive sects are the products of mental and social disease,—*psychological growths in pathological moulds*. The naked shapes of beautiful women floating around St. Anthony in full display of their maddening charms are interpreted by the Romanist Church as a visible work of the devil. An intelligent physician accounts for them by the laws of physiology,—the morbid action of morbid nerves. There is no doubt whatever as to which of these explanations is correct. The absolute prevalence of that explanation is merely a question of time. Meanwhile, it is the part of every wise and devout man, without bigotry, without hatred for any, with strict fidelity to his own convictions, with entire tolerance and kindness for all who differ from him, sacredly to seek after verity himself and earnestly to endeavor to impart it to others. To such men forms of opinion, instead of being prisons, fetters, and barriers, will be but as tents of a night while they march through life, the burning and cloudy column of inquiry their guide, the eternal temple of truth their goal.

The actual relation, the becoming attitude, the appropriate feeling, of man towards the future state, the concealed segment of his destiny, are impressively shown in the dying scene of one of the wisest and most gifted of men,—one of the fittest representatives of the modern mind.

[31] Bucknill and Tuke, Psychological Medicine, ch. ix.

[32] Genius of Christianity, part ii. book vi. ch. vii.

In a good old age, on a pleasant spring-day, with a vast expanse of experience behind him, with an immensity of hope before him, he lay calmly expiring. "More light!" he cried, with departing breath; and Death, solemn warder of eternity, led him, blinded, before the immemorial veil of awe and secrets. It uprolled as the flesh-bandage fell from his spirit, and he walked at large, triumphant or appalled, amidst the unimagined revelations of God.

And now, recalling the varied studies we have passed through, and seeking for the conclusion or root of the matter, what shall we say? This much we will say. First, the fearless Christian, fully acquainted with the results of a criticism unsparing as the requisitions of truth and candor, can scarcely, with intelligent honesty, do more than place his hand on the beating of his heart, and fix his eye on the riven tomb of Jesus, and exclaim, "Feeling here the inspired promise of immortality, and seeing there the sign of God's authentic seal, I *gratefully believe* that Christ has risen, and that my soul is deathless!" Secondly, the trusting philosopher, fairly weighing the history of the world's belief in a future life, and the evidences on which it rests, can scarcely, with justifying warrant, do less than lay his hand on his body, and turn his gaze aloft, and exclaim, "Though death shatters this shell, the soul may survive, and I *confidently hope* to live forever." Meanwhile, the believer and the speculator, combining to form a Christian philosophy wherein doubt and faith, thought and freedom, reason and sentiment, nature and revelation, all embrace, even as the truth of things and the experience of life demand, may both adopt for their own the expression wrought for himself by a pure and fervent poet in these freighted lines of pathetic beauty:—

"I gather up the scattered rays
Of wisdom in the early days,—
Faint gleams and broken, like the light
Of meteors in a Northern night,
Betraying to the darkling earth
The unseen sun which gave them birth;
I listen to the sibyl's chant,
The voice of priest and hierophant;
I know what Indian Kreeshna saith,
And what of life and what of death
The demon taught to Socrates,
And what, beneath his garden-trees
Slow-pacing, with a dream-like tread,
The solemn-thoughted Plato said;
Nor lack I tokens, great or small,
Of God's clear light in each and all,
While holding with more dear regard
Than scroll of heathen seer and bard
The starry pages, promise-lit,
With Christ's evangel overwrit,
Thy miracle of life and death,
O Holy One of Nazareth!"[28]

[28] Whittier, Questions of Life.

PART FIFTH.

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL DISSERTATIONS CONCERNING A FUTURE LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE IN THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES.

The power of the old religions was for centuries concentrated in the Mysteries. These were recondite institutions, sometimes wielded by the state, sometimes by a priesthood, sometimes by a ramifying private society. None could be admitted into them save with the permission of the hierarchs, by rites of initiation, and under solemn seals of secrecy. These mysterious institutions, charged with strange attractions, shrouded in awful wonder, were numerous, and, agreeing in some of their fundamental features, were spread nearly all over the world. The writings of the ancients abound with references to them, mostly eulogistic. The mighty part played by these veiled bodies in the life of the periods when they flourished, the pregnant hints and alluring obscurities amid which they stand in relation to the learning of modern times, have repeatedly obtained wide attention, elicited opposite opinions, provoked fierce debates, and led different inquirers to various conclusions as to their true origin, character, scope, meaning, and results.

One of the principal points in discussion by scholars concerning the Mysteries has been whether they inculcated an esoteric doctrine of philosophy, opposed to the popular religion. Some writers have maintained that in their symbols and rites was contained a pure system of monotheistic ethics and religion. Our own opinion is that in some of these institutions, at one period, higher theological views and scientific speculations were unfolded, but in others never. Still, it is extremely difficult to prove any thing on this part of the general subject: there is much that is plausible to be said on both sides of the question. Another query to be noticed in passing is in regard to the degree of exclusiveness and concealment really attached to the form of initiation.

Lobeck, in his celebrated work, "Aglaophamus," borne away by a theory, assumes the extravagant position that the Eleusinian Mysteries were almost freely open to all.[1] His error seems to lie in not distinguishing sufficiently between the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries, and in not separating the noisy shows of the public festal days from the initiatory and explanatory rites of personal admission within the mystic pale. The notorious facts that strict inquiry was made into the character and fitness of the applicant before his admission, and that many were openly rejected,—that instant death was inflicted on all who intruded unprepared within the sacred circuits, and that death was the penalty of divulging what happened during the celebrations,—all are inconsistent with the notion of Lobeck, and prove that the Mysteries were hedged about with dread. Æschylus narrowly escaped being torn in pieces upon the stage by the people on suspicion that in his play he had given a hint of something in the Mysteries. He delivered himself by appealing to the Areopagus, and proving that he had never been initiated. Andocides also, a Greek orator who lived about four hundred years before Christ, was somewhat similarly accused, and only escaped by a strenuous defence of himself in an oration, still extant, entitled "Concerning the Mysteries."

A third preliminary matter is as to the moral character of the services performed by these companies. Some held that their characteristics were divinely pure, intellectual, exalting; others that in abandoned pleasures they were fouler than the Stygian pit. The Church-Fathers, Clement, Irenæus, Tertullian, and the rest, influenced by a mixture of prejudice, hatred, and horror, against every thing connected with paganism, declared, in round terms, that the Mysteries were unmitigated sinks of iniquity and shame, lust, murder, and all promiscuous deviltry. Without pausing to except or qualify, or to be thoroughly informed and just, they included the ancient stern generations and their own degraded contemporaries, the vile rites of the Corinthian Aphrodite and the solemn service of Demeter, the furious revels of the Bacchanalians and the harmonious mental worship of Apollo, all in one indiscriminate charge of insane beastliness and idolatry. Their view of the Mysteries has been most circulated among the moderns by Leland's learned but bigoted work on the "Use and Necessity of a Divine Revelation." He would have us regard each one as a vortex of atheistic sensuality and crime. There should be discrimination. The facts are undoubtedly these, as we might abundantly demonstrate were it in the province of the present essay. The original Mysteries, the authoritative institutions co-ordinated with the state or administered by the poets and philosophers, were pure: their purpose was to purify the lives and characters of their disciples. Their means were a complicated apparatus of sensible and symbolic revelations and instructions admirably calculated to im-

[1] Lib. i. sects. 4, 5.

press the most salutary moral and religious lessons. In the first place, is it credible that the state would fling its auspices over societies whose function was to organize lawlessness and debauchery, to make a business of vice and filth? Among the laws of Solon is a regulation decreeing that the Senate shall convene in the Eleusinian temple, the day after the festival, to inquire whether every thing had been done with reverence and propriety. Secondly, if such was the character of these secrets, why was inquisition always made into the moral habits of the candidate, that he might be refused admittance if they were bad? This inquiry was severe, and the decision unrelenting. Alcibiades was rejected, as we learn from Plutarch's life of him, on account of his dissoluteness and insubordination in the city. Nero dared not attend the Eleusinian Mysteries, "because to the murder of his mother he had joined the slaughter of his paternal aunt."[2] All accepted candidates were scrupulously purified in thought and body, and clad in white robes, for nine days previous to their reception. Thirdly, it is intrinsically absurd to suppose that an institution of gross immorality and cruelty could have flourished in the most polite and refined Greek nation, as the Eleusinian Mysteries did for over eighteen hundred years, ranking among its members a vast majority of both sexes, of all classes, of all ages, and constantly celebrating its rites before immense audiences of them all. Finally, a host of men like Plato, Sophocles, Cimon, Lycurgus, Cicero, were members of these bodies, partook in their transactions, and have left on record eulogies of them and of their influence. The concurrent testimony of antiquity is that in the Great Mysteries the desires were chastened, the heart purified, the mind calmed, the soul inspired,—all the virtues of morality and hopes of religion taught and enforced with sublime solemnities. There is no just ground for suspecting this to be false.

But there remains something more and different to be said also. While the authorized Mysteries were what we have asserted, there did afterwards arise spurious Mysteries, in names, forms, and pretensions partially resembling the genuine ones, under the control of the most unprincipled persons, and in which unquestionably the excesses of unbelief, drunkenness, and prostitution held riot. These depraved societies were foreign grafts from the sensual pantheism ever nourished in the voluptuous climes of the remote East. They established themselves late in Greece, but were developed at Rome in such unbridled enormities as compelled the Senate to suppress them. Livy gives a detailed and vivid account of the whole affair in his history.[3] But the gladiators, scoundrels, rakes, bawds, who swarmed in these stews of rotting Rome, are hardly to be confounded with the noble men and matrons of the earlier time who openly joined in the pure Mysteries with the approving example of the holiest bards, the gravest statesmen, and the profoundest sages,—men like Pindar, Pericles, and Pythagoras.

[2] Suetonius, Vita Neronis, cap. xxxiv.

[3] Lib. xxxix. cap. viii.–xvi.

Ample facilities are afforded in the numerous works to which we shall refer for unmasking the different organizations that travelled over the earth in the guise of the Mysteries, and of seeing what deceptive arts were practised in some, what superhuman terrors paraded in others, what horrible cruelties perpetrated in others, what leading objects sought in each.

The Mysteries have many bearings on several distinct subjects; but in those aspects we have not space here to examine them. We purpose to consider them solely in their relation to the doctrine of a future life. We are convinced that the very heart of their secret, the essence of their meaning in their origin and their end, was no other than the doctrine of an immortality succeeding a death. Gessner published a book at Göttingen, so long ago as the year 1755, maintaining this very assertion. His work, which is quite scarce now, bears the title "Dogma de perenni Animorum Natura per Sacra præcipue Eleusinia Propagata." The consenting testimony of more than forty of the most authoritative ancient writers comes down to us in their surviving works to the effect that those who were admitted into the Mysteries were thereby purified, led to holy lives, joined in communion with the gods, and assured of a better fate than otherwise could be expected in the future state. Two or three specimens from these witnesses will suffice. Aristophanes, in the second act of the Frogs, describes an elysium of the initiates after death, where he says they bound "in sportive dances on rose-enamelled meadows; for the light is cheerful only to those who have been initiated."[4] Pausanias describes the uninitiated as being compelled in Hades to carry water in buckets bored full of holes.[5] Isocrates says, in his Panegyric, "Demeter, the goddess of the Eleusinian Mysteries, fortifies those who have been initiated against the fear of death, and teaches them to have sweet hopes concerning eternity." The old Orphic verses cited by Thomas Taylor in his Treatise on the Mysteries run thus:—

> "The soul that uninitiated dies
> Plunged in the blackest mire in Hades lies."[6]

The same statement is likewise found in Plato, who, in another place, also explicitly declares that a doctrine of future retribution was taught in the Mysteries and believed by the serious.[7] Cicero says, "Initiation makes us both live more honorably and die with better hopes."[8] In seasons of imminent danger—as in a shipwreck—it was customary for a man to ask his companion, Hast thou been initiated? The implication is that initiation removed fear of death by promising a happy life to follow.[9] A fragment preserved from a very ancient author is plain on this subject. "The soul is affected in death just as it is in the initiation into the great Mysteries: thing answers to thing. At first it passes through darkness, horrors, and toils. Then are disclosed a wondrous light, pure places, flowery meads, replete with mystic sounds, dances,

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[4] Scene iii.
[5] Lib. x. cap. xxxi.
[6] Phædon, sect. xxxviii.
[7] Leg., lib. ix. cap. x.
[8] De Leg., lib. ii. cap. xiv.
[9] St. John, Hellenes, ch. xi.

and sacred doctrines, and holy visions. Then, perfectly enlightened, they are free: crowned, they walk about worshipping the gods and conversing with good men."[10] The principal part of the hymn to Ceres, attributed to Homer, is occupied with a narrative of her labors to endow the young Demophoon, mortal child of Metaneira, with immortality. Now, Ceres was the goddess of the Mysteries; and the last part of this very hymn recounts how Persephone was snatched from the light of life into Hades and restored again. Thus we see that the implications of the indirect evidence, the leanings and guidings of all the incidental clews now left us to the real aim and purport of the Mysteries, combine to assure us that their chief teaching was a doctrine of a future life in which there should be rewards and punishments. All this we shall more fully establish, both by direct proofs and by collateral supports.

It is a well-known fact, intimately connected with the different religions of Greece and Asia Minor, that during the time of harvest in the autumn, and again at the season of sowing in the spring, the shepherds, the vintagers, and the people in general, were accustomed to observe certain sacred festivals,—the autumnal sad, the vernal joyous. These undoubtedly grew out of the deep sympathy between man and nature over the decay and disappearance, the revival and return, of vegetation. When the hot season had withered the verdure of the fields, plaintive songs were sung, their wild melancholy notes and snatches borne abroad by the breeze and their echoes dying at last in the distance. In every instance, these mournful strains were the annual lamentation of the people over the death of some mythical boy of extraordinary beauty and promise, who, in the flower of youth, was suddenly drowned, or torn in pieces by wild beasts,—

> "Some Hyacinthine boy, for whom
> Morn well might break and April bloom."

Among the Argives it was Linus. With the Arcadians it was Scephrus. In Phrygia it was Lityerses. On the shore of the Black Sea it was Bormus. In the country of the Bithynians it was Hylas. At Pelusium it was Maneros. And in Syria it was Adonis. The untimely death of these beautiful boys, carried off in their morning of life, was yearly bewailed,—their names re-echoing over the plains, the fountains, and among the hills. It is obvious that these cannot have been real persons whose death excited a sympathy so general, so recurrent. "The real object of lamentation," says Müller, "was the tender beauty of spring destroyed by the raging heat, and other similar phenomena, which the imagination of those early times invested with a personal form."[11] All this was woven into the Mysteries, whose great legend and drama were that every autumn Persephone was carried down to the dark realm of the King of Shadows, but that she was to return each spring to her mother's arms. Thus were described

[10] Sentences of Stobæus, Sermo CXIX.

[11] History of the Literature of Ancient Greece, ch. iii. sects. 2–8.

the withdrawal and reappearance of vegetable life in the alternations of the seasons. But these changes of nature typified the changes in the human lot; else Persephone would have been merely a symbol of the buried grain and would not have become the Queen of the Dead.[12] Her return to the world of light, by natural analogy, denoted a new birth to men. Accordingly, "all the testimony of antiquity concurs in saying that these Mysteries inspired the most animating hopes with regard to the condition of the soul after death."[13] That the fate of man should by imagination and sentiment have been so connected with the phenomena of nature in myths and symbols embodied in pathetic religious ceremonies was a spontaneous product. For how

> "Her fresh benignant look
> Nature changes at that lorn season when,
> With tresses drooping o'er her sable stole,
> She yearly mourns the mortal doom of man,
> Her noblest work! So Israel's virgins erst
> With annual moan upon the mountains wept
> Their fairest gone!"

And soon again the birds begin to warble, the leaves and blossoms put forth, and all is new life once more. In every age the gentle heart and meditative mind have been impressed by the mournful correspondence and the animating prophecy.

But not only was the changing recurrence of dreary winter and gladsome summer joined by affecting analogies with the human doom of death and hope of another life. The phenomena of the skies, the impressive succession of day and night, also were early seized upon and made to blend their shadows and lights, by means of imaginative suggestions, into an image of the decease and resurrection of man. Among the Mystical Hymns of Orpheus, so called, there is a hymn to Adonis, in which that personage is identified with the sun alternately sinking to Tartarus and soaring to heaven. It was customary with the ancients to speak of the setting of a constellation as its death, its reascension in the horizon being its return to life.[14] The black abysm under the earth was the realm of the dead. The bright expanse above the earth was the realm of the living. While the daily sun rises royally through the latter, all things rejoice in the warmth and splendor of his smile. When he sinks nightly, shorn of his ambrosial beams, into the former, sky and earth wrap themselves in mourning for their departed monarch, the dead god of light muffled in his bier and borne along the darkening heavens to his burial. How naturally the phenomena of human fate would be symbolically interwoven with all this! Especially alike are the exuberant joy and activity of full life and of day, the melancholy stillness and sad repose of midnight and of death.

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[12] For the connection of the Eleusinian goddesses with agriculture, the seasons, the under-world, death, resurrection, etc., see "Demeter und Persephone," von Dr. Ludwig Preller, kap. i. sects. 9–11.

[13] Müller, Hist. Gr. Lit., ch. xvi. sect. 2.

[14] Leitch's Eng. trans. of K. O. Müller's Introduction to a Scientific System of Mythology, Appendix, pp. 339–342.

"The sun insists on gladness; but at night,
When he is gone, poor Nature loves to weep."

Through her yearly and her diurnal round alike, therefore, does mother Nature sympathize with man, and picture forth his fate, in type of autumnal decay, and wintry darkness, and night-buried seed,—in sign of vernal bud, and summer light, and day-bursting fruit.

These facts and phenomena of nature and man, together with explanatory theories to which they gave rise, were, by the peculiar imaginative processes so powerfully operative among the earliest nations, personified in mythic beings and set forth as literal history. Their doctrine was inculcated as truth once historically exemplified by some traditional personage. It was dramatically impersonated and enacted in the process of initiation into the Mysteries. A striking instance of this kind of theatrical representation is afforded by the celebration, every eight years, of the mythus of Apollo's fight with the Pythian dragon, his flight and expiatory service to Admetus, the subterranean king of the dead. In mimic order, a boy slew a monster at Delphi, ran along the road to Tempe, represented on the way the bondage of the god in Hades, and returned, purified, bringing a branch of laurel from the sacred valley.[15] The doctrine of a future life connected with the legend of some hero who had died, descended into the under-world, and again risen to life,—this doctrine, dramatically represented in the personal experience of the initiate, was the heart of every one of the secret religious societies of antiquity.

"Here rests the secret, here the keys,
Of the old death-bolted Mysteries."

Perhaps this great system of esoteric rites and instructions grew up naturally, little by little. Perhaps it was constructed at once, either as poetry, by a company of poets, or as a theology, by a society of priests, or as a fair method of moral and religious teaching, by a company of philosophers. Or perhaps it was gradually formed by a mixture of all these means and motives. Many have regarded it as the bedimmed relic of a brilliant primeval revelation. This question of the origination, the first causes and purposes, of the Mysteries is now sunk in hopeless obscurity, even were it of any importance to be known. One thing we know,—namely, that at an early age these societies formed organizations of formidable extent and power, and were vitally connected with the prevailing religions of the principal nations of the earth.

In Egypt the legend of initiation was this.[16] Typhon, a wicked, destroying personage, once formed a conspiracy against his brother, the good king Osiris. Having prepared a costly chest, inlaid with gold, he offered to give it to any one whose body would fit it. Osiris unsuspiciously lay down in it. Typhon instantly fastened the cover and

[15] Müller, Introduction to Mythology, pp. 97 and 241. Also his Dorians, lib. ii. cap. vii. sect. 8.
[16] Wilkinson, Egyptian Antiquities, series i. vol. i. ch. 3.

threw the fatal chest into the river. This was called the loss or burial of Osiris, and was annually celebrated with all sorts of melancholy rites. But the winds and waves drove the funereal vessel ashore, where Isis, the inconsolable wife of Osiris, wandering in search of her husband's remains, at last found it, and restored the corpse to life. This part of the drama was called the discovery or resurrection of Osiris, and was also enacted yearly, but with every manifestation of excessive joy. "In the losing of Osiris, and then in the finding him again," Augustine writes, "first their lamentation, then their extravagant delight, are a mere play and fiction; yet the fond people, though they neither lose nor find any thing, weep and rejoice truly."[17] Plutarch speaks of the death, regeneration, and resurrection of Osiris represented in the great religious festivals of Egypt. He explains the rites in commemoration of Typhon's murder of Osiris as symbols referring to four things,—the subsidence of the Nile into his channel, the cessation of the delicious Etesian winds before the hot blasts of the South, the encroachment of the lengthening night on the shortening day, the disappearance of the bloom of summer before the barrenness of winter.[18] But the real interest and power of the whole subject probably lay in the direct relation of all these phenomena, traditions, and ceremonies to the doctrine of death and a future life for man.

In the Mithraic Mysteries of Persia, the legend, ritual, and doctrine were virtually the same as the foregoing. They are credulously said to have been established by Zoroaster himself, who fitted up a vast grotto in the mountains of Bokhara, where thousands thronged to be initiated by him.[19] This Mithraic cave was an emblem of the universe, its roof painted with the constellations of the zodiac, its depths full of the black and fiery terrors of grisly hell, its summit illuminated with the blue and starry splendors of heaven, its passages lined with dangers and instructions, now quaking with infernal shrieks, now breathing celestial music. In the Persian Mysteries, the initiate, in dramatic show, died, was laid in a coffin, and afterwards rose unto a new life,—all of which was a type of the natural fate of man.[20] The descent of the soul from heaven and its return thither were denoted by a torch borne alternately reversed and upright, and by the descriptions of the passage of spirits, in the round of the metempsychosis, through the planetary gates of the zodiac. The sun and moon and the morning and evening star were depicted in brilliant gold or blackly muffled, according to their journeying in the upper or in the lower hemisphere.[21]

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[17] De Civitate Dei, lib. vi. cap. 10. [18] De Is. et Osir.

[19] Porphyry, De Antro Nympharum. Tertullian, Prescript. ad Her., cap. xl., where he refers the mimic death and resurrection in the Mithraic Mysteries to the teaching of Satan.

[20] Julius Firmicus, De Errore Prof. Relig.

[21] Mithraica, Mémoire Académique sur le Culte Solaire de Mithra, par Joseph de Hammer, pp. 66–68, 125–127. Tertullian, Prescript. ad Her., cap. xl. Porphyry, De Abstinentia, lib. iv. sect. 16. Hyde, Hist. Vet. Pers. Relig., p. 254.

The hero of the Syrian Mysteries was Adonis or Thammuz, the beautiful favorite of Aphrodite, untimely slain by a wild boar. His death was sadly, his resurrection joyously, celebrated every year at Byblus with great pomp and universal interest. The festival lasted two days. On the first, all things were clad in mourning, sorrow was depicted in every face, and wails and weeping resounded. Coffins were exposed at every door and borne in numerous processions. Frail stalks of young corn and flowers were thrown into the river to perish, as types of the premature death of blooming Adonis, cut off like a plant in the bud of his age.[22] The second day the whole aspect of things was changed, and the greatest exultation prevailed, because it was said Adonis had returned from the dead.[23] Venus, having found him dead, deposited his body on a bed of lettuce and mourned bitterly over him. From his blood sprang the adonium, from her tears the anemone.[24] The Jews were captivated by the religious rites connected with this touching myth, and even enacted them in the gates of their holy temple. Ezekiel says, "Behold, at the gate of the Lord's house which was towards the north [the direction of night and winter] there sat women weeping for Tammuz." It was said that Aphrodite prevailed on Persephone to let Adonis dwell one half the year with her on earth, and only the rest among the shades,—a plain reference to vegetable life in summer and winter.[25] Lucian, in his little treatise on the Syrian Goddess, says that "the river Adonis, rising out of Mount Libanus, at certain seasons flows red in its channel: some say it is miraculously stained by the blood of the fresh-wounded youth; others say that the spring-rains, washing in a red ore from the soil of the country, discolor the stream." Dupuis remarks that this redness was probably an artifice of the priests.[26] Milton's beautiful allusion to this fable is familiar to most persons. Next came he

> "Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
> The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
> In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
> While smooth Adonis from his native rock
> Ran purple to the sea with Thammuz' blood."

There is no end to the discussions concerning the secret purport of this fascinating story. But, after all is said, it seems to us that there are in it essentially two significations,—one relating to the phenomena of the sun and the earth, the other to the mutual changes of nature and the fate of humanity. Aphrodite bewailing Adonis is surviving Nature mourning for departed Man.

In India the story was told of Mahadeva searching for his lost consort Sita, and, after discovering her lifeless form, bearing it around the world with dismal lamentations. Sometimes it was the death of Camadeva, the

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[22] Hist. du Culte d'Adonis, Mem. Acad. des Inscript., vol. iv. p. 136.

[23] Theocritus, Idyl XV.

[24] Bion, Epitaph Adon., l. 66.

[25] See references in Anthon's Class. Dict., art. Adonis.

[26] Dupuis, Orig. de Cultes, vol. iv. p. 121, ed. 1822.

Hindu Cupid, that was mourned with solemn dirges.[27] He, like Osiris, was slain, enclosed in a chest, and committed to the waves. He was afterwards recovered and resuscitated. Each initiate passed through the emblematic ceremonies corresponding to the points of this pretended history. The Phrygians associated the same great doctrine with the persons of Atys and Cybele. Atys was a lovely shepherd youth passionately loved by the mother of the gods.[28] He suddenly died; and she, in frantic grief, wandered over the earth in search of him, teaching the people where she went the arts of agriculture. He was at length restored to her. Annually the whole drama was performed by the assembled nation with sobs of woe succeeded by ecstasies of joy.[29] Similar to this, in the essential features, was the Eleusinian myth. Aidoneus snatched the maiden Kore down to his gloomy empire. Her mother, Demeter, set off in search of her, scattering the blessings of agriculture, and finally discovered her, and obtained the promise of her society for half of every year. These adventures were dramatized and explained in the mysteries which she, according to tradition, instituted at Eleusis.

The form of the legend was somewhat differently incorporated with the Bacchic Mysteries. It was elaborately wrought up by the Orphic poets. The distinctive name they gave to Bacchus or Dionysus was Zagreus. He was the son of Zeus, and was chosen by him to sit on the throne of heaven. Zeus gave him Apollo and the Curetes as guards; but the brutal Titans, instigated by jealous Hera, disguised themselves and fell on the unfortunate youth while his attention was fixed on a splendid mirror, and, after a fearful conflict, overcame him and tore him into seven pieces. Pallas, however, saved his palpitating heart, and Zeus swallowed it. Zagreus was then begotten again.[30] He was destined to restore the golden age. His devotees looked to him for the liberation of their souls through the purifying rites of his Mysteries. The initiation shadowed out an esoteric doctrine of death and a future life, in the mock murder and new birth of the aspirant, who impersonated Zagreus.[31]

The Northmen constructed the same drama of death around the young Balder, their god of gentleness and beauty. This legend, as Dr. Oliver has shown, constituted the secret of the Gothic Mysteries.[32] Obscure and dread prophecies having crept among the gods that the death of the beloved Balder was at hand, portending universal ruin, a consultation was held to devise means for averting the calamity. At the suggestion of Balder's mother, Freya, the Scandinavian Venus, an oath that they would not be instrumental in causing his death was exacted from all things in nature except the mistletoe, which, on account of its frailty and insignificance, was scornfully neglected. Asa Loke, the evil principle of

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[27] Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 187.
[28] See article Atys in Smith's Class. Dict. with references.
[29] Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, lib. ii. ll. 605–655.
[30] Müller, Hist. Greek Lit., ch. xvi.
[31] Lobeck, Aglaophamus, lib. iii. cap. 5, sect. 13.
[32] History of Initiation, Lect. X.

the Norse faith, taking advantage of this fatal exception, had a spear made of mistletoe, and with it armed Hödur, a strong but blind god. Freya, rejoicing in fancied security, to convince Balder of his charmed exemption from wounds, persuaded him to be the mark for the weapons of the gods. But, alas! when Hödur tilted at him, the devoted victim was transpierced and fell lifeless to the ground. Darkness settled over the world, and bitter was the grief of men and gods over the innocent and lovely Balder. A deputation imploring his release was sent to the queen of the dead. Hela so far relented as to promise his liberation to the upper-world on condition that every thing on earth wept for him. Straightway there was a universal mourning. Men, beasts, trees, metals, stones, wept. But an old withered giantess—Asa Loke in disguise—shed no tears; and so Hela kept her beauteous and lamented prey. But he is to rise again to eternal life and joy when the twilight of the gods has passed.[33] This entire fable has been explained by the commentators, in all its details, as a poetic embodiment of the natural phenomena of the seasons. But it is not improbable that, in addition, it bore a profound doctrinal reference to the fate of man which was interpreted to the initiates.

A great deal has been written concerning the ceremonies and meaning of the celebrated Celtic Mysteries established so long at Samothrace, and under the administration of the Druids throughout ancient Gaul and Britain. The aspirant was led through a series of scenic representations, "without the aid of words," mystically shadowing forth in symbolic forms the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. He assumed successively the shapes of a rabbit, a hen, a grain of wheat, a horse, a tree, and so on through a wide range of metamorphoses enacted by the aid of secret dramatic machinery. He died, was buried, was born anew, rising from his dark confinement to life again. The hierophant enclosed him in a little boat and set him adrift, pointing him to a distant rock, which he calls "the harbor of life." Across the black and stormy waters he strives to gain the beaconing refuge. In these scenes and rites a recondite doctrine of the physical and moral relations and destiny of man was shrouded, to be unveiled by degrees to their docile disciples by the Druidic mystagogues.[34]

It may appear strange that there should be in connection with so many of the old religions of the earth these *arcana* only to be approached by secret initiation at the hands of hierophants. But it will seem natural when we remember that those religions were in the exclusive keeping of priesthoods, which, organized with wondrous cunning and perpetuated through ages, absorbed the science, art, and philosophy of the world, and, concealing their wisdom in the mystic signs of an esoteric

[33] Pigott, Manual of Scandinavian Mythology, pp. 288–300.

[34] Davies, Mythology and Rites of the British Druids, pp. 207–257; 390–392; 420, 555, 572. The accuracy of many of Davies's translations has been called in question. His statements, even on the matters affirmed above, must be received with some reservation of faith.

language, wielded the mighty enginery of superstition over the people at will. The scenes and instructions through which the priests led the unenlightened candidate were the hiding of their power. Thus, wherever was a priesthood we should expect to find mysteries and initiations. Historic fact justifies the supposition; learning unveils the obscure places of antiquity, and shows us the templed or cavernous rites of the religious world, from Hindostan to Gaul, from Egypt to Norway, from Athens to Mexico. And this brings us to the Mysteries of Vitzliputzli, established in South America. Dr. Oliver, in the twelfth lecture of his History of Initiation, gathering his materials from various sources, gives a terrific account of the dramatic ritual here employed. The walls, floor, images, were smeared and caked with human blood. Fresh slaughters of victims were perpetrated at frequent intervals. The candidate descended to the grim caverns excavated under the foundations of the temple. This course was denominated "*the path of the dead.*" Phantoms flitted before him, shrieks appalled him, pitfalls and sacrificial knives threatened him. At last, after many frightful adventures, the aspirant arrived at a narrow stone fissure terminating the range of caverns, through which he was thrust, and was received in the open air, as a person born again, and welcomed with frantic shouts by the multitudes who had been waiting for him without during the process of his initiation.

Even among the savage tribes of North America striking traces have been found of an initiation into a secret society by a mystic death and resurrection. Captain Jonathan Carver, who spent the winter of 1776 with the Naudowessie Indians, was an eye-witness of the admission of a young brave into a body which they entitled Wakou-Kitchewah, or Friendly Society of the Spirit. "This singular initiation," he says, "took place within a railed enclosure in the centre of the camp at the time of the new moon." First came the chiefs, clad in trailing furs. Then came the members of the society, dressed and painted in the gayest manner. When all were seated, one of the principal chiefs arose, and, leading the young man forward, informed the meeting of his desire to be admitted into their circle. No objection being offered, the various preliminary arrangements were made; after which the director began to speak to the kneeling candidate, telling him that he was about to receive a communication of the spirit. This spirit would instantly strike him dead; but he was told not to be terrified, because he should immediately be restored to life again, and this experience was a necessary introduction to the advantages of the community he was on the point of entering. Then violent agitation distorted the face and convulsed the frame of the old chief. He threw something looking like a small bean at the young man. It entered his mouth, and he fell lifeless as suddenly as if he had been shot. Several assistants received him, rubbed his limbs, beat his back, stripped him of his garments and put a new dress on him, and finally presented him to the society in full consciousness as a member.[35]

[35] Travels in the Interior of North America, ch. viii.

All the Mysteries were funereal. This is the most striking single phenomenon connected with them. They invariably began in darkness with groans and tears, but as invariably ended in festive triumph with shouts and smiles. In them all were a symbolic death, a mournful entombment, and a glad resurrection. We know this from the abundant direct testimony of unimpeachable ancient writers, and also from their indirect descriptions of the ceremonies and allusions to them. For example, Apuleius says, "The delivery of the Mysteries is celebrated as a thing resembling a voluntary death: the initiate, being, after a manner, born again, is restored to a new life."[36] Indeed, all who describe the course of initiation agree in declaring that the aspirant was buried for a time within some narrow space,—a typical coffin or grave. This testimony is confirmed by the evidence of the ruins of the chief temples and sacred places of the pagan world. These abound with spacious caverns, labyrinthine passages, and curious recesses; and in connection with them is always found some excavation evidently fitted to enclose a human form. Such hollow beds, covered with flat stones easily removed, are still to be seen amidst the Druidic remains of Britain and Gaul, as well as in nearly every spot where tradition has located the celebration of the Mysteries,—in Greece, India, Persia, Egypt.[37]

It becomes a most interesting question whence these symbols and rites had their origin, and what they were really meant to shadow forth. Bryant, Davies, Faber, Oliver, and several other well-known mythologists, have labored, with no slight learning and ingenuity, to show that all these ceremonies sprang from traditions of the Deluge and of Noah's adventures at that time. The mystic death, burial, and resurrection of the initiate, they say, are a representation of the entrance of the patriarch into the ark, his dark and lonesome sojourn in it, and his final departure out of it. The melancholy wailings with which the Mysteries invariably began, typified the mourning of the patriarchal family over their confinement within the gloomy and sepulchral ark; the triumphant rejoicings with which the initiations always ended, referred to the glad exit of the patriarchal family from their floating prison into the blooming world. The advocates of this theory have laboriously collected all the materials that favor it, and skilfully striven by their means to elucidate the whole subject of ancient paganism, especially of the Mysteries. But, after reading all that they have written, and considering it in the light of impartial researches, one is constrained to say that they have by no means made out their case. It is somewhat doubtful if there be any ground whatever for believing that traditions concerning Noah's deluge and the ark, and his doings in connection with them, in any way entered into the public doctrines and forms, or into the secret initiations, of the heathen

[36] Golden Ass, Eng. trans., by Thomas Taylor, p. 280.

[37] Copious instances are given in Oliver's History of Initiation, in Faber's Origin of Pagan Idolatry, and in Maurice's Indian Antiquities.

religions. At all events, there can be no doubt that the Arkite theorists have exaggerated the importance and extent of these views beyond all tolerable bounds, and even to absurdity. But our business with them now is only so far as they relate to the Mysteries. Our own conviction is that the real meaning of the rites in the Mysteries was based upon the affecting phenomena of human life and death and the hope of another life. We hold the Arkite theory to be arbitrary in general, unsupported by proofs, and inconsistent in detail, unable to meet the points presented.

In the first place, a fundamental part of the ancient belief was that below the surface of the earth was a vast, sombre under-world,—the destination of the ghosts of men, the Greek Hades, the Roman Orcus, the Gothic Hell. A part of the service of initiation was a symbolic descent into this realm. Apuleius, describing his initiation, says, "I approached to the confines of death and trod on the threshold of Proserpine."[38] Orpheus, to whom the introduction of the Mysteries into Greece from the East was ascribed, wrote a poem, now lost, called the "Descent into Hades." Such a descent was attributed to Hercules, Theseus, Rhampsinitus, and many others.[39] It is painted in detail by Homer in the adventure of his hero Ulysses, also by Virgil much more minutely through the journey of Æneas. Warburton labors with great learning and plausibility, and, as it seems to us, with irresistible cogency, to show that these descents are no more nor less than exoteric accounts of what was dramatically enacted in the esoteric recesses of the Mysteries.[40] Any person must be invincibly prejudiced who can doubt that the Greek Hades meant a capacious subterranean world of shades. Now, to assert, as Bryant and his disciples do,[41] that "Hades means the interior of Noah's ark," or "the abyss of waters on which the ark floated, as a coffin bearing the relics of dead Nature," is a purely arbitrary step taken from undue attachment to a mere theory. Hades means the under-world of the dead, and not the interior of Noah's ark. Indeed, in the second place, Faber admits that in the Mysteries "the ark itself was supposed to be in Hades,—the vast central abyss of the earth." But such was not the location of Noah's vessel and voyage. They were on the face of the flood, above the tops of the mountains. It is beyond comparison the most reasonable supposition in itself, and the one best supported by historic facts, that the representations of a mystic burial and voyage in a ship or boat shown in the ancient religions were symbolic rites drawn from imagination and theory as applied to the impressive phenomena of nature and the lot of man. The Egyptians and some other early nations, we know, figured the starry worlds in the sky as ships sailing over a celestial sea. The earth itself was sometimes emblematized in the same

[38] Golden Ass, Taylor's trans., p. 283. [39] Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. cxxii.

[40] Divine Legation of Moses, book ii. sect. iv.

[41] Faber, Mysteries of the Cabiri, ch. v.: On the Connection of the Fabulous Hades with the Mysteries.

way. Then, too, there was the sepulchral barge in which the Egyptian corpses were borne over the Acherusian lake to be entombed. Also the "dark-blue punt" in which Charon ferried souls across the river of death. In these surely there was no reference to Noah's ark. It seems altogether likely that what Bryant and his coadjutors have constructed into the Arkite system of interpretation was really but an emblematic showing forth of a natural doctrine of human life and death and future fate. A wavering boat floating on the deep might, with striking fitness, typify the frail condition of humanity in life, as when Hercules is depicted sailing over the ocean in a golden cup; and that boat, safely riding the flood, might also represent the cheerful faith of the initiate in a future life, bearing him fearlessly through all dangers and through death to the welcoming society of Elysium, as when Danaë and her babe, tossed over the tempestuous sea in a fragile chest, were securely wafted to the sheltering shore of Seriphus. No emblem of our human state and lot, with their mysteries, perils, threats, and promises, could be either more natural or more impressive than that of a vessel launched on the deep. The dying Socrates said "that he should trust his soul on the hope of a future life as upon a raft, and launch away into the unknown." Thus the imagination broods over and explores the shows and secrets, presageful warnings and alluring invitations, storms and calms, island-homes and unknown havens, of the dim seas of nature and of man, of time and of eternity.[42]

Thirdly, the defenders of the Arkite theory are driven into gross inconsistencies with themselves by the falsity of their views. The dilaceration of Zagreus into fragments, the mangling of Osiris and scattering of his limbs abroad, they say, refer to the throwing open of the ark and the going forth of the inmates to populate the earth. They usually make Osiris, Zagreus, Adonis, and the other heroes of the legends enacted in the Mysteries, representatives of the diluvian patriarch himself; but here, with no reason whatever save the exigencies of their theory, they make these mythic personages representatives of the ark,—a view which is utterly unfounded and glaringly wanting in analogy. When Zagreus is torn in pieces, his heart is preserved alive by Zeus and born again into the world within a human form. After the body of Osiris had been strewn piecemeal, the fragments were fondly gathered by Isis, and he was restored to life. There is no plausible correspondence between these cases and the sending out from the ark of the patriarchal family to repeople the world. Their real purpose would seem plainly to be to symbolize the thought that, however the body of man crumbles in pieces, there is life for him still,—he does not hopelessly die. They likewise say that the egg which was consecrated in the Mysteries, at the beginning of the rites, was intended as an emblem of the ark resting on the abyss of waters, and that its latent hatching

[42] Procopius, in his History of the Gothic War, mentions a curious popular British superstition concerning the ferriage of souls among the neighboring islands at midnight. See Grimm's Deutsche Mythologie, kap. xxvi. zweite ausgabe.

was meant to suggest the opening of the ark to let the imprisoned patriarch forth. This hypothesis has no proof, and is needless. It is much more plausible to suppose that the egg was meant as a symbol of a new life about to burst upon the candidate,—a symbol of his resurrection from the mystic tomb wherein he was buried during one stage of initiation; for we know that the initiation was often regarded as the commencement of a fresh life, as a new birth. Apuleius says, "I celebrated the most joyful day of my initiation as my natal day."

Faber argues, from the very close similarity of all the differently-named Mysteries, that they were all Arkite, all derived from one mass of traditions reaching from Noah and embodying his history.[43] The asserted fact of general resemblance among the instituted Mysteries is unquestionable; but the inference above drawn from it is unwarrantable, even if no better explanation could be offered. But there is another explanation ready, more natural in conception, more consistent in detail, and better sustained by evidence. The various Mysteries celebrated in the ancient nations were so much alike not because they were all founded on one world-wide tradition about the Noachian deluge, but because they all grew out of the great common facts of human destiny in connection with natural phenomena. The Mysteries were funereal and festive, began in sorrow and ended in joy, not because they represented first Noah's sad entrance into the ark and then his glad exit from it, but because they began with showing the initiate that he must die, and ended with showing him that he should live again in a happier state. Even the most prejudiced advocates of the Arkite theory are forced to admit, on the explicit testimony of the ancients, that the initiates passed from the darkness and horrors of Tartarus to the bliss and splendors of Elysium by a dramatic resurrection from burial in the black caverns of probation to admission within the illuminated hall or dome of perfection.[44] That the idea of death and of another life runs through all the Mysteries as their cardinal tenet is well shown in connection with the rites of the celebrated Cave of Trophonius at Lebadea in Bœotia. Whoso sought this oracle must descend head-foremost over an inclined plane, bearing a honey-cake in his hand. Aristophanes speaks of this descent with a shudder of fear.[45] The adventurer was suddenly bereft of his senses, and after a while returned to the upper air. What he could then remember composed the Divine revelation which had been communicated to him in his unnatural state below. Plutarch has given a full account of this experience from one Timarchus, who had himself passed through it.[46] The substance of it is this. When Timarchus reached the bottom of the cave, his soul passed from his body, visited

[43] Mysteries of the Cabiri, ch. 10: Comparison of the Various Mysteries.

[44] Faber, Mysteries of the Cabiri, ch. 10, pp. 331–356. Dion Chrysostom describes this scene: Oration XII.

[45] The Clouds, l. 507.

[46] Essay on the Demon of Socrates. See also Pausanias, lib. ix. cap. xxxix.

the under-world of the departed, saw the sphere of generation where souls were reborn into the upper-world, received some explanation of all these things: then, returning into the body, he was taken up out of the cave. Here is no allusion to any traditions of the Deluge or the ark; but the great purpose is evidently a doctrine of the destiny of man after death.

Before the eyes and upon the heart of all mankind in every age has passed in common vision the revolution of the seasons, with its beautiful and sombre changes,—phenomena having a power of suggestion irresistible to stir some of the most profound sentiments of the human breast. The day rolls overhead full of light and life and activity; then the night settles upon the scene with silent gloom and repose. So man runs his busy round of toil and pleasure through the day of existence; then, fading, following the sinking sun, he goes down in death's night to the pallid populations of shade. Again: the fruitful bloom of summer is succeeded by the bleak nakedness of winter. So the streams of enterprise and joy that flowed full and free along their banks in maturity, overhung by blossoming trees, are shrivelled and frozen in the channels of age, and above their sepulchral beds the leafless branches creak in answer to the shrieks of the funereal blast. The flush of childish gayety, the bloom of youthful promise, when a new-comer is growing up sporting about the hearth of home, are like the approach of the maiden and starry Spring,—

> "Who comes sublime, as when, from Pluto free,
> Came, through the flash of Zeus, Persephone."

And then draw hastily on the long, lamenting autumnal days, when

> "Above man's grave the sad winds wail and rain-drops fall,
> And Nature sheds her leaves in yearly funeral."

The flowers are gone, the birds are gone, the gentle breezes are gone; and man too must go, go mingle with the pale people of dreams. But not wholly and forever shall he die. The sun soars into new day from the embrace of night; summer restored hastens on the heels of retreating winter; vegetation but retires and surely returns, and the familiar song of the birds shall sweeten the renewing woods afresh for a million springs. Apollo weeping over the beauteous and darling boy, his slain and drooped Hyacinthus, is the sun shorn of his fierce beams and mourning over the annual wintry desolation: it is also Nature bewailing the remediless loss of man, her favorite companion. It was these general analogies and suggestions, striking the imagination, affecting the heart, enlisting the reason, wrought out, personified, and dramatized by poets, taken up with a mass of other associated matter by priestly societies and organized in a scheme of legendary doctrine and an imposing ritual, that constituted the basis and the central meaning of the old Mysteries; and not a vapid tradition about Noah and his ark.

The aim of these institutions as they were wielded was threefold; and in each particular they exerted tremendous power. The first object was

to stretch over the wicked the restraining influence of a doctrine of future punishment,—to fill them with a fearful looking for judgment in the invisible world. And a considerable proportion of this kind of fear among the ancients is to be traced to the secret influence of the Mysteries, the revelations and terrors there applied. The second desire was to encourage the good and obedient with inspiring hopes of a happy fate and glorious rewards beyond the grave. Plutarch writes to his wife, (near the close of his letter of consolation to her,) "Some say the soul will be entirely insensible after death; but you are too well acquainted with the doctrines delivered in the Mysteries of Bacchus, and with the symbols of our fraternity, to harbor such an error." The third purpose was, by the wonders and splendors, the secret awe, the mysterious authority and venerable sanctions, thrown around the society and its ceremonies, to establish its doctrines in the reverential acceptance of the people, and thus to increase the power of the priesthood and the state. To compass these ends, the hidden science, the public force, the vague superstition, the treasured wealth, and all the varied resources available by the ancient world, were marshalled and brought to bear in the Mysteries. By chemical and mechanical secrets then in their exclusive possession, the mystagogues worked miracles before the astonished novices.[47] They had the powers of electricity, gunpowder, hydrostatic pressure, at their command.[48] Their rites were carried out on the most magnificent scale. The temple at Eleusis could hold thirty thousand persons. Imagine what effect might be produced, under such imposing and prepared circumstances, on an ignorant multitude, by a set of men holding all the scientific secrets and mechanical inventions till then discovered,—illumination flashing after darkness successively before their smitten eyes, the floors seeming to heave and the walls to crack, thunders bellowing through the mighty dome; now yawning revealed beneath them the ghostly chimera of Tartarus, with all the shrieking and horrid scenery gathered there; now the mild beauties of Elysium dawning on their ravished vision, amid strains of celestial music, through fading clouds of glory, while nymphs, heroes, and gods walked apparent. Clement of Alexandria tells us that one feature of the initiation was a display of the grisly secrets of Hades.[49] Apuleius, in his account of his own initiation, says, "At midnight I saw the sun shining with a resplendent light; and I manifestly drew near to the lower and to the upper gods and adored them in immediate presence."[50] Lobeck says that, on the lifting of the veil exposing the adytum to the gaze of the initiates, apparitions

[47] Anthon's Class. Dict., art. "Elicius."

[48] Salverte, Des Sciences Occultes, ou Essai sur la Magie. See also editor's introduction to Thomson's Eng. trans. of Salverte's work.

[49] Stromata, lib. iii., cited by a writer on the Mysteries in Blackwood, Feb. 1853, pp. 201–203.

[50] Taylor's trans. of Golden Ass, p. 283. In a note to p. 275 of this work, the translator describes (with a citation of his authorities) "the breathing resemblances of the gods used in the Mysteries, statues fabricated by the *telestæ*, so as to be illuminated and to appear animated."

of the gods appeared to them.[51] Christie, in his little work on the Greek Mysteries, says that the doctrines of the Eleusinian shows were explained by means of transparent scenes, many of which were faithfully copied upon the painted Greek vases; and these vases, accordingly, were deposited in tombs to evidence the faith of the deceased in a future life. The foregoing conceptions may be illustrated by the dramatic representations, scenic shadows behind transparent curtains, in Java, alluded to by Sir Stamford Raffles.[52]

It is remarkable how far the Mysteries spread over the earth, and what popularity they attained. They penetrated into almost every nation under the sun. They admitted, in some degree, nearly the whole people. Herodotus informs us that there were collected in Egypt, at one celebration, seven hundred thousand men and women, besides children.[53] The greatest warriors and kings—Philip, Alexander, Sulla, Antony—esteemed it an honor to be welcomed within the mystic pale. "Men," says Cicero, "came from the most distant shores to be initiated at Eleusis." Sophocles declares, as quoted by Warburton, "True life is to be found only among the initiates: all other places are full of evil." At the rise of the Christian religion, all the life and power left in the national religion of Greece and Rome were in the Mysteries. Accordingly, here was the most formidable foe of the new faith. Standing in its old entrenchments, with all its popular prestige around it, it fought with desperate determination for every inch it was successively forced to yield. The brilliant effort of Julian to roll back the tide of Christianity and restore the pagan religion to more than its pristine splendor—an effort beneath which the scales of the world's fortunes poised, tremulous, for a while—was chiefly an endeavor to revive and enlarge the Mysteries. Such was the attachment of the people to these old rites even in the middle of the fourth century of the Christian era, that a murderous riot broke out at Alexandria, in which Bishop George and others were slain, on occasion of the profanation by Christians of a secret adytum in which the Mysteries of Mithra were celebrated.[54] And when, a little later, the Emperor Valentinian had determined to suppress all nocturnal rites, he was induced to withdraw his resolution by Pretextatus, proconsul in Greece, "a man endowed with every virtue, who represented to him that the Greeks would consider life insupportable if they were forbidden to celebrate those most sacred Mysteries which bind together the human race."[55] Upon the whole, we cannot fail to see that the Mysteries must have exerted a most extensive and profound influence alike in fostering the good hopes of human nature touching a life to come, and in giving credit and diffusion to the popular fables of the poets concerning the details of the future state. Much of that belief which seems to us so absurd

[51] Aglaophamus, lib. i. sect. 7.
[52] Discourse to the Lit. and Sci. Soc. of Java, 1815, pub. in Valpy's Pamphleteer, No. 15.
[53] Lib. ii. cap. ix. [54] Socrates, Ecc. Hist., lib. iii. cap. 2.
[55] Essay on Mysteries, by M. Ouvaroff, Eng. trans. by J. D. Price, p. 55.

we can easily suppose they sincerely embraced, when we recollect what they thought they had seen under supernatural auspices in their initiations.

In the Greek and Roman faith there was gradually developed—in connection chiefly with the Mysteries, as we believe—an aristocratic doctrine which allotted to a select class of souls an abode in the sky as their distinguished destination after death, while the common multitude were still sentenced to the shadow-region below the grave. As Virgil writes, "The descent to Avernus is easy. The gate of dark Dis is open day and night. But to rise into the upper-world is most arduous. Only the few heroes whom favoring Jove loves or shining virtue exalts thither can effect it."[56] Numerous scattered, significant traces of a belief in this change of the destination of some souls from the pit of Hades to the hall of heaven are to be found in the classic authors. Virgil, celebrating the death of some person under the fictitious name of Daphnis, exclaims, "Robed in white, he admires the strange court of heaven, and sees the clouds and the stars beneath his feet. He is a god now."[57] Porphyry ascribes to Pythagoras the declaration that the souls of departed men are gathered in the zodiac.[58] Plato earnestly describes a region of brightness and unfading realities above this lower world, among the stars, where the gods live, and whither, he says, the virtuous and wise may ascend, while the corrupt and ignorant must sink into the Tartarean realm.[59] A similar conception of the attainableness of heaven seems to be suggested in the old popular myths, first, of Hercules coming back in triumph from his visit to Pluto's seat, and, on dying, rising to the assembly of immortals and taking his equal place among them; secondly, of Dionysus going into the under-world, rescuing his mother, the hapless Semele, and soaring with her to heaven, where she henceforth resides, a peeress of the eldest goddesses. Cicero expresses the same thought when he affirms that "a life of justice and piety is the path to heaven, where patriots, exemplary souls, released from their bodies, enjoy endless happiness amidst the brilliant orbs of the galaxy."[60] The same author also speaks of certain philosophers who flourished before his time, "whose opinions encouraged the belief that souls departing from bodies would arrive at heaven as their proper dwelling-place."[61] He afterwards stigmatizes the notion that the life succeeding death is subterranean as an error,[62] and in his own name addresses his auditor thus:—"I see you gazing upward and wishing to migrate into heaven."[63] It was the common belief of the Romans for ages that Romulus was taken up into heaven, where he would remain forever, claiming Divine honors.[64] The Emperor Julian says, in his Letter on the Duties of a Priest, "God will raise from darkness and

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[56] Æneid, lib. vi. ll. 125–130.
[57] Ecl. v. ll. 57, 58, 64.
[58] De Antro Nympharum.
[59] Phædo, sects. 126–138.
[60] Somn. Scipionis.
[61] Tusc. Quæst., lib. i. cap. xi.
[62] Ibid. cap. xvi.
[63] Ibid. cap. xxxiv.
[64] Ennius, *e.g.*, sings, "Romulus in cœlo cum diis agit ævum."

Tartarus the souls of all of us who worship him sincerely: to the pious, instead of Tartarus he promises Olympus." "It is lawful," writes Plato, "only for the true lover of wisdom to pass into the rank of gods."[65] The privilege here confined to philosophers we believe was promised to the initiates in the Mysteries, as the special prerogative secured to them by their initiation. "To pass into the rank of the gods" is a phrase which, as here employed, means to ascend into heaven and have a seat with the immortals, instead of being banished, with the souls of common mortals, to the under-world.

In early times the Greek worship was most earnestly directed to that set of deities who resided at the gloomy centre of the earth, and who were called the *chthonian gods*.[66] The hope of immortality first sprung up and was nourished in connection with this worship. But in the progress of time and culture the supernal circle of divinities who kept state on bright Olympus acquired a greater share of attention, and at last received a degree of worship far surpassing that paid to their swarthy compeers below. The adoration of these bright beings, with a growing trust in their benignity, the fables of the poets telling how they had sometimes elevated human favorites to their presence,—for instance, receiving a Ganymede to the joys of their sublime society,—the encouraging thoughts of the more religious and cheerful of the philosophers,—these facts, together with a natural shrinking from the dismal gloom of the life of shades around the Styx, and a native longing for admission to the serene pleasures of the unfading life led by the radiant lords of heaven, in conjunction, perhaps, with still other causes, effected an improvement of the old faith, altering and brightening it, little by little, until the hope came in many quarters to be entertained that the faithful soul would after death rise into the assemblage and splendor of the celestial gods. The Emperor Julian, at the close of his seventh Oration, represents the gods of Olympus addressing him in this strain:—"Remember that your soul is immortal, and that if you follow us you will be a god and with us will behold our Father." Several learned writers have strenuously labored to prove that the ground-secret of the Mysteries, the grand thing revealed in them, was the doctrine of apotheosis, shaking the established theology by unmasking the historic fact that all the gods were merely deified men. We believe the real significance of the various collective testimony, hints, and inferences by which these writers have been brought to such a conclusion is this; the genuine point of the Mysteries lay not in teaching that *the gods were once men*, but in the idea that *men may become gods*. To teach that Zeus, the universal Father, causing the creation to tremble at the motion of his brow, was formerly an obscure king of Crete, whose tomb was yet visible in that island, would have been utterly absurd. But to assert that the soul of man,—the free, intelligent image of the gods,—on leaving the body, would ascend to live eternally

[65] Phædo, sect. lxxi. [66] Müller, Hist. Greek Lit., cap. ii. sect. 5; cap. xvi. sect. 2.

in the kingdom of its Divine prototypes, would have been a brilliant step of progress in harmony both with reason and the heart. Such was probably the fact. Observe the following citation from Plutarch:—"There is no occasion against nature to send the bodies of good men to heaven; but we are to conclude that virtuous souls, by nature and the Divine justice, rise from men to heroes, from heroes to genii; and if, as in the Mysteries, they are purified, shaking off the remains of mortality and the power of the passions, they then attain the highest happiness, and ascend from genii to gods, not by the vote of the people, but by the just and established order of nature."[67]

The reference in the last clause is to the decrees of the Senate whereby apotheosis was conferred on various persons, placing them among the gods. This ceremony has often been made to appear unnecessarily ridiculous, through a perversion of its actual meaning. When the ancients applied the term "god" to a human soul departed from the body, it was not used as the moderns prevailingly employ that word. It expressed a great deal less with them than with us. It merely meant to affirm similarity of essence, qualities, and residence, but by no means equal dignity and power of attributes between the one and the others. It meant that the soul had gone to the heavenly habitation of the gods and was thenceforth a participant in the heavenly life.[68] Heraclitus was accustomed to say, "Men are mortal gods; gods are immortal men." Macrobius says, "The soul is not only immortal, but a god."[69] And Cicero declares, "The soul of man is a Divine thing,—as Euripides dares to say, a god."[70] Milton uses language precisely parallel, speaking of those who are "unmindful of the crown true Virtue gives her servants, after their mortal change, among the enthroned gods on sainted seats." Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch in the second century, says that "to become a god means to ascend into heaven."[71] The Roman Catholic ceremony of beatification and canonization of saints, offering them incense and prayers thereafter, means exactly what was meant by the ancient apotheosis,—namely, that while the multitudes of the dead abide below, in the intermediate state, these favored souls have been advanced into heaven. The papal functionaries borrowed this rite, with most of its details, from their immediate pagan predecessors, who themselves probably adopted it from the East, whence the Mysteries came. It is well known that the Brahmans and Buddhists believed, centuries before the Christian era, in the contrasted fate of good men after death to enjoy the successive heavens above the clouds, and of bad men to suffer the successive hells beneath the earth. A knowledge of this attractive Oriental

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[67] Lives, Romulus, sect. xxviii.

[68] See a valuable discussion of the ancient use of the terms *theos* and *deus* in note D vol. iii. of Norton's Genuineness of the Gospels.

[69] Somn. Scip., lib. ii. cap. 12.

[70] Tusc. Quæst., lib. i. cap. 26.

[71] We omit several other authorities, as the reader would probably deem any further evidence superfluous.

doctrine may have united with the advance of their own speculations to win the partial acceptance obtained among the Greeks and Romans for the faith which broke the universal doom to Hades and opened heaven to their hopeful aspirations. In a tragedy of Euripides the following passage occurs, addressed to the bereaved Admetus:—"Let not the tomb of thy wife be looked on as the mound of the ordinary dead. Some wayfarer, as he treads the sloping road, shall say, 'This woman once died for her husband; but now she is a saint in heaven.'"[72]

When the meaning of the cheerful promises given to the initiates of a more favored fate in the future life than awaited others—namely, as we think, that their spirits on leaving the body should scale Olympus instead of plunging to Tartarus—had been concealed within the Mysteries for a long time, it at length broke into public view in the national apotheosis of ancient heroes, kings, and renowned worthies, the instances of which became so numerous that Cicero cries, "Is not nearly all heaven peopled with the human race?"[73] Over the heads of the devout heathen, as they gazed up through the clear night-air, twinkled the beams of innumerable stars, each chosen to designate the cerulean seat where some soul was rejoicing with the gods in heaven over the glorious issue of the toils and sufferings in which he once painfully trod this earthly scene.

Herodian, a Greek historian of some of the Roman emperors, has left a detailed account of the rite of apotheosis.[74] An image of the person to be deified was made in wax, looking all sick and pale, laid in state on a lofty bed of ivory covered with cloth of gold, surrounded on one side by choirs of noble lords, on the other side by their ladies stripped of their jewels and clad in mourning, visited often for several days by a physician, who still reports his patient worse, and finally announces his decease. Then the Senators and haughtiest patricians bear the couch through the *via sacra* to the Forum. Bands of noble boys and of proud women ranged opposite each other chant hymns and lauds over the dead in solemn melody. The bier is next borne to the Campus Martius, where it is placed upon a high wooden altar, a large, thin structure with a tower like a lighthouse. Heaps of fragrant gums, herbs, fruits, and spices are poured out and piled upon it. Then the Roman knights, mounted on horseback, prance before it in beautiful bravery, wheeling to and fro in the dizzy measures of the Pyrrhic dance. Also, in a stately manner, purple-clothed charioteers, wearing masks which picture forth the features of the most famous worthies of other days to the reverential recognition of the silent hosts assembled, ride around the form of their descendant. Suddenly a torch is set to the pile, and it is wrapped in flames. From the turret, amidst the aromatic fumes, an eagle is let loose. Phœnix-like symbol of the departed soul, he soars into the sky, and the seven-hilled city throbs with pride, reverberating the shouts of

[72] Alcestis, ll. 1015-1025, ed. Glasg. [73] Tusc. Quæst., lib. i. cap. 12. [74] Lib. iv.

her people. Thus into the residence of the gods—"*Sic itur ad astra*"—was borne the divinely-favored mortal;

> "And thus we see how man's prophetic creeds
> Made gods of men when godlike were their deeds."

For it was only in times of degradation and by a violent perversion that the honor was allowed to the unworthy; and even in such cases it was usually nullified as soon as the people recovered their senses and their freedom. There is extant among the works of Seneca a little treatise called Apocolocuntosis,—that is, pumpkinification, or the metamorphosis into a gourd,—a sharp satire levelled against the apotheosis of the Emperor Claudius. The deification of mortals among the ancients has long been laughed at. When the great Macedonian monarch applied for a decree for his apotheosis while he was yet alive, the Lacedemonian Senate, with bitter sarcasm, voted, "If Alexander desires to be a god, let him be a god." The doctrine is often referred to among us in terms of mockery. But this is principally because it is not understood. It simply signifies the ascent of the soul after death into the Olympian halls instead of descending into the Acheronian gulfs. And whether we consider the symbolic justice and beauty of the conception as a poetic image applied to the deathless heroes of humanity ensphered above us forever in historic fame and natural worship, or regard its comparative probability as the literal location of the residence of departed spirits, it must recommend itself to us as a decided improvement on the ideas previously prevalent, and as a sort of anticipation, in part, of that bright faith in a heavenly home for faithful souls, afterwards established in the world by Him of whom it was written, "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, who is now in heaven." Indeed, so forcible and close is the correspondence between the course of the aspirant in his initiation—dramatically dying, descending into Hades, rising again to life, and ascending into heaven—with the apostolic presentation of the redemptive career of Christ, our great Forerunner, that some writers—Nork, for instance—have suggested that the latter was but the exoteric publication to all the world of what in the former was esoterically taught to the initiates alone.

There was a striking naturalness, a profound propriety, in the obscurities of secrecy and awe with which the ancient Mysteries shrouded from a rash curiosity their instructions concerning the future life and only unfolded them by careful degrees to the prepared candidate. It is so with the reality itself in the nature of things. It is the great mystery of mysteries, darkly hinted in types, faintly gleaming in analogies, softly whispered in hopes, passionately asked in desires, patiently confirmed in arguments, suddenly blazed and thundered in revelation. Man from the very beginning of his race on earth has been thickly encompassed by mysteries,—hung around by the muffling curtains of ignorance and superstition. Through one after another of these he has forced his way

and gazed on their successive secrets laid bare. Once the Ocean was an alluring and terrible mystery, weltering before him with its endless wash of waves, into which the weary sun, in the west, plunged at evening, and out of which, in the east, it bounded refreshed in the morning. But the daring prows of his ships, guided by pioneering thought and skill, passed its islands and touched its ultimate shores. Once the Polar Circle was a frightful and frozen mystery, enthroned on mountains of eternal ice and wearing upon its snowy brow the flaming crown of the aurora borealis. But his hardy navigators, inspired by enterprise and philanthropy, armed with science, and supplied by art, have driven the awful phantom back, league by league, until but a small expanse of its wonders remains untracked by his steps. Once the crowded Sky was a boundless mystery, a maze of motions, a field where ghastly comets played their antics and shook down terrors on the nations. But the theories of his reason, based on the gigantic grasp of his calculus and aided by the instruments of his invention, have solved perplexity after perplexity, blended discords into harmony, and shown to his delighted vision the calm perfection of the stellar system. So, too, in the moral world he has lifted the shrouds from many a dark problem, and extended the empire of light and love far out over the ancient realm of darkness and terror. But the secret of Death, the mystery of the Future, remains yet, as of old, unfathomed and inscrutable to his inquiries. Still, as of old, he kneels before that unlifted veil and beseeches the oracles for a response to faith.

The ancient Mysteries in their principal ceremony but copied the ordination and followed the overawing spirit of Nature herself. The religious reserve and awe about the entrance into the adytum of their traditions were like those about the entrance into the invisible scenes beyond the veils of time and mortality. Their initiation was but a miniature symbol of the great initiation through which, and that upon impartial terms, every mortal, from King Solomon to the idiot pauper, must sooner or later pass to immortality. When a fit applicant, after the preliminary probation, kneels with fainting sense and pallid brow before the veil of the unutterable Unknown, and the last pulsations of his heart tap at the door of eternity, and he reverentially asks admission to partake in the secrets shrouded from profane vision, the infinite Hierophant directs the call to be answered by Death, the speechless and solemn steward of the celestial Mysteries. He comes, pushes the curtain aside, leads the awe-struck initiate in, takes the blinding bandage of the body from his soul; and straightway the trembling neophyte receives light in the midst of that innumerable Fraternity of Immortals over whom the Supreme Author of the Universe presides.

CHAPTER II.

METEMPSYCHOSIS; OR, TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS.

NO other doctrine has exerted so extensive, controlling, and permanent an influence upon mankind as that of the metempsychosis,—the notion that when the soul leaves the body it is born anew in another body, its rank, character, circumstances, and experience in each successive existence depending on its qualities, deeds, and attainments in its preceding lives. Such a theory, well matured, bore unresisted sway through the great Eastern world, long before Moses slept in his little ark of bulrushes on the shore of the Egyptian river; Alexander the Great gazed with amazement on the self-immolation by fire to which it inspired the Gymnosophists; Cæsar found its tenets propagated among the Gauls beyond the Rubicon; and at this hour it reigns despotic, as the learned and travelled Professor of Sanscrit at Oxford tells us, "without any sign of decrepitude or decay, over the Burman, Chinese, Tartar, Tibetan, and Indian nations, including at least six hundred and fifty millions of mankind."[1] There is abundant evidence to prove that this scheme of thought prevailed at a very early period among the Egyptians, all classes and sects of the Hindus, the Persian disciples of the Magi, and the Druids, and, in a later age, among the Greeks and Romans as represented by Musæus, Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Macrobius, Ovid, and many others. It was generally adopted by the Jews from the time of the Babylonian captivity. Traces of it have been discovered among the ancient Scythians, the African tribes, some of the Pacific Islanders, and various aboriginal nations both of North and of South America. Charlevoix says some tribes of Canadian Indians believed in a transmigration of souls; but, with a curious mixture of fancy and reflection, they limited it to the souls of little children, who, being balked of this life in its beginning, they thought would try it again. Their bodies, accordingly, were buried at the sides of roads, that their spirits might pass into pregnant women travelling by. A belief in the metempsychosis limited in the same way to the souls of children also prevailed among the Mexicans.[2] The Maricopas, by the Gila, believe when they die they shall transmigrate into birds, beasts, and reptiles, and shall return to the banks of the Colorado, whence they were driven by the Yumas. They will live there in caves and woods, as wolves, rats, and snakes; so will their enemies the Yumas; and they will

[1] Wilson, Two Lectures on the Religious Opinions of the Hindus, p. 64.
[2] Kingsborough, Antiquities of Mexico, vol. viii. p. 220.

fight together.[3] On the western border of the United States, only three or four years ago, two Indians having been sentenced to be hung for murder, the chiefs of their tribe came in and begged that they might be shot or burned instead, as they looked upon hanging with the utmost horror, believing that the spirit of a person who is thus strangled to death goes into the next world in a foul manner, and that it assumes a beastly form. The Sandwich Islanders sometimes threw their dead into the sea to be devoured by sharks, supposing their souls would animate these monsters and cause them to spare the living whom accident should throw within their reach.[4] Similar superstitions, but more elaborately developed, are rife among many tribes of African negroes.[5] It was inculcated in the early Christian centuries by the Gnostics and the Manichæans; also by Origen and several other influential Fathers. In the Middle Ages the sect of the Cathari, the Bogomiles, the famous scholastics Scotus Erigena and Bonaventura, as well as numerous less distinguished authors, advocated it. And in modern times it has been earnestly received by Lessing and Fourier, and is not without its open defenders to-day, as we can attest from our own knowledge, even in the prosaic and enlightened circles of European and American society.

There have been two methods of explaining the origin of the dogma of transmigration. First, it has been regarded as a retribution,—the sequel to sin in a pre-existent state:—

> "All that flesh doth cover,
> Souls of source sublime,
> Are but slaves sold over
> To the Master Time
> To work out their ransom
> For the ancient crime."

With the ancient Egyptians the doctrine was developed in connection with the conception of a revolt and battle among the gods in some dim and disastrous epoch of the past eternity, when the defeated deities were thrust out of heaven and shut up in fleshly prison-bodies. So man is a fallen spirit, heaven his fatherland, this life a penance, sometimes necessarily repeated in order to be effectual.[6] The pre-existence of the soul, whether taught by Pythagoras, sung by Empedocles, dreamed by Fludd, or contended for by Beecher, is the principal foundation of the belief in the metempsychosis. But, secondly, the transmigration of souls has been considered as the means of their progressive ascent. The soul begins its conscious course at the bottom of the scale of being, and, gradually rising through birth after birth, climbs along a discriminated series of improvements in endless aspiration. Here the scientific adaptation and moral intent are thought to lead only upwards, insect travelling to man, man soaring to God; but by sin the natural order and working

[3] Bartlett, Personal Narrative of Explorations in Texas, New Mexico, &c., ch. xxx.
[4] Jarves, Hist. Sandwich Islands, p. 82. [5] Wilson, Western Africa, p. 210.
[6] Dr. Röth, Ægyptische Glaubenslehre.

of means are inverted, and the series of births lead downward, until expiation and merit restore the primal adjustment and direction.

The idea of a metempsychosis, or soul-wandering, as the Germans call it, has been broached in various forms widely differing in the extent of their application. Among the Jews the writings of Philo, the Talmud, and other documents, are full of it. They seem, for the most part, to have confined the mortal residence of souls to human bodies. They say that God created all souls on the first day, the only day in which he made aught out of nothing; and they imply, in their doctrine of the revolution of souls, that these are born over and over, and will continue wandering thus until the Messiah comes and the resurrection occurs. The Rabbins distinguish two kinds of metempsychosis; namely, "Gilgul," which is a series of single transmigrations, each lasting till death; and "Ibbur," which is where one soul occupies several bodies, changing its residence at pleasure, or where several souls occupy one body.[7] The latter kind is illustrated by examples of demoniacal possession in the New Testament. The demons were supposed to be the souls of deceased wicked men. Sometimes they are represented as solitary and flitting from one victim to another; sometimes they swarm together in the same person, as seven were at once cast out of Mary Magdalene.

More frequently, however, the range of the soul's travels in its repeated births has been so extended as to include all animal bodies,—beasts, birds, fishes, reptiles, insects. In this extent the doctrine was held by the Pythagoreans and Platonists, and in fact by a majority of its believers. Shakspeare's wit is not without historical warrant when he makes the clown say to Malvolio, "Thou shalt fear to kill a woodcock, lest thou dispossess the soul of thy grandam." Many—the Manichæans, for instance —taught that human souls transmigrated not only through the lowest animal bodies but even through all forms of vegetable life. Souls inhabit ears of corn, figs, shrubs. "Whoso plucks the fruit or the leaves from trees, or pulls up plants or herbs, is guilty of homicide," say they; "for in each case he expels a soul from its body."[8] And some have even gone so far as to believe that the soul, by a course of ignorance, cruelty, and uncleanness pursued through many lives, will at length arrive at an inanimate body, and be doomed to exist for unutterable ages as a stone or as a particle of dust. The adherents of this hypothesis regard the whole world as a deposition of materialized souls. At every step they tread on hosts of degraded souls, destined yet, though now by sin sunk thus low, to find their way back as redeemed and blessed spirits to the bosom of the Godhead.

Upon the whole, the metempsychosis may be understood, as to its inmost meaning and its final issue, to be either a Development, a Revo-

[7] Basnage, Hist. Jews, lib. iv. cap. xxx.: Schröder, Judenthum, buch ii. kap. iii.: Eisenmenger, Entdecktes Judenthum, th. ii. kap. i.

[8] Augustine, De Morib. Manichæ., lib. ii. cap. xvii.: De Hæres., cap. xlvi.: Contra Faustum, lib. xvi. cap. xxviii.

lution, or a Retribution,—a Divine system of development eternally leading creatures in a graduated ascension from the base towards the apex of the creation,—a perpetual cycle in the order of nature fixedly recurring by the necessities of a physical fate unalterable, unavoidable, eternal, —a scheme of punishment and reward exactly fitted to the exigencies of every case, presided over by a moral Nemesis, and issuing at last in the emancipation of every purified soul into infinite bliss, when, by the upward gravitation of spirit, they shall all have been strained through the successively finer-growing filters of the worlds, from the coarse-grained foundation of matter to the lower shore of the Divine essence.

In seeking to account for the extent and the tenacious grasp of this antique and stupendous belief,—in looking about for the various suggestions or confirmations of such a dogma,—we would call attention to several considerations, each claiming some degree of importance. First, among the earliest notions of a reflecting man is that of the separate existence of the soul after the dissolution of the body. He instinctively distinguishes the thinking substance he is from the material vestment he wears. Conscious of an unchanged personal identity beneath the changes and decays everywhere visible around him, he naturally imagines that

> "As billows on the undulating main,
> That swelling fall and falling swell again,
> So on the tide of time inconstant roll
> The dying body and the deathless soul."

To one thus meditating, and desiring, as he surely would, to perceive or devise some explanation of the soul's posthumous fortunes, the idea could hardly fail to occur that the destiny of the soul might be to undergo a renewed birth, or a series of births in new bodies. Such a conception, appearing in a rude state of culture, before the lines between science, religion, and poetry had been sharply drawn, recommending itself alike by its simplicity and by its adaptedness to gratify curiosity and speculation in the formation of a thousand quaint and engaging hypotheses, would seem plausible, would be highly attractive, would very easily secure acceptance as a true doctrine.

Secondly, the strange resemblances and sympathies between men and animals would often powerfully suggest to a contemplative observer the doctrine of the transmigration of souls.[9] Looking over those volumes of singular caricatures wherein certain artists have made all the most distinctive physiognomies of men and beasts mutually to approximate and mingle, one cannot avoid the fancy that the bodies of brutes are the masks of degraded men. Notice an ox reclining in the shade of a tree, patiently ruminating as if sadly conscious of many things and helplessly bound in some obscure penance,—a mute world of dreamy experiences, —a sombre mystery: how easy to imagine him an enchanted and trans-

[9] Scholz, Beweis, dass es eine Seelenwanderung bei den Thieren giebt.

formed man! See how certain animals are allied in their prominent traits to humanity,—the stricken deer, weeping big, piteous tears,—the fawning affection and noble fidelity of the dog,—the architectural skill of the beaver,—the wise aspect of the owl,—the sweet plaint of the nightingale,—the shrieks of some fierce beasts, and the howls of others startlingly like the cries of children and the moans of pain,—the sparkling orbs and tortuous stealthiness of the snake; and the hints at metempsychosis are obvious. Standing face to face with a tiger, an anaconda, a wild-cat, a monkey, a gazelle, a parrot, a dove, we alternately shudder with horror and yearn with sympathy, now expecting to see the latent devils throw off their disguise and start forth in their own demoniac figures, now waiting for the metamorphosing charm to be reversed, and for the enchanted children of humanity to stand erect, restored to their former shapes. Pervading all the grades and forms of distinct animal life there seems to be a rudimentary unity. The fundamental elements and primordial germs of consciousness, intellect, will, passion, appear the same, and the different classes of being seem capable of passing into one another by improvement or deterioration. Spontaneously, then, might a primitive observer, unhampered by prejudices, think that the soul of man on leaving its present body would find or construct another according to its chief intrinsic qualities and forces, whether those were a leonine magnanimity of courage, a vulpine subtlety of cunning, or a pavonine strut of vanity. The spirit, freed from its fallen cell,

> "Fills with fresh energy another form,
> And towers an elephant, or glides a worm,
> Swims as an eagle in the eye of noon,
> Or wails, a screech-owl, to the deaf, cold moon,
> Or haunts the brakes where serpents hiss and glare,
> Or hums, a glittering insect, in the air."

The hypothesis is equally forced on our thoughts by regarding the human attributes of some brutes and the brutal attributes of some men. Thus Gratiano, enraged at the obstinate malignity of Shylock, cries to the hyena-hearted Jew,—

> "Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
> To hold opinion, with Pythagoras,
> That souls of animals infuse themselves
> Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
> Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,
> Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
> And, whilst thou lay'st in thine unhallow'd dam,
> Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
> Are wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous."

Thirdly, there is a figurative metempsychosis, which may sometimes—the history of mythology abounds in examples of the same sort of thing—have been turned from an abstract metaphor into a concrete belief, or from a fanciful supposition have hardened into a received fact. There is a poetic animation of objects whereby the imaginative person puts himself

into other persons, into trees, clouds, whirlwinds, or what not, and works them for the time in ideal realization. The same result is put in speech sometimes as humorous play: for example, a celebrated English author says, "Nature meant me for a salamander, and that is the reason I have always been discontented as a man: I shall be a salamander in the next world!" Such imagery stated to a mind of a literal order solidifies into a meaning of prosaic fact. It is a common mode of speech to say of an enthusiastic disciple that the spirit of his master possesses him. A receptive student enters into the soul of Plato, or is full of Goethe. We say that Apelles lived again in Titian. Augustine reappeared in Calvin, and Pelagius in Arminius, to fight over the old battle of election and freedom. Luther rose in Ronge. Take these figures literally, construct what they imply into a dogma, and the product is the transmigration of souls. The result thus arrived at finds effective support in the striking physical resemblance, spiritual likeness, and similarity of mission frequently seen between persons in one age and those in a former age. Columbus was the modern Jason sailing after the Golden Fleece of a New World. Glancing along the portrait-gallery of some ancient family, one is sometimes startled to observe a face, extinct for several generations, suddenly confronting him again with all its features in some distant descendant. A peculiarity of conformation, a remarkable trait of character, suppressed for a century, all at once starts into vivid prominence in a remote branch of the lineage, and men say, pointing back to the ancestor, "He has revived once more." Seeing Elisha do the same things that his departed master had done before him, the people exclaimed, "The spirit of Elijah is upon him." Beholding in John the Baptist one going before him in the spirit of that expected prophet, Jesus said, "If ye are able to receive it, this is he." Some of the later Rabbins assert many entertaining things concerning the repeated births of the most distinguished personages in their national history. Abel was born again in Seth; Cain, in that Egyptian whom Moses slew; Abiram, in Ahithophel; and Adam, having already reappeared once in David, will live again in the Messiah. The performance by an eminent man of some great labor which had been done in an earlier age in like manner by a kindred spirit evokes in the imagination an apparition of the return of the dead to repeat his old work.

Fourthly, there are certain familiar psychological experiences which serve to suggest and to support the theory of transmigration, and which are themselves in return explained by such a surmise. Thinking upon some unwonted subject, often a dim impression arises in the mind, fastens upon us, and we cannot help feeling, that somewhere, long ago, we have had these reflections before. Learning a fact, meeting a face, for the first time, we are puzzled with an obscure assurance that it is not the first time. Travelling in foreign lands, we are ever and anon haunted by a sense of familiarity with the views, urging us to conclude that surely we have more than once trodden those fields and gazed on those scenes;

and from hoary mountain, trickling rill, and vesper bell, meanwhile, mystic tones of strange memorial music seem to sigh, in remembered accents, through the soul's plaintive-echoing halls,—

"'Twas auld lang syne, my dear,
'Twas auld lang syne."

Plato's doctrine of reminiscence here finds its basis. We have lived before, perchance many times, and through the clouds of sense and imagination now and then float the veiled visions of things that were. Efforts of thought reveal the half-effaced inscriptions and pictures on the tablets of memory. Snatches of dialogues once held are recalled, faint recollections of old friendships return, and fragments of landscapes beheld and deeds performed long ago pass in weird procession before the mind's half-opened eye. We know a professional gentleman of unimpeachable veracity, of distinguished talents and attainments, who is a firm believer in his own existence on the earth previously to his present life. He testifies that on innumerable occasions he has experienced remembrances of events and recognitions of places, accompanied by a flash of irresistible conviction that he had known them in a former state. Nearly every one has felt instances of this, more or less numerous and vivid. The doctrine at which such things hint—that

"Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,"

but trailing vague traces and enigmas from a bygone history, "do we come"—yields the secret of many a mood and dream, the spell of inexplicable hours, the key and clew to baffling labyrinths of mystery. The belief in the doctrine of the metempsychosis, among a fanciful people and in an unscientific age, need be no wonder to any cultivated man acquainted with the marvels of experience and aware that every one may say,—

"Full oft my feelings make me start,
Like footprints on some desert shore,
As if the chambers of my heart
Had heard their shadowy step before."

Fifthly, the theory of the transmigration of souls is marvellously adapted to explain the seeming chaos of moral inequality, injustice, and manifold evil presented in the world of human life. No other conceivable view so admirably accounts for the heterogeneousness of our present existence, refutes the charge of a groundless favoritism urged against Providence, and completely justifies the ways of God to man. The loss of remembrance between the states is no valid objection to the theory; because such a loss is the necessary condition of a fresh and fair probation. Besides, there is a parallel fact of deep significance in our unquestionable experience;

"For is not our *first year* forgot?
The haunts of memory echo not."

Once admit the theory to be true, and all difficulties in regard to moral

justice vanish. If a man be born blind, deaf, a cripple, a slave, an idiot, it is because in a previous life he abused his privileges and heaped on his soul a load of guilt which he is now expiating. If a sudden calamity overwhelm a good man with unmerited ruin and anguish, it is the penalty of some crime committed in a state of responsible being beyond the confines of his present memory. Does a surprising piece of good fortune accrue to any one,—splendid riches, a commanding position, a peerless friendship? It is the reward of virtuous deeds done in an earlier life. Every flower blighted or diseased,—every shrub gnarled, awry, and blasted,—every brute ugly and maimed,—every man deformed, wretched, or despised,—is reaping in these hard conditions of being, as contrasted with the fate of the favored and perfect specimens of the kind, the fruit of sin in a foregone existence. When the Hindu looks on a man beautiful, learned, noble, fortunate, and happy, he exclaims, "How wise and good must this man have been in his former lives!" In his philosophy, or religion, the proof of the necessary consequences of virtue and vice is deduced from the metempsychosis, every particular of the outward man being a result of some corresponding quality of his soul, and every event of his experience depending as effect on his previous merit as cause.[10] Thus the principal physical and moral phenomena of life are strikingly explained; and, as we gaze around the world, its material conditions and spiritual elements combine in one vast scheme of unrivalled order, and the total experience of humanity forms a magnificent picture of perfect poetic justice. We may easily account for the rise and spread of a theory whose sole difficulty is a lack of positive proof, but whose applications are so consistent and fascinating alike to imagination and to conscience. Hierocles said,—and distinguished philosophers both before and since have said,—"Without the doctrine of metempsychosis it is not possible to justify the ways of Providence."

Finally, this doctrine, having been suggested by the various foregoing considerations, and having been developed into a practical system of conceptions and motives by certain leading thinkers, was adopted by the principal philosophers and priesthoods of antiquity, and taught to the common people with authority. The popular beliefs of four thousand years ago depended for their prevalence, not so much on cogent arguments or intrinsic probability, as upon the sanctions thrown around them by renowned teachers, priests, and mystagogues. Now, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls was inculcated by the ancient teachers, not as a mere hypothesis resting on loose surmises, but as an unquestionable fact supported by the experimental knowledge of many individuals and by infallible revelation from God. The sacred books of the Hindus abound in detailed histories of transmigrations. Kapila is said to have written out the Vedas from his remembrance of them in a former state of being. The Vishnu Purana gives some very entertaining examples of

[10] Colebrooke, Essays, vol. i. p. 286.

the retention of memory through several successive lives.[11] Pythagoras pretended to recollect his adventures in previous lives; and on one occasion, as we read in Ovid, going into the temple of Juno, he recognised the shield he had worn as Euphorbus at the siege of Troy. Diogenes Laertius also relates of him, that one day meeting a man who was cruelly beating a dog, the Samian sage instantly detected in the piteous howls of the poor beast the cries of a dear friend of his long since deceased, and earnestly and successfully interceded for his rescue. In the life of Apollonius of Tyana by Philostratus, numerous extraordinary instances are told of his recognitions of persons he had known in preceding lives. Such examples as these exactly met the weakest point in the metempsychosis theory, and must have had vast influence in fostering the common faith. Plotinus said, "Body is the true river of Lethe; for souls plunged in it forget all." Pierre Leroux, an enthusiastic living defender of the idea of repeated births, attempts to reply to the objection drawn from the absence of memory; but his reply is an appeal rather to authority and fancy than to reason, and leaves the doubts unsolved.[12] His supposition is that in each spirit-life we remember all the bygone lives, both spiritual and earthly, but in each earth-life we forget all that has gone before; just as, here, every night we lose in sleep all memory of the past, but recover it each day again as we awake. Throughout the East this general doctrine is no mere superstition of the masses of ignorant people: it is the main principle of all Hindu metaphysics, the foundation of all their philosophy, and inwrought with the intellectual texture of their inspired books. It is upheld by the venerable authority of ages, by an intense general conviction of it, and by multitudes of subtle conceits and apparent arguments. It was also impressed upon the initiates in the old Mysteries, by being there dramatically shadowed forth through masks, and quaint symbolic ceremonies enacted at the time of initiation.[13]

This, then, is what we must say of the ancient and widely-spread doctrine of transmigration. As a suggestion or theory naturally arising from empirical observation and confirmed by a variety of phenomena, it is plausible, attractive, and, in some stages of knowledge, not only easy to be believed, but hard to be resisted. As an ethical scheme clearing up on principles of poetic justice the most perplexed and awful problems in the world, it throws streams of light through the abysses of evil, gives dramatic solution to many a puzzle, and, abstractly considered, charms the understanding and the conscience. As a philosophical dogma answering to some strange, vague passages in human nature and experience, it echoes with dreamy sweetness through the deep mystic chambers of our being. As the undisputed creed which has inspired and spell-bound hundreds of millions of our race for perhaps over a hundred and fifty generations, it commands deference and deserves study. But, viewing

[11] Professor Wilson's translation, p. 343.
[12] De l'Humanité, livre v. chap. xliii.
[13] Porphyry, De Abstinentia, lib. iv. sect. 16. Davies, Rites of the Druids.

it as a thesis in the light of to-day, challenging intelligent scrutiny and sober belief, we scarcely need to say that, based on shadows and on arbitrary interpretations of superficial appearances, built of reveries and occult experiences, fortified by unreliable inferences, destitute of any substantial evidence, it is unable to face the severity of science.

A real investigation of its validity by the modern methods dissipates it as the sun scatters fog. First, the mutual correspondences between men and animals are explained by the fact that they are—all living beings are—the products of the same God and the same nature, and built according to one plan. They thus partake, in different degrees and on different planes, of many of the same elements and characteristics. Lucretius, with his usual mixture of acuteness and sophistry, objects to the doctrine that, if it were true, when the soul of a lion passed into the body of a stag, or the soul of a man into the body of a horse, we should see a stag with the courage of a lion, a horse with the intelligence of a man. But of course the manifestations of soul depend on the organs of manifestation. Secondly, the singular psychological experiences referred to are explicable—so far as we can expect with our present limited data and powers to solve the dense mysteries of the soul—by various considerations not involving the doctrine in question. Herder has shown this with no little acumen in three "Dialogues on the Metempsychosis," beautifully translated by the Rev. Dr. Hedge in his "Prose-Writers of Germany." The sense of pre-existence—the confused idea that these occurrences have thus happened to us before—which is so often and strongly felt, is explicable partly by the supposition of some sudden and obscure mixture of associations, some discordant stroke on the keys of recollection, jumbling together echoes of bygone scenes, snatches of unremembered dreams, and other hints and colors in a weird and uncommanded manner. The phenomenon is accounted for still more decisively by Dr. Wigand's theory of the "Duality of the Mind." The mental organs are double,—one on each side of the brain. They usually act with perfect simultaneity. When one gets a slight start of the other, as the thought reaches the slow side a bewildered sense of a previous apprehension of it arises in the soul. And then, the fact that the supposition of a great system of adjusting transmigrations justifies the ways of Providence is no proof that the supposition is a true one. The difficulty is, that there is no evidence of the objective truth of the assumption, however well the theory applies; and the justice and goodness of God may as well be defended on the ground of a single life here and a discriminating retribution hereafter, as on the ground of an unlimited series of earthly births.

The doctrine evidently possesses two points of moral truth and power, and, if not tenable as strict science, is yet instructive as symbolic poetry. First, it embodies, in concrete shapes the most vivid and unmistakable, the fact that beastly and demoniac qualities of character lead men down towards the brutes and fiends. Rage makes man a tiger; low cunning, a fox; coarseness and ferocity, a bear; selfish envy and malice, a devil.

On the contrary, the attainment of better degrees of intellectual and ethical qualities elevates man towards the angelic and the Divine. There are three kinds of lives, corresponding to the three kinds of metempsychosis,—ascending, circular, descending: the aspiring life of progress in wisdom and goodness; the monotonous life of routine in mechanical habits and indifference; the deteriorating life of abandonment in ignorance and vice. Timæus the Locrian, and some other ancient Pythagoreans, gave the whole doctrine a purely symbolic meaning. Secondly, the theory of transmigrating souls typifies the truth that, however it may fare with persons now, however ill their fortunes may seem to accord with their deserts here, justice reigns irresistibly in the universe, and sooner or later every soul shall be strictly compensated for every tittle of its merits in good or evil. There is no escaping the chain of acts and consequences.

This entire scheme of thought has always allured the Mystics to adopt it. In every age, from Indian Vyasa to Teutonic Boehme, we find them contending for it. Boehme held that all material existence was composed by King Satan out of the physical substance of his fallen followers.

The conception of the metempsychosis is strikingly fitted for the purposes of humor, satire, and ethical hortation; and literature abounds with such applications of it. In Plutarch's account of what Thespesius saw when his soul was ravished away into hell for a time, we are told that he saw the soul of Nero dreadfully tortured, transfixed with iron nails. The workmen forged it into the form of a viper; when a voice was heard out of an exceeding light ordering it to be transfigured into a milder being; and they made it one of those creatures that sing and croak in the sides of ponds and marshes.[14] When Rosalind finds the verses with which her enamored Orlando had hung the trees, she exclaimed, "I was never so berhymed since Pythagoras' time, that I was an Irish rat, which I can hardly remember." One of the earliest popular introductions of this Oriental figment to the English public was by Addison, whose Will Honeycomb tells an amusing story of his friend, Jack Freelove,—how that, finding his mistress's pet monkey alone one day, he wrote an autobiography of his monkeyship's surprising adventures in the course of his many transmigrations. Leaving this precious document in the monkey's hands, his mistress found it on her return, and was vastly bewildered by its pathetic and laughable contents.[15] The fifth number of the "Adventurer" gives a very entertaining account of the "Transmigrations of a Flea." There is also a poem on this subject by Dr. Donne, full of strength and wit. It traces a soul through ten or twelve births, giving the salient points of its history in each. First, the soul animates the apple our hapless mother Eve ate, bringing "death into the world and all our woe." Then it appeared successively as a mandrake, a cock, a herring, a whale,—

> "Who spouted rivers up as if he meant
> To join our seas with seas above the firmament."

[14] Sera Numinis Vindicta: near the close.

[15] Spectator, No. 343.

Next, as a mouse, it crept up an elephant's sinewy proboscis to the soul's bedchamber, the brain, and, gnawing the life-cords there, died, crushed in the ruins of the gigantic beast. Afterwards it became a wolf, a dog, an ape, and finally a woman, where the quaint tale closes. Fielding is the author of a racy literary performance called "A Journey from this World to the Next." The Emperor Julian is depicted in it, recounting in Elysium the adventures he had passed through, living successively in the character of a slave, a Jew, a general, an heir, a carpenter, a beau, a monk, a fiddler, a wise man, a king, a fool, a beggar, a prince, a statesman, a soldier, a tailor, an alderman, a poet, a knight, a dancing-master, and a bishop. Whoever would see how vividly, with what an honest and vigorous verisimilitude, the doctrine can be embodied, should read "The Modern Pythagorean," by Dr. Macnish. But perhaps the most humorous passage of this sort is the following description from a remarkable writer of the present day:—

"In the mean while all the shore rang with the trump of bull-frogs, the sturdy spirits of ancient wine-bibbers and wassailers, still unrepentant, trying to sing a catch in their Stygian lake; who would fain keep up the hilarious rules of their old festal tables, though their voices have waxed hoarse and solemnly grave, mocking at mirth, and the wine has lost its flavor. The most aldermanic, with his chin upon a heart-leaf, which serves for a napkin to his drooling chaps, under this northern shore quaffs a deep draught of the once-scorned water, and passes round the cup with the ejaculation *tr-r-r-oonk, tr-r-r-oonk!* and straightway comes over the water from some distant cove the same password repeated, where the next in seniority and girth has gulped down to his mark; and when this observance has made the circuit of the shores, then ejaculates the master of ceremonies, with satisfaction, *tr-r-r-oonk!* and each in his turn, down to the flabbiest-paunched, repeats the same, that there be no mistake; and then the bowl goes round again and again, until the sun disperses the morning mist, and only the patriarch is not under the pond, but vainly bellowing *troonk* from time to time, and pausing for a reply."[16]

The doctrine of the metempsychosis, which was the priest's threat against sin, was the poet's interpretation of life. The former gave by it a terrible emphasis to the moral law; the latter imparted by it an unequalled tenderness of interest to the contemplation of the world. To the believer in it in its fullest development, the mountains piled towering to the sky and the plains stretching into trackless distance were the conscious dust of souls; the ocean, heaving in tempest or sleeping in moonlight, was a sea of spirits, every drop once a man. Each animated form that caught his attention might be the dwelling of some ancestor, or of some once-cherished companion of his own. Hence the Hindu's so sensitive kindness towards animals:—

"Crush not the feeble, inoffensive worm:
Thy sister's spirit wears that humble form.

[16] Thoreau, Walden, or Life in the Woods, p. 137.

Why should thy cruel arrow smite yon bird?
In him thy brother's plaintive song is heard.
Let not thine anger on thy dog descend:
That faithful animal was once thy friend."

There is a strange grandeur, an affecting mystery, in the view of the creation from the stand-point of the metempsychosis. It is an awful dream-palace all aswarm with falling and climbing creatures clothed in ever-shifting disguises. The races and changes of being constitute a boundless masquerade of souls, whose bodies are vizards and whose fortunes poetic retribution. The motive furnished by the doctrine to self-denial and toil has a peerless sublimity. In our Western world, the hope of acquiring large possessions, or of attaining an exalted office, often stimulates men to heroic efforts of labor and endurance. What, then, should we not expect from the application to the imaginative minds of the Eastern world of a motive which, transcending all set limits, offers unheard-of prizes, to be plucked in life after life, and at the end unveils, for the occupancy of the patient aspirant, the Throne of Immensity? No wonder that, under the propulsion of a motive so exhaustless, a motive not remote nor abstract, but concrete, and organized in indissoluble connection with the visible chain of eternal causes and effects,—no wonder we see such tremendous exhibitions of superstition, voluntary sufferings, superhuman deeds. Here is the secret fountain of that irresistible force which enables the devotee to measure journeys of a thousand miles by prostrations of his body, to hold up his arm until it withers and remains immovably erect as a stick, or to swing himself by red-hot hooks through his flesh. The poorest wretch of a soul that has wandered down to the lowest grade of animate existence can turn his resolute and longing gaze up the resplendent ranks of being, and, conscious of the godhead's germ within, feel that, though now unspeakably sunken, he shall one day spurn every vile integument and vault into seats of heavenly dominion. Crawling as an almost invisible bug in a heap of carrion, he can still think within himself, holding fast to the law of righteousness and love, "This is the infinite ladder of redemption, over whose rounds of purity, penance, charity, and contemplation I may ascend, through births innumerable, till I reach a height of wisdom, power, and bliss that will cast into utter contempt the combined glory of countless millions of worlds,—ay, till I sit enthroned above the topmost summit of the universe as omnipotent Buddha."[17]

[17] Those who wish to pursue the subject further will find the following references useful:—Hardy, "Manual of Buddhism," ch. v. Upham, "History of Buddhism," ch. iii. Beausobre, "Histoire du Manichéisme," livre vi. ch. iv. Helmont, "De Revolutione Animarum." Richter, "Das Christenthum und die ältesten Religionen des Orients," sects. 54–65. Sinner, "Essai sur les Dogmes de la Metempsychose et du Purgatoire." Conz, "Schicksale der Seelenwanderungshypothese unter verschiedenen Völkern und in verschiedenen Zeiten." Dubois, "People of India," part iii. ch. vii. Werner, "Commentatio Psychologica contra Metempsychosin."

CHAPTER III.

RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH.

A DOCTRINE widely prevalent asserts that, at the termination of this probationary epoch, Christ will appear with an army of angels in the clouds of heaven, descend, and set up his tribunal on the earth. The light of his advancing countenance will be the long-waited Aurora of the Grave. All the souls of men will be summoned from their tarrying-places, whether in heaven, or hell, or purgatory, or the sepulchre; the fleshly tabernacles they formerly inhabited will be re-created, a strong necromancy making the rooty and grave-floored earth give up its dust of ruined humanity, and moulding it to the identical shapes it formerly composed; each soul will enter its familiar old house in company with which its sins were once committed; the books will be opened and judgment will be passed; then the accepted will be removed to heaven, and the rejected to hell, both to remain clothed with those same material bodies forever,—the former in celestial bliss, the latter in infernal torture.

In the present dissertation we propose to exhibit the sources, trace the developments, explain the variations, and discuss the merits, of this doctrine.

The first appearance of this notion of a bodily restoration which occurs in the history of opinions is among the ancient Hindus. With them it appears as a part of a vast conception, embracing the whole universe in an endless series of total growths, decays, and exact restorations. In the beginning the Supreme Being is one and alone. He thinks to himself, "I will become many." Straightway the multiform creation germinates forth, and all beings live. Then for an inconceivable period—a length of time commensurate with the existence of Brahma, the Demiurgus—the successive generations flourish and sink. At the end of this period all forms of matter, all creatures, sages, and gods, fall back into the Universal Source whence they arose. Again the Supreme Being is one and alone. After an interval the same causes produce the same effects, and all things recur exactly as they were before.[1]

We find this theory sung by some of the Oriental poets:—

> "Every external form of things, and every object which disappear'd,
> Remains stored up in the storehouse of fate:
> When the system of the heavens returns to its former order,
> God, the All-Just, will bring them forth from the veil of mystery."[2]

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[1] Wilson, Lectures on the Hindus, pp. 53–56.

[2] The Dabistán, vol. iii. p. 169.

The same general conception, in a modified form, was held by the Stoics of later Greece, who doubtless borrowed it from the East, and who carried it out in greater detail. "God is an artistic fire, out of which the cosmopœia issues." This fire proceeds in a certain fixed course, in obedience to a fixed law, passing through certain intermediate gradations and established periods, until it ultimately returns into itself and closes with a universal conflagration. It is to this catastrophe that reference is made in the following passage of Epictetus:—"Some say that when Zeus is left alone at the time of the conflagration, he is solitary, and bewails himself that he has no company."[3] The Stoics supposed each succeeding formation to be perfectly like the preceding. Every particular that happens now has happened exactly so a thousand times before, and will happen a thousand times again. This view they connected with astronomical calculations, making the burning and re-creating of the world coincide with the same position of the stars as that at which it previously occurred.[4] This they called the restoration of all things. The idea of these enormous revolving identical epochs—Day of Brahm, Cycle of the Stoics, or Great Year of Plato—is a physical fatalism, effecting a universal resurrection of the past, by reproducing it over and over forever.

Humboldt seems more than inclined to adopt the same thought. "In submitting," he says, "physical phenomena and historical events to the exercise of the reflective faculty, and in ascending to their causes by reasoning, we become more and more penetrated by that ancient belief, that the forces inherent in matter, and those regulating the moral world, exert their action under the presence of a primordial necessity and according to movements periodically renewed." The wise man of old said, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun." The conception of the destinies of the universe as a circle returning forever into itself is an artifice on which the thinking mind early seizes, to evade the problem that is too mighty for its feeble powers. It concludes that the final aim of Nature is but the infinite perfecting of her material in infinite transformations ever repeating the same old series. We cannot comprehend and master satisfactorily the eternal duration of one visible order, the incessant rolling on of races and stars:—

> "And doth creation's tide forever flow,
> Nor ebb with like destruction? World on world
> Are they forever heaping up, and still
> The mighty measure never, never full?"

And so, when the contemplation of the staggering infinity threatens to crush the brain, we turn away and find relief in the view of a periodical revolution, wherein all comes to an end from time to time and takes a

[3] Epictetus, lib. iii. cap. 13. Sonntag, De Palingenesia Stoicorum.
[4] Ritter's Hist. of An. Phil., lib. xi. cap. 4.

fresh start. It would be wiser for us simply to resign the problem as too great. For the conception to which we have recourse is evidently a mere conceit of imagination, without scientific basis or philosophical confirmation.

The doctrine of a bodily resurrection, resting on a wholly different ground, again emerges upon our attention in the Zoroastrian faith of Persia. The good Ormuzd created men to be pure and happy and to pass to a heavenly immortality. The evil Ahriman insinuated his corruptions among them, broke their primal destiny, and brought death upon them, dooming their material frames to loathsome dissolution, their unclothed spirits to a painful abode in hell. Meanwhile, the war between the Light-God and the Gloom-Fiend rages fluctuatingly. But at last the Good One shall prevail, and the Bad One sink in discomfiture, and all evil deeds be neutralized, and the benignant arrangements decreed at first be restored. Then all souls shall be redeemed from hell and their bodies be rebuilt from their scattered atoms and clothed upon them again.[5] This resurrection is not the consequence of any fixed laws or fate, nor is it an arbitrary miracle. It is simply the restoration by Ormuzd of the original intention which Ahriman had temporarily marred and defeated. This is the great bodily resurrection, as it is still understood and looked for by the Parsees.

The whole system of views out of which it springs, and with which it is interwrought, is a fanciful mythology, based on gratuitous assumptions, or at most on a crude glance at mere appearances. The hypothesis that the creation is the scene of a drawn battle between two hostile beings, a Deity and a Devil, can face neither the scrutiny of science, nor the test of morals, nor the logic of reason; and it has long since been driven from the arena of earnest thought. On this theory it follows that death is a violent curse and discord, maliciously forced in afterwards to deform and spoil the beauty and melody of a perfect original creation. Now, as Bretschneider well says, "the belief that death is an evil, a punishment for sin, can arise only in a dualistic system." It is unreasonable to suppose that the Infinite God would deliberately lay a plan and allow it to be thwarted and ruined by a demon. And it is unscientific to imagine that death is an accident, or an after-result foisted into the system of the world. Death—that is, a succession of generations—is surely an essential part of the very constitution of nature, plainly stamped on all those "medals of the creation" which bear the features of their respective ages and which are laid up in the archives of geological epochs. Successive growth and decay is a central part of God's original plan, as appears from the very structure of living bodies and the whole order of the globe. Death, therefore, which furthermore actually reigned on earth unknown ages before the existence of man, could not have been a for-

[5] Fraser, History of Persia, chap. iv. Baur, Symbolik und Mythologie, thl. ii. absch. ii. cap. iii. ss. 394-404.

tuitous after-clap of human sin. And so the foregoing theory of a general resurrection as the restoration of God's broken plan to its completeness falls to the ground.

The Jews, in the course of their frequent and long-continued intercourse with the Persians, did not fail to be much impressed with the vivid melodramatic outlines of the Zoroastrian doctrine of the resurrection. They finally adopted it themselves, and joined it, with such modifications as it naturally underwent from the union, with the great dogmas of their own faith. A few faint references to it are found in the Old Testament. Some explicit declarations and boasts of it are in the Apocrypha. In the Targums, the Talmud, and the associated sources, abundant statements of it in copious forms are preserved. The Jews rested their doctrine of the resurrection on the same general ground as the Persians did, from whom they borrowed it. Man was meant to be immortal, either on earth or in heaven; but Satan seduced him to sin, and thus wrested from him his privilege of immortality, made him die and descend into a dark nether-realm which was to be filled with the disembodied souls of his descendants. The resurrection was to annul all this and restore men to their original footing.

We need not labor any disproof of the truth or authority of this doctrine as the Pharisees held it, because, admitting that they had the record of a revelation from God, this doctrine was not a part of it. It is only to be found in their canonic scriptures by way of vague and hasty allusion, and is historically traceable to its derivation from the pagan oracles of Persia. Of course it is possible that the doctrine of the resurrection, as the Hebrews held it, was developed by themselves, from imaginative contemplations on the phenomena of burials and graves; spectres seen in dreams; conceptions of the dead as shadowy shapes in the under-world; ideas of God as the deliverer of living men from the open gates of the under-world when they experienced narrow escapes from destruction; vast and fanatical national hopes. Before advancing another step, it is necessary only to premise that some of the Jews appear to have expected that the souls on rising from the under-world would be clothed with new, spiritualized, incorruptible bodies, others plainly expected that the identical bodies they formerly wore would be literally restored.

Now, when Christianity, after the death of its Founder, arose and spread, it was in the guise of a new and progressive Jewish sect. Its apostles and its converts for the first hundred years were Christian Jews. Christianity ran its career through the apostolic age virtually as a more liberal Jewish sect. Most natural was it, then, that infant Christianity should retain all the salient dogmas of Judaism, except those of exclusive nationality and bigoted formalism in the throwing off of which the mission of Christianity partly consisted. Among these Jewish dogmas retained by early Christianity was that of the bodily resurrection. In the New Testament itself there are seeming references to this doctrine.

We shall soon recur to these. The phrase "resurrection of the body" does not occur in the Scriptures. Neither is it found in any public creed whatever among Christians until the fourth century.[6] But these admissions by no means prove that the doctrine was not believed from the earliest days of Christianity. The fact is, it was the same with this doctrine as with the doctrine of the descent of Christ into Hades: it was not for a long time called in question at all. It was not defined, discriminated, lifted up on the symbols of the Church, because that was not called for. As soon as the doctrine came into dispute, it was vehemently and all but unanimously affirmed, and found an emphatic place in every creed. Whenever the doctrine of a bodily resurrection has been denied, that denial has been instantly stigmatized as heresy and schism, even from the days of "Hymeneus and Philetas, who concerning the truth erred, saying that the resurrection was past already." The uniform orthodox doctrine of the Christian Church has always been that in the last day the identical fleshly bodies formerly inhabited by men shall be raised from the earth, sea, and air, and given to them again to be everlastingly assumed. The scattered exceptions to the believers in this doctrine have been few, and have ever been styled heretics by their contemporaries.

Any one who will glance over the writings of the Fathers with reference to this subject will find the foregoing statements amply confirmed.[7] Justin Martyr wrote a treatise on the resurrection, a fragment of which is still extant. Athenagoras has left us an extremely elaborate and able discussion of the whole doctrine, in a separate work. Tertullian is author of a famous book on the subject, entitled "Concerning the Resurrection of the Flesh," in which he says, "The teeth are providentially made eternal to serve as the seeds of the resurrection." Chrysostom has written fully upon it in two of his eloquent homilies. All these, in company indeed with the common body of their contemporaries, unequivocally teach a carnal resurrection with the grossest details. Augustine says, "Every man's body, howsoever dispersed here, shall be restored perfect in the resurrection. Every body shall be complete in quantity and quality. As many hairs as have been shaved off, or nails cut, shall not return in such enormous quantities to deform their original places; but neither shall they perish: they shall return into the body into that substance from which they grew."[8] As if *that* would not cause any deformity![9] Some of the later Origenists held that the resurrection-bodies would be in the shape of a ball,—the mere heads of cherubs![10]

In the seventh century Mohammed flourished. His doctrinal system, it is well known, was drawn indiscriminately from many sources, and

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[6] Dr. Sykes, Inquiry when the Article of the Resurrection of the Body or Flesh was first introduced into the Public Creeds.

[7] Mosheim, De Resurrectione Mortuorum.

[8] De Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. cap. 19, 20.

[9] See the strange speculations of Opitz in his work "De Staturâ et Ætate Resurgentium."

[10] Redepenning, Origenes, b. ii. s. 463.

mixed with additions and colors of his own. Finding the dogma of a general bodily resurrection already prevailing among the Parsees, the Jews, and the Christians, and perceiving, too, how well adapted for purposes of vivid representation and practical effect it was,—or perhaps believing it himself,—the Arabian prophet ingrafted this article into the creed of his followers. It has ever been with them, and is still, a foremost and controlling article of faith,—an article for the most part held in its literal sense, although there is a powerful sect which spiritualizes the whole conception, turning all its details into allegories and images. But this view is not the original nor the orthodox view.

The subject of the resurrection was a prominent theme in the theology of the Middle Age. Only here and there a dissenting voice was raised against the doctrine in its strict physical form. The great body of the Scholastics stood stanchly by it. In defence and support of the Church-thesis they brought all the quirks and quiddities of their subtle dialectics. As we take down their ponderous tomes from their neglected shelves, and turn over the dusty, faded old leaves, we find chapter after chapter in many a formidable folio occupied with grave discussions, carried on in acute logical terminology, of questions like these:—"Will the resurrection be natural or miraculous?" "Will each one's hairs and nails all be restored to him in the resurrection?" "When bodies are raised, will each soul spontaneously know its own and enter it? or will the power of God distribute them as they belong?" "Will the deformities and scars of our present bodies be retained in the resurrection?" "Will all rise of the same age?" "Will all have one size and one sex?"[11] And so on with hundreds of kindred questions. For instance, Thomas Aquinas contended "that no other substance would rise from the grave except that which belonged to the individual in the moment of death."[12] What dire prospects this proposition must conjure up before many minds! If one chance to grow prodigiously obese before death, he must lug that enormous corporeity wearily about forever; but if he happen to die when wasted, he must then flit through eternity as thin as a lath. Those who have had the misfortune to be amputated of legs or arms must appear on the resurrection-stage *without* those very convenient appendages. There will still be need of hospitals for the battered veterans of Chelsea and Greenwich, mutilated heroes, pensioned relics of deck and field. Then in the resurrection the renowned

> "Mynheer von Clam,
> Richest merchant in Rotterdam,"

will again have occasion for the services of the "patent cork-leg manufacturer," though it is hardly to be presumed he will accept another unrestrainable one like that which led him so fearful a race through the poet's verses.

[11] Summa Theologiæ, Thomæ Aquinatis, tertia pars, Supplementum, Quæstiones 79–87.
[12] Hagenbach, Dogmengeschichte, sect. 204.

The Manichæans denied a bodily resurrection. In this all the sects theologically allied to them, who have appeared in ecclesiastical history, —for instance, the Cathari,—have agreed. There have also been a few individual Christian teachers in every century who have assailed the doctrine. But, as already declared, it has uniformly been the firm doctrine of the Church and of all who acknowledged her authority. The old dogma still remains in the creeds of the recognised Churches, Papal, Greek, and Protestant. It has been terribly shattered by the attacks of reason and of progressive science. It lingers in the minds of most people only as a dead letter. But all the earnest conservative theologians yet cling to it in its unmitigated grossness, with unrelaxing severity. We hear it in practical discourses from the pulpit, and read it in doctrinal treatises, as offensively proclaimed now as ever. Indeed, it is an essential part of the compact system of the ruling theology, and cannot be taken out without loosening the whole dogmatic fabric into fragments. Thus writes to-day a distinguished American divine, Dr. Spring:—"Whether buried in the earth, or floating in the sea, or consumed by the flames, or enriching the battle-field, or evaporate in the atmosphere,—all, from Adam to the latest-born, shall wend their way to the great arena of the judgment. Every perished bone and every secret particle of dust shall obey the summons and come forth. If one could then look upon the earth, he would see it as one mighty excavated globe, and wonder how such countless generations could have found a dwelling beneath its surface."[13] This is the way the recognised authorities in theology still talk. To venture any other opinion is a heresy all over Christendom at this hour.

We will next bring forward and criticize the arguments for and against the doctrine before us. It is contended that the doctrine is demonstrated in the example of Christ's own resurrection. "The resurrection of the flesh was formerly regarded as incredible," says Augustine; "but now we see the whole world believing that Christ's earthly body was borne into heaven."[14] It is the faith of the Church that "Christ rose into heaven with his body of flesh and blood, and wears it there now, and will forever." "Had he been there in body before, it would have been no such wonder that he should have returned with it; but that the flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone should be seated at the right hand of God is worthy of the greatest admiration."[15] That is to say, Christ was from eternity God, the Infinite Spirit, in heaven; he came to earth and lived in a human body; on returning to heaven, instead of resuming his proper form, he bears with him, and will eternally retain, the body of flesh he had worn on earth! Paul says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The Church, hastily following the senses, led by a carnal, illogical philosophy, has deeply misinterpreted and violently abused the significance of Christ's ascension. The drama of his resur-

[13] The Glory of Christ, vol. ii. p. 237. [14] De Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. cap. 5.
[15] Pearson on the Creed, 12th ed., pp. 272-275.

rection, with all its connected parts, was not meant throughout as a strict representation of our destiny. It was a seal upon his commission and teachings, not an exemplification of what should happen to others. It was outwardly a miracle, not a type,—an exceptional instance of supernatural power, not a significant exhibition of the regular course of things. The same logic which says, "Christ rose and ascended with his fleshly body: therefore we shall," must also say, "Christ rose visibly on the third day: therefore we shall." Christ's resurrection was a miracle; and therefore we cannot reason from it to ourselves. The common conception of a miracle is that it is the suspension, not the manifestation, of ordinary laws. We have just as much logical right to say that the physical appearance in Christ's resurrection was merely an accommodation to the senses of the witnesses, and that on his ascension the body was annihilated, and only his soul entered heaven, as we have to surmise that the theory embodied in the common belief is true. The record is according to mere sensible appearances. The reality is beyond our knowledge. The record gives no explanation. It is wiser in this dilemma to follow the light of reason than to follow the blind spirit of tradition. The point in our reasoning is this. If Christ, on rising from the world of the dead, assumed again his former body, he assumed it by a miracle, and for some special purpose of revealing himself to his disciples and of finishing his earthly work; and it does not follow either that he bore that body into heaven, or that any others will ever, even temporarily, reassume *their* cast-off forms.

The Christian Scriptures do not in a single passage teach the popular doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Every text in the New Testament finds its full and satisfactory explanation without implying that dogma at all. In the first place, it is undeniably implied throughout the New Testament that the soul does not perish with the body. It also appears, in the next place, from numerous explicit passages, that the New Testament authors, in common with their countrymen, supposed the souls of the departed to be gathered and tarrying in what the Church calls the intermediate state,—the obscure under-world. In this subterranean realm they were imagined to be awaiting the advent of the Messiah to release them. Now, we submit that every requirement of the doctrine of the resurrection as it is stated or hinted in the New Testament is fully met by the simple ascension of this congregation of souls from the vaults of Sheol to the light of the upper earth, there to be judged, and then some to be sent up to heaven, some sent back to their prison. For, let it be carefully observed, there is not one text in the New Testament, as before stated, which speaks of the resurrection of the "body" or of the "flesh." The expression is simply the resurrection of "the dead," or of "them that slept." If by "the dead" was meant "the bodies," why are we not told so? Locke, in the Third Letter of his controversy with the Bishop of Worcester on this subject, very pointedly shows the absurdity of a literal interpretation of the words "All that are in their

graves shall hear my voice and shall come forth." Nothing can come out of the grave except what is in it. And there are no souls in the grave: they are in the separate state. And there are no bodies in millions of graves: they long ago, even to the last grain of dust, entered into the circulations of the material system. "Coming forth from their graves unto the resurrection" either denotes the rising of souls from the under-world, or else its meaning is something incredible. At all events, nothing is said about any resurrection of the body: that is a matter of arbitrary inference. The angels are not thought to have material bodies; and Christ declares, "In the resurrection ye shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but shall be as the angels of heaven." It seems clear to us that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews also looked for no restoration of the fleshly body; for he not only studiously omits even the faintest allusion to any such notion, but positively describes "the *spirits* of just men made perfect in the heavenly Jerusalem, with an innumerable company of angels, and with the general assembly and church of the first-born." The Jews and early Christians who believed in a bodily resurrection did not suppose the departed could enter heaven until after that great consummation.

The most cogent proof that the New Testament does not teach the resurrection of the same body that is buried in the grave is furnished by the celebrated passage in Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians. The apostle's premises, reasoning, and conclusion are as follows:—"Christ is risen from the dead, become the first-fruits of them that slept." That is to say, all who have died, except Christ, are still tarrying in the great receptacle of souls under the earth. As the first-fruits go before the harvest, so the solitary risen Christ is the forerunner to the general resurrection to follow. "But some one will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" Mark the apostle's reply, and it will appear inexplicable how any one can consider him as arguing for the resurrection of the identical body that was laid in the grave, particle for particle. "Thou fool! that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but naked grain, and God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him." "There are celestial bodies, and terrestrial bodies;" "there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body;" "the first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven;" "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" "we shall all be changed," and "bear the image of the heavenly, as we have borne the image of the earthy." The analogy which has been so strangely perverted by most commentators is used by Paul thus. The germ which was to spring up to a new life, clothed with a new body, was not any part of the fleshly body buried in the grave, but was the *soul itself*, once contained in the old body, but released from its hull in the grave and preserved in the under-world until Christ shall call it forth to be invested with a "glorious," "powerful," "spiritual," "incorruptible" body. When a grain of wheat is sown, that is not the body that shall be; but the mysterious principle

of life, latent in the germ of the seed, springs up and puts on its body fashioned appropriately for it. So, according to Paul's conception, when a man is buried, the material corpse is not the resurrection-body that shall be; but the living soul which occupied it is the germ that shall put on a new body of immortality when the spring-tide of Christ's coming draws the buried treasures of Hades up to the light of heaven.

A species of proof which has been much used by the advocates of the dogma of a bodily resurrection is the argument from analogy. The intimate connection of human feeling and fancy with the changing phenomena of Nature's seasons would naturally suggest to a pensive mind the idea, Why, since she has her annual resurrection, may not humanity some time have one? And what first arose as a poetic conceit or stray thought, and was expressed in glowing metaphors, might by an easy process pass abroad and harden into a prosaic proposition or dogmatic formula.

> "O soul of the spring-time, now let us behold
> The stone from the mouth of the sepulchre roll'd,
> And Nature rise up from her death's damp mould;
> Let our faith, which in darkness and coldness has lain,
> Revive with the warmth and the brightness again,
> And in blooming of flower and budding of tree
> The symbols and types of our destiny see."

Standing by the graves of our loved and lost ones, our inmost souls yearn over the very dust in which their hallowed forms repose. We feel that they *must* come back, we *must* be restored to each other as we were before. Listening to the returned birds whose warble fills the woods once more, gazing around on the verdant and flowery forms of renewed life that clothe the landscape over again, we eagerly snatch at every apparent emblem or prophetic analogy that answers to our fond imagination and desiring dream. Sentiment and fancy, especially when stimulated by love and grief, and roving in the realms of reverie, free from the cold guidance and sharp check of literal fact and severe logic, are poor analysts, and then we easily confuse things distinct and wander to conclusions philosophy will not warrant. Before building a dogmatic doctrine on analogies, we must study those analogies with careful discrimination,—must see what they really are, and to what they really lead. There is often an immense difference between the first appearance to a hasty observer and the final reality to a profound student. Let us, then, scrutinize a little more closely those seeming analogies which, to borrow a happy expression from Flügge, have made "Resurrection a younger sister of Immortality."

Nature, the old, eternal snake, comes out afresh every year in a new shining skin. What then? Of course this emblem is no proof of any doctrine concerning the fate of man. But, waiving that, what would the legitimate correspondence to it be for man? Why, that humanity should exhibit the fresh specimens of her living handiwork in every new generation. And that is done. Nature does not reproduce before us each

spring the very flowers that perished the previous winter: she makes new ones like them. It is not a resurrection of the old: it is a growth of the new. The passage of the worm from its slug to its chrysalis state is surely no symbol of a bodily resurrection, but rather of a bodily emancipation, not resuming a deserted dead body, but assuming a new live one. Does the butterfly ever come back to put on the exuviæ that have perished in the ground? The law of all life is progress, not return, —ascent through future developments, not descent through the stages already traversed.

"The herb is born anew out of a seed,
Not raised out of a bony skeleton.
What tree is man the seed of? Of a soul."

Sir Thomas Browne, after others, argues for the restoration of man's body from the grave, from the fancied analogy of the palingenesis or resurrection of vegetables which the magicians of the antique East and the mystic chemists of the Middle Age boasted of effecting. He having asserted in his "Religion of a Physician" that "experience can from the ashes of a plant revive the plant, and from its cinders recall it into its stalk and leaves again," Dr. Henry Power wrote beseeching "an experimental eviction of so high and noble a piece of chymistry, the reindividuality of an incinerated plant." We are not informed that Sir Thomas ever granted him the sight. Of this beautiful error, this exquisite superstition, which undoubtedly arose from the crystallizations of certain salts in arborescent forms which suddenly surprised the early alchemists in some of their experiments, we have the following account in Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature:"—"The semina of resurrection are concealed in extinct bodies, as in the blood of man. The ashes of roses will again revive into roses, though smaller and paler than if they had been planted unsubstantial and unodoriferous, they are not roses which grew on rose-trees, but their delicate apparitions; and, like apparitions, they are seen but for a moment. This magical phœnix lies thus concealed in its cold ashes till the presence of a certain chemical heat produces its resurrection." Any refutation of this now would be considered childish. Upon the whole, then, while recurrent spring, bringing in the great Easter of the year, typifies to us indeed abundantly the development of new life, the growth of new bodies out of the old and decayed, but nowhere hints at the gathering up and wearing again of the dusty sloughs and rotted foliage of the past, let men cease to talk of there being any natural analogies to the ecclesiastical dogma of the resurrection of the flesh. The teaching of nature finds a truer utterance in the words of Æschylus:—"There is no resurrection for him who is once dead."[16]

The next argument is that based on considerations of reason and of ethics. The supporters of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body have often disingenuously evaded the burden of proof thrown upon

[16] Eumenides, l. 648, Oxford edition.

them by retreating beneath loud assertions of God's power. From the earliest dawn of the hypothesis to the present time, every perplexity arising from it, every objection brought against it, every absurdity shown to be involved in it, has been met and confidently rebutted with declarations of God's abundant power to effect a physical resurrection, or to do any thing else he pleases, however impossible it may appear to us. Now, it is true the power of God is competent to innumerable things utterly beyond our skill, knowledge, or conception. Nevertheless, there is a province within which our reason can judge of probabilities, and can, if not absolutely grasp infallible truth, at least reach satisfactory convictions. God is able to restore the vast coal-deposits of the earth, and the ashes of all the fuel ever burned, to their original condition when they covered the world with dense forests of ferns; but we have no reason to believe he will do it. The truth or falsity of the popular theory of the resurrection is not a question of God's power; it is simply a question of God's will. A Jewish Rabbin relates the following conversation, as exultingly as if the quibbling evasion on which it turns positively settled the question itself, which in fact it does not approach. A Sadducee says, "The resurrection of the dead is a fable: the dry, scattered dust cannot live again." A by-standing Pharisee makes this reply:—"There were in a city two artists: one made vases of water, the other made them of clay: which was the more wondrous artist?" The Sadducee answered, "The former." The Pharisee rejoins, "Cannot God, then, who formed man of water, (*gutta seminis humida,*) much more re-form him of clay?" Such a method of reasoning is an irrelevant impertinence. God can call Nebuchadnezzar from his long rest, and seat him on his old throne again to-morrow. What an absurdity to infer that therefore he will do it! God can give us wings upon our bodies, and enable us to fly on an exploring trip among the planets. Will he do it? The question, we repeat, is not whether God has the power to raise our dead bodies, but whether he has the will. To that question—since, as we have already seen, he has sent us no miraculous revelation replying to it—we can only find an answer by tracing the indications of his intentions contained in reason, morals, and nature.

One of the foremost arguments urged by the Fathers for the resurrection was its supposed necessity for a just and complete judgment. The body was involved and instrumental in all the sins of the man: it must therefore bear part in his punishment. The Rabbins tell this allegory:—"In the day of judgment the body will say, The soul alone is to blame: since it left me, I have lain like a stone in the grave. The soul will retort, The body alone is sinful: since released from it, I fly through the air like a bird. The Judge will interpose with this myth:—A king once had a beautiful garden full of early fruits. A lame man and a blind man were in it. Said the lame man to the blind man, Let me mount upon your shoulders and pluck the fruit, and we will divide it. The king accused them of theft; but they severally replied, the lame man, How

could I reach it? the blind man, How could I see it? The king ordered the lame man to be placed upon the back of the blind man, and in this position had them both scourged. So God in the day of judgment will replace the soul in the body, and hurl them both into hell together." There is a queer tradition among the Mohammedans implying, singularly enough, the same general thought. The Prophet's uncle, Hamzah, having been slain by Hind, daughter of Atabah, the cursed woman cut out his liver and gnawed it with fiendish joy; but, lest any of it should become incorporated with her system and go to hell, the Most High made it as hard as a stone; and when she threw it on the ground, an angel restored it to its original nature and place in the body of the martyred hero, that lion of God.

The Roman Catholic Church endorses the representation that the body must be raised to be punished. In the Catechism of the Council of Trent, which is an authoritative exposition of Romanist theology, we read that the "identical body" shall be restored, though "without deformities or superfluities;" restored that "as it was a partner in the man's deeds, so it may be a partner in his punishments." The same Catechism also gives in this connection the reason why a general judgment is necessary after each individual has been judged at his death, namely, this: that they may be punished for the evil which has resulted in the world since they died from the evil they did in the world while they lived! Is it not astonishing how these theologians find out so much? A living Presbyterian divine of note says, "The bodies of the damned in the resurrection shall be fit dwellings for their vile minds. With all those fearful and horrid expressions which every base and malignant passion wakes up in the human countenance stamped upon it for eternity and burned in by the flaming fury of their own terrific wickedness, they will be condemned to look upon their own deformity and to feel their fitting doom." It is therefore urged that the body must be raised to suffer the just penalty of the sins man committed while occupying it. Is it not an absurdity to affirm that nerves and blood, flesh and bones, are responsible, guilty, must be punished? Tucker, in his "Light of Nature Pursued," says, "The vulgar notion of a resurrection in the same form and substance we carry about at present, because the body being partaker in the deed ought to share in the reward, as well requires a resurrection of the sword a man murders with, or the bank-note he gives to charitable uses." We suppose an intelligent personality, a free will, indispensable to responsibleness and alone amenable to retributions. Besides, if the body must be raised to undergo chastisement for the offences done in it and by means of it, this insurmountable difficulty by the same logic confronts us. The material of our bodies is in a constant change, the particles becoming totally transferred every few years. Now, when a man is punished after the general judgment for a certain crime, he must be in the very body he occupied when that crime was perpetrated. Since he was a sinner all his days, his resurrection-body must comprise all the matter that ever formed a part of his corporeity, and

each sinner may hereafter be as huge as the writhing Titan, Tityus, whose body, it was fabled, covered nine acres. God is able to preserve the integral soul in being, and to punish it according to justice, without clothing it in flesh. This fact by itself utterly vacates and makes gratuitous the hypothesis of a physical resurrection from punitive considerations,—an hypothesis which is also refuted by the truth contained in Locke's remark to Stillingfleet, "that the soul hath no greater congruity with the particles of matter which were once united to it, but are so no longer, than it hath with any other particles of matter." When the soul leaves the body, it would seem to have done with that stage of its existence, and to enter upon another and higher one, leaving the dust to mix with dust forever. The body wants not the soul again; for it is a senseless clod and wants nothing. The soul wants not its old body again: it prefers to have the freedom of the universe, a spirit. Philip the Solitary wrote, in the twelfth century, a book called "Dioptra," presenting the controversy between the soul and the body very quaintly and at length. The same thing was done by Henry Nicholson in a "Conference between the Soul and Body concerning the Present and Future State." William Crashaw, an old English poet, translated from the Latin a poem entitled "The Complaint: a Dialogue between the Body and the Soul of a Damned Man."[17] But any one who will peruse with intelligent heed the works that have been written on this whole subject must be amazed to see how exclusively the doctrine which we are opposing has rested on pure grounds of tradition and fancy, alike destitute of authority and reason. Some authors have indeed attempted to support the doctrine with arguments: for instance, there are two German works, one by Bertram, one by Pflug, entitled "The Resurrection of the Dead on Grounds of Reason," in which recourse is had to every possible expedient to make out a case, not even neglecting the factitious assistance of Leibnitz's scheme of "Pre-established Harmony." But it may be deliberately affirmed that not one of their arguments is worthy of respect. Apparently, they do not seek to reach truth, but to bolster up a foregone conclusion held merely from motives of tradition.

The Jews had a favorite tradition, developed by their Rabbins in many passages, that there was one small, almond-shaped bone, (supposed now to have been the bone called by anatomists the os coccygis,) which was indestructible, and would form the nucleus around which the rest of the body would gather at the time of the resurrection. This bone, named Luz, was miraculously preserved from demolition or decay. Pound it furiously on anvils with heavy hammers of steel, burn it for ages in the fiercest furnaces, soak it for centuries in the strongest solvents,—all in vain: its magic structure still remained. So the Talmud tells.

> "Even as there is a round dry grain
> In a plant's skeleton, which, being buried,

[17] Also see Dialogus inter Corpus et Animam, p. 95 of Latin Poems attributed to Walter Mapes.

Can raise the herb's green body up again;
So is there such in man, a seed-shaped bone,
Aldabaron, call'd by the Hebrews Luz,
Which, being laid into the ground, will bear,
After three thousand years, the grass of flesh,
The bloody, soul-possessed weed called man."

The Jews did not, as these singular lines represent, suppose this bone was a germ which after long burial would fructify by a natural process and bear a perfect body: they regarded it only as a nucleus around which the Messiah would by a miracle compel the decomposed flesh to return as in its pristine life. All that the Jews say of Luz the Mohammedans repeat of the bone Al Ajib.

This conceit of superstition has been developed by a Christian author of considerable reputation into a theory of a natural resurrection. The work of Mr. Samuel Drew on the "Identity and General Resurrection of the Human Body" has been quite a standard work on the subject of which it treats. Mr. Drew believes there is a germ in the body which slowly ripens and prepares the resurrection-body in the grave. As a seed must be buried for a season in order to spring up in perfect life, so must the human body be buried till the day of judgment. During this period it is not idle, but is busily getting ready for its consummation. He says, "There are four distinct stages through which those parts constituting the identity of the body must necessarily pass in order to their attainment of complete perfection beyond the grave. The *first* of these stages is that of its elementary principles; the *second* is that of an embryo in the womb; the *third* is that of its union with an immaterial spirit, and with the fluctuating portions of flesh and blood in our present state; and the *fourth* stage is that of its residence in the grave. All these stages are undoubtedly necessary to the full perfection of the body: they are alembics through which its parts must necessarily move to attain that vigor which shall continue forever."[18] To state this figment is enough. It would be folly to attempt any refutation of a fancy so obviously a pure contrivance to fortify a preconceived opinion,—a fancy, too, so preposterous, so utterly without countenance, either from experience, observation, science, reason, or Scripture. The egg of man's divinity is not laid in the nest of the grave.

Another motive for believing the resurrection of the body has been created by the exigencies of a materialistic philosophy. There was in the early Church an Arabian sect of heretics who were reclaimed from their errors by the powerful reasonings and eloquence of Origen.[19] Their heresy consisted in maintaining that the soul dies with the body—being indeed only its vital breath—and will be restored with it at the last day. In the course of the Christian centuries there have arisen occasionally a few defenders of this opinion. Priestley, as is well known, was an earnest

[18] Drew on Resurrection, ch. vi. sect. vii. pp. 326–332.
[19] Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. cap. xxxvii.

supporter of it. Let us scan the ground on which he held this belief. In the first place, he firmly believed that the fact of an eternal life to come had been supernaturally revealed to men by God through Christ. Secondly, as a philosopher he was intensely a materialist, holding with unwavering conviction to the conclusion that life, mind, or soul, was a concomitant or result of our physical organism, and wholly incapable of being without it. Death to him was the total destruction of man for the time. There was therefore plainly no alternative for him but either to abandon one of his fundamental convictions as a Christian and a philosopher, or else to accept the doctrine of a future resurrection of the body into an immortal life. He chose the latter, and zealously taught always that death is an annihilation lasting till the day of judgment, when all are to be summoned from their graves. To this whole course of thought there are several replies to be made. In the first place, we submit that the philosophy of materialism is false: standing in the province of science and reason, it may be affirmed that the soul is not dependent for its existence on the body, but will survive it. We will not argue this point, but merely state it. Secondly, it is certain that the doctrine which makes soul perish with body finds no countenance in the New Testament. It is inconsistent with the belief in angelic spirits, in demoniac possessions, in Christ's descent as a spirit to preach to the spirits of departed men imprisoned in the under-world, and with other conceptions underlying the Gospels and the Epistles. But, thirdly, admitting it to be true, then, we affirm, the legitimate deduction from all the arrayed facts of science and all the presumptive evidence of appearances is not that a future resurrection will restore the dead man to life, but that all is over with him,—he has hopelessly perished forever. When the breath ceases, if nothing survives, if the total man is blotted out, then we challenge the production of a shadow of proof that he will ever live again. The seeming injustice and blank awfulness of the fate may make one turn for relief to the hypothesis of a future arbitrary miraculous resurrection; but that is an artificial expedient, without a shadow of justification. Once admit that the body is all, its dissolution a total death, and you are gone forever. One intuition of the spirit, seizing the conscious supports of eternal ideas, casts contempt on

"The doubtful prospects of our painted dust,"

and outvalues all the gross hopes of materialism. Between nonentity and being yawns the untraversable gulf of infinity. No: the body of flesh falls, turns to dust and air; the soul, emancipated, rejoices, and soars heavenwards, and is its own incorruptible frame, mocking at death, —a celestial house, whose maker and builder is God.

Finally, there remain to be weighed the bearings of the argument from chemical and physiological science on the resurrection. Here is the chief stumbling-block in the way of the popular doctrine. The scientific absurdities connected with that doctrine have been marshalled

against it by Celsus, the Platonist philosopher, by Avicenna, the Arabian physician, and by hundreds more, and have never been answered, and cannot be answered. As long as man lives, his bodily substance is incessantly changing; the processes of secretion and absorption are rapidly going forward. Every few years he is, as to material, a totally new man. Dying at the age of seventy, he has had at least ten different bodies. He is one identical soul, but has lived in ten separate houses. With which shall he be raised? with the first? or the fifth? or the last? or with all? But, further, the body after death decays, enters into combination with water, air, earth, gas, vegetables, animals, other human bodies. In this way the same matter comes to have belonged to a thousand persons. In the resurrection, whose shall it be? We reply, nearly in the language of Christ to the Sadducees, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the will of God: in the resurrection they have not bodies of earthly flesh, but are spirits, as the angels of God."

The argument against the common theory of a material resurrection, on account of numerous claimants for the same substance, has of late derived a greatly-increased force from the brilliant discoveries in chemistry. It is now found that only a small number of substances ever enter into the composition of animal bodies.[20] The food of man consists of nitrogenized and non-nitrogenized substances. The latter are the elements of respiration; the former alone compose the plastic elements of nutrition, and they are few in number and comparatively limited in extent. "All life depends on a relatively small quantity of matter. Over and over again, as the modeller fashions his clay, are plant and animal formed out of the same material." The particles that composed Adam's frame may before the end of the world have run the circuit of ten thousand bodies of his descendants:—

"'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands."

To proclaim the resurrection of the flesh as is usually done, seems a flat contradiction of clear knowledge.[21] A late writer on this subject, Dr. Hitchcock, evades the insuperable difficulty by saying, "It is not necessary that the resurrection-body should contain a single particle of the body laid in the grave, if it only contain particles of the same kind, united in the same proportion, and the compound be made to assume the same form and structure as the natural body."[22] Then two men who look exactly alike may in the resurrection exchange bodies without any harm! Here the theory of punishment clashes. Does not the esteemed author see that this would not be a resurrection of the old bodies, but a creation of new ones just like them? And is not this a desertion of the orthodox doctrine of the Church? If he varies so far from the established formularies out of a regard for philosophy, he may as well

[20] Liebig, Animal Chemistry, sect. xix.

[21] The Circulation of Matter, Blackwood's Magazine, May, 1853.

[22] The Resurrection of Spring, p. 26.

be consistent and give up the physical doctrine wholly, because it rests solely on the tradition which he leaves and is every whit irreconcilable with philosophy. This device is as wilful an attempt to escape the scientific difficulty as that employed by Candlish to avoid the scriptural difficulty put in the way of the doctrine by the apostolic words "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The eminent Scottish divine affirms that "flesh and *bones*"—that is, these present bodies made incorruptible—can inherit the kingdom of God; although "flesh and *blood*" —that is, these present bodies subject to decay—cannot.[23] It is surely hard to believe that the New Testament writers had such a distinction in their minds. It is but a forlorn resource conjured up to meet a desperate exigency.

At the appearing of Christ in glory,—

> "When the Day of Fire shall have dawn'd, and sent
> Its deadly breath into the firmament,"—

as it is supposed, the great earth-cemetery will burst open and its innumerable millions swarm forth before him. Unto the tremendous act of *habeas corpus*, then proclaimed, every grave will yield its prisoner. Ever since the ascension of Jesus his mistaken followers have been anxiously expecting that awful advent of his person and his power in the clouds; but in vain. "All things remain as they were: where is the promise of his appearing?" As the lookers-out hitherto have been disappointed, so they ever will be. Say not, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, he is within you. The reason why this carnal error, Jewish conceit, retains a hold, is that men accept it without any honest scrutiny of its foundations or any earnest thought of their own about it. They passively receive the tradition. They do not realize the immensity of the thing, nor the ludicrousness of its details. To their imaginations the awful blast of the trumpet calling the world to judgment, seems no more, as Feuerbach says, than a tone from the tin horn of a postillion, who, at the post-station of the Future, orders fresh horses for the Curriculum Vitæ! President Hitchcock tells us that, "when the last trumpet sounds, the whole surface of the earth will become instinct with life, from the charnels of battle-fields alone more than a thousand millions of human beings starting forth and crowding upwards to the judgment-seat." On the resurrection-morning, at the first tip of light over acres of opening monument and heaving turf,—

> "Each member jogs the other,
> And whispers, Live you, brother?"

And how will it be with us then? Will Daniel Lambert, the mammoth of men, appear weighing half a ton? Will the Siamese twins then be again joined by the living ligament of their congenital band? Shall "infants be not raised in the smallness of body in which they died, but increase by the wondrous and most swift work of God"?[24]

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[23] Candlish, Life in a Risen Savior: Discourse XV.

[24] Augustine, De Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. cap. xiv.

Young sings,—

> "Now charnels rattle; scatter'd limbs, and all
> The various bones, obsequious to the call,
> Self-moved, advance; the neck perhaps to meet
> The distant head; the distant head the feet.
> Dreadful to view! see, through the dusky sky
> Fragments of bodies in confusion fly,
> To distant regions journeying, there to claim
> Deserted members and complete the frame."

The glaring melodramatic character, the startling mechanico-theatrical effects, of this whole doctrine, are in perfect keeping with the raw imagination of the childhood of the human mind, but in profound opposition to the working philosophy of nature and the sublime simplicity of God.

Many persons have never distinctly defined their views upon the subject before us. In the minds even of many preachers and writers, several different and irreconcilable theories would seem to exist together in confused mixture. Now they speak as if the soul were sleeping with the body in the grave; again they appear to imply that it is detained in an intermediate state; and a moment afterwards they say it has already entered upon its final reward or doom. Jocelyn relates, in his Life of St. Patrick, that "as the saint one day was passing the graves of two men recently buried, observing that one of the graves had a cross over it, he stopped his chariot and asked the dead man below of what religion he had been. The reply was, 'A pagan.' 'Then why was this cross put over you?' inquired St. Patrick. The dead man answered, 'He who is buried near me is a Christian; and one of your faith, coming hither, placed the cross at my head.' The saint stepped out of his chariot, rectified the mistake, and went his way." Calvin, in the famous treatise designated "Psychopannychia," which he levelled against those who taught the sleep of souls until the day of judgment, maintained that the souls of the elect go immediately to heaven, the souls of the reprobate to hell. Here they tarry in bliss and bale until the resurrection; then, coming to the earth, they assume their bodies and return to their respective places. But if the souls live so long in heaven and hell without their flesh, why need they ever resume it? The cumbrous machinery of the scheme seems superfluous and unmeaning. As a still further specimen of the arbitrary thinking—the unscientific and unphilosophical thinking —carried into this department of thought by most who have cultivated it, reference may be made to Bishop Burnet's work "De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium," which teaches that at the first resurrection the bodies of the risen will be the same as the present, but at the second resurrection, after the millennium, from the rudiments of the present body a new spiritual body will be developed.

The true idea of man's future destiny appears to be that no resurrection of the flesh is needed, because the real man never dies, but lives continuously forever. There are two reasonable ways of conceiving what the vehicle of his life is when he leaves his present frame. It may be that

within his material system lurks an exquisite spiritual organization, invisibly pervading it and constituting its vital power. This ethereal structure is disengaged at last from its gross envelope, and, unfettered, soars to the Divine realms of ether and light. This theory of an "inner body" is elaborately wrought out and sustained in Bonnet's "Palingénésie Philosophique." Or it may be that there is in each one a primal germ, a deathless monad, which is the organic identity of man, root of his inmost stable being, triumphant, unchanging ruler of his flowing, perishable organism. This spirit-germ, born into the present life, assimilates and holds the present body around it, out of the materials of this world; born into the future life, it will assimilate and hold around it a different body, out of the materials of the future world.[25] Thus there are bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial: the glory of the terrestrial is one, fitted to this scene of things; the glory of the celestial is another, fitted to the scene of things hereafter to dawn. Each spirit will be clothed from the material furnished by the world in which it resides. Not forever shall we bear about this slow load of weary clay, this corruptible mass, heir to a thousand ills. Our body shall rather be such—

> "If lightning were the gross corporeal frame
> Of some angelic essence, whose bright thoughts
> As far surpass'd in keen rapidity
> The lagging action of his limbs as doth
> Man's mind his clay; with like excess of speed
> To animated thought of lightning flies
> That spirit-body o'er life's deeps divine,
> Far past the golden isles of memory."

What man knows constitutes his present world. All beyond that constitutes another world. He can imagine two modes in which his desire for a life after death may be gratified,—a removal into the Unknown World, or a return into the Known World. With the latter supposition the restoration of the flesh is involved.

Upon the whole, our conclusion is, that in the original plan of the world it was fixed that man should not live here forever, but that the essence of his life should escape from the flesh and depart to some other sphere of being, there either to fashion itself a new form, or to remain disembodied. If those who hold the common doctrine of a carnal resurrection should carry it out with philosophical consistency, by extending the scheme it involves to all existing planetary races as well as to their own,—should they cause that process of imagination which produced this doctrine to go on to its legitimate completion,—they would see in the final consummation the sundered earths approach each other, and firmaments conglobe, till at last the whole universe concentred in one orb. On the surface of that world all the risen races of being would be distributed, the inhabitants of a present solar system making a nation, the sum of gigantic nationalities constituting one prodigious, death-exempted empire, its solitary sovereign GOD. But this is pure poetry, and not science nor philosophy.

[25] Lange on the Resurrection of the Body, Studien und Kritiken, 1836.

CHAPTER IV.

DOCTRINE OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT; OR, CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE IDEA OF A HELL.

A HELL of fire and brimstone has been, perhaps still is, the most terrible of the superstitions of the world. We propose to give a historic sketch of the popular representations on this subject, trace them to their origin, and discuss the merits of the question itself. To follow the doctrine through all its variations, illustrating the practical and controversial writings upon it, would require a large volume; but, by a judicious arrangement, all that is necessary to a fair understanding of the subject, or really interesting, may be presented within the compass of an essay. Any one who should read the literature of this subject would be astonished at the almost universal prevalence of the doctrine and at the immense diversity of appalling descriptions of it, and would ask, Whence arises all this? How have these horrors obtained such a seated hold in the world?

In the first place, it is to be replied, as soon as reason is in fair possession of the idea of a continued individual existence beyond the grave, the moral sense, discriminating the deeds, tempers, and characters of men, would teach that there must be different allotments and experiences for them after death. It is not right, say reason and conscience, for the coward, the idler, fool, knave, sot, murderer, to enter into the same realm and have the same bliss with heroes, sages, and saints; neither are they able to do it. The spontaneous thought and sentiment of humanity would declare, if the soul survives the body, passing into the invisible world, its fortunes there must depend somewhat upon its fitness and deserts, its contained treasures and acquired habits. Reason, judging the facts of observation according to the principles of ethics and the working of experienced spiritual laws, at once decides that there is a difference hereafter between the fate of the good heart and the bad one, the great soul and the mean one: in a word, there is, in some sense or other, a heaven and a hell.

Again: the same belief would be necessitated by the conception, so deeply entertained by the primitive people of the earth, of overruling and inspecting gods. They supposed these gods to be in a great degree like themselves, partial, fickle, jealous, revengeful. Such beings, of course, would caress their favorites and torture their offenders. The calamities and blessings of this life were regarded as tokens, revengeful or loving, of the ruling deities, now pleased, now enraged. And when

their votaries or victims had passed into the eternal state, how natural to suppose them still favored or cursed by the passionate wills of these irresponsible gods! Plainly enough, they who believe in gods that launch thunderbolts and upheave the sea in their rage and take vengeance for an insult by sending forth a pestilence, must also believe in a hell where Ixion may be affixed to the wheel and Tantalus be tortured with maddening mockeries. These two conceptions of discriminating justice and of vengeful gods both lead to the theoretic construction of a hell, and to the growth of doctrines and parables about it, though in a different sort,—the former illustrating a pervasive law which distributes men according to their deserts, the latter speaking of beings with human passions, who inflict outward arbitrary penalties according to their pleasure.

Thirdly, when the general idea of a hell has once obtained lodgment, it is rapidly nourished, developed, and ornamented, carried out into particulars by poets, rhetoricians, and popular teachers, whose fancies are stimulated and whose figurative views and pictures act and react both upon the sources and the products of faith. Representations based only on moral facts, emblems addressing the imagination, after a while are received in a literal sense, become physically located and clothed with the power of horror. A Hindu poet says, "The ungrateful shall remain in hell as long as the sun hangs in heaven." An old Jewish Rabbi says that after the general judgment "God shall lead all the blessed through hell and all the damned through paradise, and show to each one the place that was prepared for him in each region, so that they shall not be able to say, 'We are not to be blamed or praised; for our doom was unalterably fixed beforehand.'" Such utterances are originally moral symbols, not dogmatic assertions; and yet in a rude age they very easily pass into the popular mind as declaring facts literally to be believed. A Talmudic writer says, "There are in hell seven abodes, in each abode seven thousand caverns, in each cavern seven thousand clefts, in each cleft seven thousand scorpions; each scorpion has seven limbs, and on each limb are seven thousand barrels of gall. There are also in hell seven rivers of rankest poison, so deadly that if one touches it he bursts." Hesiod, Homer, Virgil, have given minute descriptions of hell and its agonies,—descriptions which have unquestionably had a tremendous influence in cherishing and fashioning the world's faith in that awful empire. The poems of Dante, Milton, and Pollok revel in the most vivid and terrific pictures of the infernal kingdom and its imagined horrors; and the popular doctrine of future punishment in Christendom is far more closely conformed to their revelations than to the declarations of the New Testament. The English poet's "Paradise Lost" has undoubtedly exerted an influence on the popular faith comparable with that of the Genevan theologian's "Institutes of the Christian Religion." There is a horrid fiction, widely believed once by the Jewish Rabbins and by the Mohammedans, that two gigantic fiends called the Searchers, as soon as a deceased person is buried, make him sit up in the grave, examine the

moral condition of his soul, and, if he is very guilty, beat in his temples with heavy iron maces. It is obvious to observe that such conceptions are purely arbitrary, the work of fancy, not based on any intrinsic fitness or probability; but they are received because unthinking ignorance and hungry superstition will greedily believe any thing they hear. Joseph Trapp, an English clergyman, in a long poem thus sets forth the scene of damnation:—

"Doom'd to live death and never to expire,
In floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire
The damn'd shall groan,—fire of all kinds and forms,
In rain and hail, in hurricanes and storms,
Liquid and solid, livid, red, and pale,
A flaming mountain here, and there a flaming vale;
The liquid fire makes seas, the solid, shores;
Arch'd o'er with flames, the horrid concave roars.
In bubbling eddies rolls the fiery tide,
And sulphurous surges on each other ride.
The hollow winding vaults, and dens, and caves,
Bellow like furnaces with flaming waves.
Pillars of flame in spiral volumes rise,
Like fiery snakes, and lick the infernal skies.
Sulphur, the eternal fuel, unconsumed,
Vomits redounding smoke, thick, unillumed."

But all other paintings of the fear and anguish of hell are vapid and pale before the preternatural frightfulness of those given at unmerciful length and in sickening specialty in some of the Hindu and Persian sacred books.[1] Here worlds of nauseating disgusts, of loathsome agonies, of intolerable terrors, pass before us. Some are hung up by their tongues, or by their eyes, and slowly devoured by fiery vermin; some scourged with whips of serpents whose poisonous fangs lacerate their flesh at every blow; some forced to swallow bowls of gore, hair, and corruption, freshly filled as fast as drained; some packed immovably in red-hot iron chests and laid in raging furnaces for unutterable millions of ages. One who is familiar with the imagery of the Buddhist hells will think the pencils of Dante and Pollok, of Jeremy Taylor and Jonathan Edwards, were dipped in water. There is just as much ground for believing the accounts of the former to be true as there is for crediting those of the latter: the two are fundamentally the same, and the pagan had earlier possession of the field.

Furthermore, in the early ages, and among people where castes were prominent, when the learning, culture, and power were confined to one class at the expense of others, it is unquestionable that copious and fearful descriptions of the future state were spread abroad by those who were interested in establishing such a dogma. The haughtiness and selfishness of the hierarchic spirit, the exclusiveness, cruelty, and cunning tyranny of many of the ancient priesthoods, are well known. Despising,

[1] See Pope's translation of the Viraf-Nameh. Also the Dabistán, vol. i. pp. 296–304, of the translation by Shea and Troyer; and Coleman's Mythology of the Hindus, chapter on the hells.

hating, and fearing the people, whom they held in abject spiritual bondage, they sought to devise, diffuse, and organize such opinions as would concentrate power in their own hands and rivet their authority. Accordingly, in the lower immensity they painted and shadowed forth the lurid and dusky image of hell, gathering around it all that was most abominated and awful. Then they set up certain fanciful conditions, without the strict observance of which no one could avoid damnation. The *animus* of a priesthood in the structure of this doctrine is shown by the glaring fact that in the old religions the woes of hell were denounced not so much upon bad men who committed crimes out of a wicked heart, as upon careless men who neglected priestly guidance and violated the ritual. The omission of a prayer or an ablution, the neglect of baptism or confession, a slight thrown upon a priest, a mental conception differing from the decree of the "Church," would condemn a man far more surely and deeply into the Egyptian, Hindu, Persian, Pharisaic, Papal, or Calvinistic hell than any amount of moral culpability according to the standard of natural ethics.

The popular hells have ever been built on hierarchic selfishness, dogmatic pride, and personal cruelty, and have been walled around with arbitrary and traditional rituals. Through the breaches made in these rituals by neglect, souls have been plunged in. The Parsee priest describes a woman in hell "beaten with stone clubs by two demons twelve miles in size, and compelled to continue eating a basin of putridity, because once some of her hair, as she combed it, fell into the sacred fire." The Brahmanic priest tells of a man who, for "neglecting to meditate on the mystic monosyllable Om before praying, was thrown down in hell on an iron floor and cleaved with an axe, then stirred in a caldron of molten lead till covered all over with the sweated foam of torture like a grain of rice in an oven, and then fastened, with head downwards and feet upwards, to a chariot of fire and urged onwards with a red-hot goad." The Papal priest declares that the schismatic, though the kindest and justest man, at death drops hopelessly into hell, while the devotee, though scandalously corrupt in heart and life, who confesses and receives extreme unction, treads the primrose path to paradise. The Episcopalian priest dooms the dissenter to everlasting woe in spite of every virtue, because he has not known sacramental baptism in the apostolic line. The Arminian priest turns the rationalist over to the penal fires of eternity, because he is in mental error as to the explanation of the Trinity and the Atonement. In every age it has been the priestly spirit, acting on ritual considerations, that has deepened the foundations, enlarged the borders, and apportioned the victims, of hell. The perversions and excesses of the doctrine have grown out of cruel ambition and cunning on one side, and been received by docile ignorance and superstition on the other, and been mutually fed by traditions and fables between. The excessive vanity and theocratic pride of the Jews led them to exclude all the Gentiles, whom they stigmatized as "uncircum-

cised dogs," from the Jewish salvation. The same spirit, aggravated if possible, passed lineally into Christendom, causing the Orthodox Church to exclude all the heathen, all heretics, and the unbaptized, from the Christian salvation.

A fifth explanation of the wholesale severity and multiplied details of horror, which came to be incorporated with the doctrine of hell, is to be found in the gloomy theories of certain philosophers whose relentless speculations were tinged and moulded by their own recluse misanthropy and the prevailing superstitions of their time. Out of the old asceticism of the East—the false spiritualism which regarded matter as the source of evil and this life as a penance—arose the dogma of metempsychosis. The consequence of this theory, rigidly carried out, created a descending congeries of hells, reaching from centre to nadir, in correspondence to an ascending congeries of heavens, reaching from centre to zenith. Out of the myth of the Fall sprang the dogma of total depravity, dooming our whole race to hell forever, except those saved by the subsequent artifice of the atonement. Theories conjured up and elaborated by fanciful and bloodless metaphysicians, in an age when the milk of public human kindness was thinned, soured, poisoned, by narrow and tyrannical prejudices, might easily legitimate and establish any conclusions, however unreasonable and monstrous. The history of philosophy is the broad demonstration of this. The Church philosophers, (with exceptions, of course,) receiving the traditions of the common faith, partaking in the superstitions of their age, banished from the bosoms of men by their monastic position, and inflamed with hierarchic pride, with but a faint connection or intercourse between conscience and intellect or between heart and fancy, strove to spin out theories which would explain and justify the orthodox dogmas.

Working with metaphysical tools of abstract reason, not with the practical faculties of life, dealing with the fanciful materials of priestly tradition, not with the solid facts of ethical observation, they would naturally be troubled with but few qualms and make but few reservations, however overwhelming the results of horror at which they might arrive. Habituated for years to hair-drawn analyses and superstitious broodings upon the subject, overshadowed by the supernatural hierarchy in which they lived, surrounded by a thick night of ignorance, persecution, and slaughter, it was no wonder they could believe the system they preached, although in reality it was only a traditional abstraction metaphysically wrought up and vivified by themselves. Being thus wrought out and animated by them, who were the sole depositaries of learning and the undisputed lords of thought, the mass of the people, lying abjectly in the fetters of authority, could not help accepting it. Ample illustrations of these assertions will occur to all who are familiar with the theological schemes and the dialectic subtleties of the early Church Fathers and of the later Church Scholastics.

Finally, by the combined power, first, of natural conscience affirming

a future distinction between the good and the bad; secondly, of imperfect conceptions of God as a passionate avenger; thirdly, of the licentious fancies of poets drawing awful imaginative pictures of future woe; fourthly, of the cruel spirit and the ambitious plans of selfish priesthoods; and fifthly, of the harsh and relentless theories of conforming metaphysicians,—the doctrine of hell, as a located place of manifold terrific physical tortures drawing in vast majorities of the human race, became established in the ruling creeds and enthroned as an orthodox dogma. In some heathen nations the descriptions of the poets, in others the accounts of the priestly books, were held to be inspired revelations. To call them in question was blasphemous. In Christendom the scriptural representations of the subject, which were general moral adaptations, incidentally made, of representations already existing, obtained a literal interpretation, had the stamp of infallibility put on them and immense perverted additions joined to them. Thus everywhere the dogma became associated with the established authority. To deny it was heresy. Heretics were excommunicated, loaded with pains and penalties, and, for many centuries, often put to death with excruciating tortures. From that moment the doctrine was taken out of the province of natural reason, out of the realm of ethical truth. The absurdities, wrongs, and barbarities deducible from it were a part and parcel of it, and not to be considered as any objection to it. No free thought and honest criticism were allowed. Because taught by authority, it must be submissively taken for granted. Henceforth we are not to wonder at the revolting inhumanity of spirit and horribleness of gloating hatred shown in connection with the doctrine; for it was not the independent thought and proper moral spirit of individuals, but the petrified dogma and irresponsible corporate spirit of that towering hierarchy, the CHURCH.

The Church set forth certain conditional offers of salvation. When those offers were spurned or neglected, the Church felt personally insulted and aggrieved. Her servants hurled on the hated heretics and heathen the denunciations of bigotry and the threats of rage. Rugged old Tertullian, in whose torrid veins the fire of his African deserts seems infused, revels with infernal glee over the contemplation of the sure damnation of the heathen. "At that greatest of all spectacles, the last and eternal judgment," he says, "how shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates liquefying in fiercer flames than they ever kindled against the Christians; so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot fires with their deluded pupils; so many tragedians more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings; so many dancers tripping more nimbly from anguish than ever before from applause."[1] Hundreds of the most accredited Christian writers have shown the same fiendish spirit. Drexel the Jesuit, preaching of Dives,

[1] De Spectaculis, cap. XXX., Gibbon's trans.

exclaims, "Instead of a lofty bed of down on which he was wont to repose himself, he now lies frying in the flames; his sparkling wine and delicious dainties are taken from him; he is burnt up with thirst, and has nothing for his food but smoke and sulphur." Jeremy Taylor[3] says, in that discourse on the "Pains of Hell" where he has lavished all the stores of his matchless learning and all the wealth of his gorgeous imagination in multiplying and adorning the paraphernalia of torture with infinite accompaniments of unendurable pangs and insufferable abominations, "We are amazed at the inhumanity of Phalaris, who roasted men in his brazen bull: this was joy in respect of that fire of hell which penetrates the very entrails without consuming them;" "husbands shall see their wives, parents shall see their children, tormented before their eyes;" "the bodies of the damned shall be crowded together in hell like grapes in a wine-press, which press one another till they burst;" "every distinct sense and organ shall be assailed with its own appropriate and most exquisite sufferings." Christopher Love—belying his name—says of the damned, "Their cursings are their hymns, howlings their tunes, and blasphemies their ditties." Calvin writes, "Forever harassed with a dreadful tempest, they shall feel themselves torn asunder by an angry God, and transfixed and penetrated by mortal stings, terrified by the thunderbolts of God, and broken by the weight of his hand, so that to sink into any gulfs would be more tolerable than to stand for a moment in these terrors." A living divine, Dr. Gardiner Spring, declares, "When the omnipotent and angry God, who has access to all the avenues of distress in the corporeal frame and all the inlets to agony in the intellectual constitution, undertakes to punish, he will convince the universe that he does not gird himself for the work of retribution in vain;" "it will be *a glorious deed* when He who hung on Calvary shall cast those who have trodden his blood under their feet, into the furnace of fire, where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." Thousands of passages like these, and even worse, might easily be collected from Christian authors, dating their utterance from the days of St. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, who flamed against the heretics, to the days of Nehemiah Adams, Congregational preacher of Boston, who says, "It is to be feared the forty-two children that mocked Elisha are now in hell."[4] There is an unmerciful *animus* in them, a vindictiveness of thought and feeling, far—oh, how far!—removed from the meek and loving soul of Jesus, who wept over Jerusalem, and loved the "unevangelical" young lawyer who was "not far from the kingdom of heaven," and yearned towards the penitent Peter, and from the tenderness of his immaculate purity said to the adulteress, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." There are some sectarians in whom the arbitrary narrowness, fierceness, and rigidity of their received creeds have so demoralized and hardened conscience and sensibility in their native healthy

[3] Contemplations of the State of Man, ch. 6–8.

[4] Friends of Christ, p. 149.

directions, and artificially inflamed them in diseased channels, that we verily believe, if the decision of the eternal destiny of the human race were placed in their hands, they would with scarcely a twinge of pain—perhaps some of them even with a horrid satisfaction and triumph—doom all except their own dogmatic coterie to hell. They are bound to do so. They profess to know infallibly that God will do so: if, therefore, the case being in their arbitration, they would decide differently, they thereby impeach the action of God, confess his decrees irreconcilable with reason and justice, and set up their own goodness as superior to his. Burnet has preserved the plea of Bloody Mary, which was in these words:—"As the souls of heretics are hereafter to be eternally burning in hell, there can be nothing more proper than for me to imitate the Divine vengeance by burning them on earth." Thanks be to the infinite Father that our fate is in his hands, and not in the hands of men who are bigots,—

> "Those pseudo Privy-Councillors of God,
> Who write down judgments with a pen hard nibb'd:
> Ushers of Beelzebub's black rod,
> Commending sinners, not to ice thick-ribb'd,
> But endless flames to scorch them up like flax,—
> Yet sure of heaven themselves, as if they'd cribb'd
> The impression of St. Peter's keys in wax!"

It may be thought that this doctrine and its awful concomitants, though once promulgated, are now nearly obsolete. It is true that, in thinking minds and generous hearts, they are getting to be repudiated. But by no means is it so in the recognised formularies of the established Churches and in the teachings of the popular clergy. All through the Gentile world, wherever there is a prevailing religion, the threats and horrors of a fearful doctrine of hell are still brandished over the trembling or careless multitudes. In Christendom, the authoritative announcement of the Roman and Greek Churches, and the public creeds confessed by every communicant of all the denominations, save two or three which are comparatively insignificant in numbers, show that the doctrine is yet held without mitigation. The Bishop of Toronto, only a year or two ago, published the authoritative declaration that "every child of humanity, except the Virgin Mary, is from the first moment of conception a child of wrath, hated by the blessed Trinity, belonging to Satan, and doomed to hell!" Indeed, the doctrine, in its whole naked and frightful extent, is necessarily, in strict logic, an integral part of the great system of the popular Christianity;—that is, Christianity as falsely interpreted, paganized, and scholasticized. For if by the sin of Adam the entire race were totally depraved and condemned to a hopeless hell, and only those can be saved who personally appropriate by a realizing faith the benefits of the subsequent artifice carried out in the atoning blood of the incarnate God, certainly the extremest advocate of the doctrine concerning hell has not exceeded the truth, and cannot exceed it. All the necessities of logic rebuke the tame-hearted theologians, and great Augustine's, great Calvin's, ghost walks unapproached among them, crying

out that they are slow and inefficient in describing the enormous sweep of the inherited penalty! Many persons who have not taken pains to examine the subject suppose that the horrifying descriptions given by Christian authors of the state and sufferings of the lost were not intended to be literally received, but were meant as figures of speech, highly-wrought metaphors calculated to alarm and impress with physical emblems corresponding only to moral and spiritual realities. The progress of thought and refinement has made it natural that recourse should often be had to such an explanation; but unquestionably it is a mistake. The annals of theology, both dogmatic and homiletic, from the time of the earliest Fathers till now, abound in detailed accounts of the future punishment of the wicked, whereof the context, the train of thought, and all the intrinsic characteristics of style and coherence, do not leave a shadow of doubt that they were written as faithful, though inadequate, accounts of facts. The Church, the immense bulk of Christendom, has in theory always regarded hell and its dire concomitants as material facts, and not as merely spiritual experiences. Tertullian says, "The damned burn eternally without consuming, as the volcanoes, which are vents from the stored subterranean fire of hell, burn forever without wasting."[5] Cyprian declares that "the wretched bodies of the condemned shall simmer and blaze in those living fires." Augustine argues at great length and with ingenious varieties of reasoning to show how the material bodies of the damned may withstand annihilation in everlasting fire.[6] Similar assertions, which cannot be figuratively explained, are made by Irenæus, Jerome, Athanasius, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, Gerson, Bernard, and indeed by almost all the Christian writers. Origen, who was a Platonist, and a heretic on many points, was severely condemned for saying that the fire of hell was inward and of the conscience, rather than outward and of the body. For the strict materiality of the fire of hell we might adduce volumes of authorities from nearly every province of the Church. Dr. Barrow asserts that "our bodies will be afflicted continually by a sulphureous flame, piercing the inmost sinews." John Whitaker thinks "the bodies of the damned will be all salted with fire, so tempered and prepared as to burn the more fiercely and yet never consume." Jeremy Taylor teaches that "this temporal fire is but a painted fire in respect of that penetrating and real fire in hell." Jonathan Edwards soberly and believingly writes thus:—"The world will probably be converted into a great lake or liquid globe of fire,—a vast ocean of fire, in which the wicked shall be overwhelmed, which will always be in tempest, in which they shall be tost to and fro, having no rest day or night, vast waves or billows of fire continually rolling over their heads, of which they shall forever be full of a quick sense within and without: their heads, their eyes, their tongues, their hands, their feet, their loins, and their vitals shall forever be full of a glowing, melting

[5] Apol. cap. 47–48.

[6] De Civ. Dei, lib. xxi. cap. 2–4.

fire, fierce enough to melt the very rocks and elements; and also they shall eternally be full of the most quick and lively sense to feel the torments; not for one minute, nor for one day, nor for one age, nor for two ages, nor for a hundred ages, nor for ten thousands of millions of ages one after another, but for ever and ever, without any end at all, and never, never be delivered."[7] Calvin says, "Iterum quæro, unde factum est, ut *tot gentes una cum liberis eorum infantibus* æternæ morti involveret lapsus Adæ absque remedio, nisi quia Deo ita visum est? Decretum horribile fateor."[8] Outraged humanity before the contemplation cries, "O God, horror hath overwhelmed me, for thou art represented as an omnipotent Fiend." It is not the Father of Christ, but his Antagonist, whose face glares down over such a scene as that! The above diabolical passage—at the recital of which from the pulpit, Edwards's biographers tell us, "whole congregations shuddered and simultaneously rose to their feet, smiting their breasts, weeping and groaning"—is not the arbitrary exaggeration of an individual, but a fair representation of the actual tenets and vividly held faith of the Puritans. It is also, in all its uncompromising literality, a direct and inevitable part of the system of doctrine which, with insignificant exceptions, professedly prevails throughout Christendom at this hour. We know most persons will hesitate at this statement; but let them look at the logic of the case in the light of its history, and they must admit the correctness of the assertion. Weigh the following propositions, the accuracy of which no one, we suppose, will question, and it will appear at once that there is no possibility of avoiding the conclusion.

First, it is the established doctrine of Christendom that no one can be saved without a supernatural regeneration, or sincere faith in the vicarious atonement, or valid reception of sacramental grace at the hands of a priest,—conditions which it is not possible that one in a hundred thousand of the whole human race has fulfilled. Secondly, it is the established doctrine of Christendom that there will be a general day of judgment, when all men will be raised in the same bodies which they originally occupied on earth, when Christ and his angels will visibly descend from heaven, separate the elect from the reprobate, summon the sheep to the blissful pastures on the right hand, but

> "Proclaim
> The flocks of goats to folds of flame."

The world is to be burnt up, and the damned, restored to their bodies, are to be driven into the everlasting fire prepared for them. *The resurrection of the body*,—still held in all Christendom,—taken in connection with the rest of the associated scheme, necessitates the belief in the materiality of the torments of hell. That eminent living divine, Dr. Gardiner Spring, says, "The souls of all who have died in their sins are

[7] Edwards's Works, vol. viii. p. 166.

[8] Instit., lib. iii. cap. xxiii. sect. 7.

in hell; and there their bodies too will be after the resurrection."[9] Mr. Spurgeon also, in his graphic and fearful sermon on the "Resurrection of the Dead," uses the following language:—"When thou diest, thy soul will be tormented alone; that will be a hell for it: but at the day of judgment thy body will join thy soul, and then thou wilt have twin-hells, thy soul sweating drops of blood, and thy body suffused with agony. In fire exactly like that which we have on earth thy body will lie, asbestos-like, forever unconsumed, all thy veins roads for the feet of pain to travel on, every nerve a string on which the devil shall forever play his diabolical tune of Hell's Unutterable Lament!" And, if this doctrine be true, no ingenuity, however fertile in expedients and however fiendish in cruelty, can possibly devise emblems and paint pictures half terrific enough to present in imagination and equal in moral impression what the reality will be to the sufferers. It is easy to speak or hear the word "hell;" but to analyze its significance and realize it in a sensitive fancy is difficult; and whenever it is done the fruit is madness, as the bedlams of the world are shrieking in testimony at this instant. The Revivalist preachers, so far from exaggerating the frightful contents latent in the prevalent dogma concerning hell, have never been able—and no man is able—to do any thing like justice to its legitimate deductions. Edwards is right in declaring, "After we have said our utmost and thought our utmost, all that we have said and thought is but *a faint shadow* of the reality." Think of yourselves, seized, just as you are now, and flung into the roaring, glowing furnace of eternity; think of such torture for an instant, multiply it by infinity, and then say if any words can convey the proper force of impression. It is true these intolerable details are merely latent and unappreciated by the multitude of believers; and when one, roused to fanaticism by earnest contemplation of his creed, dares to proclaim its logical consequences and to exhort men accordingly, they shrink, and charge him with excess. But they should beware ere they repudiate the literal horrors of the historic orthodox doctrine for any figurative and moral views accommodated to the advanced reason and refinement of the times,—beware how such an abandonment of a part of their system affects the rest.

Give up the material fire, and you lose the bodily resurrection. Renounce the bodily resurrection, and away goes the visible coming of Christ to a general judgment. Abandon the general judgment, and the climacteric completion of the Church-scheme of redemption is wanting. Mar the wholeness of the redemption-plan, and farewell to the incarnation and vicarious atonement. Neglect the vicarious atonement, and down crumbles the hollow and broken shell of the popular theology helplessly into its grave. The old literal doctrine of a material hell, however awful its idea, as it has been set forth in flaming views and threats by all the accredited representatives of the Church, must be uncompro-

[9] The Glory of Christ, vol. ii. p. 258.

misingly clung to, else the whole popular system of theology will be mutilated, shattered, and lost from sight. The theological leaders understand this perfectly well, and for the most part they act accordingly. We have now under our hand numerous extracts, from writings published within the last five years by highly-influential dignitaries in the different denominations, which for frightfulness of outline and coloring, and for unshrinking assertions of literality, will compare with those already quoted. Especially read the following description of this kind from John Henry Newman:—

"Oh, terrible moment for the soul, when it suddenly finds itself at the judgment-seat of Christ,—when the Judge speaks and consigns it to the jailers till it shall pay the endless debt which lies against it! 'Impossible! I a lost soul? I separated from hope and from peace forever? It is not I of whom the Judge so spake! There is a mistake somewhere; Christ, Savior, hold thy hand: one minute to explain it! My name is Demas: I am but Demas,—not Judas, or Nicholas, or Alexander, or Philetus, or Diotrephes. What! eternal pain for me? Impossible! it shall not be!' And the poor soul struggles and wrestles in the grasp of the mighty demon which has hold of it, and whose every touch is torment. 'Oh, atrocious!' it shrieks, in agony, and in anger too,—as if the very keenness of the infliction were a proof of its injustice. 'A second! and a third! I can bear no more! Stop, horrible fiend! give over: I am a man, and not such as thou! I am not food for thee, or sport for thee! I have been taught religion; I have had a conscience; I have a cultivated mind; I am well versed in science and art; I am a philosopher, or a poet, or a shrewd observer of men, or a hero, or a statesman, or an orator, or a man of wit and humor. Nay, I have received the grace of the Redeemer; I have attended the sacraments for years; I have been a Catholic from a child; I died in communion with the Church: nothing, nothing which I have ever been, which I have ever seen, bears any resemblance to thee, and to the flame and stench which exhale from thee: so I defy thee, and abjure thee, O enemy of man!'

"Alas! poor soul! and, whilst it thus fights with that destiny which it has brought upon itself and those companions whom it has chosen, the man's name perhaps is solemnly chanted forth, and his memory decently cherished, among his friends on earth. Men talk of him from time to time; they appeal to his authority; they quote his words; perhaps they even raise a monument to his name, or write his history. 'So comprehensive a mind! such a power of throwing light on a perplexed subject and bringing conflicting ideas or facts into harmony!' 'Such a speech it was that he made on such and such an occasion: I happened to be present, and never shall forget it;' or, 'A great personage, whom some of us knew;' or, 'It was a rule with a very worthy and excellent friend of mine, now no more;' or, 'Never was his equal in society,—so just in his remarks, so lively, so versatile, so unobtrusive;' or, 'So great a benefactor to his country and to his kind;' or, 'His philosophy so profound.'

Oh, vanity! vanity of vanities! all is vanity! What profiteth it? What profiteth it? *His soul is in hell, O ye children of men! While thus ye speak, his soul is in the beginning of those torments in which his body will soon have part, and which will never die!*"[10]

Some theologians do not hesitate, even now, to say that "in hell the bodies of the damned shall be nealed, as we speak of glass, so as to endure the fire without being annihilated thereby." "Made of the nature of salamanders," they shall be "immortal kept to feel immortal fire." Well may we take up the words of the Psalmist and cry out of the bottomless depths of disgust and anguish, "I am overwhelmed with horror!"

Holding this abhorrent mass of representations, so grossly carnal and fearful, up in the free light of to-day, it cannot stand the test of honest and resolute inquiry. It exists only by timid, unthinking sufferance. It is kept alive, among the superstitious vestiges of the outworn and outgrown past, only by the power of tradition, authority, and custom. In refutation of it we shall not present here a prolonged detail of learned researches and logical processes; for that would be useless to those who are enslaved to the foregone conclusions of a creed and possessed by invulnerable prejudices, while those who are thoughtful and candid can make such investigations themselves. We shall merely state, in a few clear and brief propositions, the results in which we suppose all free and enlightened minds who have adequately studied the subject now agree, leaving the reader to weigh these propositions for himself, with such further examination as inclination and opportunity may cause him to bestow upon the matter.

We reject the common belief of Christians in a hell which is a local prison of fire where the wicked are to be tortured by material instruments, on the following grounds, appealing to God for the reverential sincerity of our convictions, and appealing to reason for their truth. First, the supposition that hell is an enormous region in the hollow of the earth is a remnant of ancient ignorance, a fancy of poets who magnified the grave into Hades, a thought of geographers who supposed the earth to be flat and surrounded by a brazen expanse bright above and black beneath. Secondly, the soul, on leaving the body, is a spiritual substance, if it be any substance at all, eluding our senses and all the instruments of science. Therefore, in the nature of things, it cannot be chained in a dungeon, nor be cognizant of suffering from material fire or other physical infliction, but its woes must be moral and inward; and the figment that its former fleshly body is to be restored to it is utterly incredible, being an absurdity in science, and not affirmed, as we believe, in Scripture. Thirdly, the imagery of a subterranean hell of fire, brimstone, and undying worms, as used in the Scriptures of the New Testament, is the same as that drawn from heathen sources with modifications and employed by the Pharisees before the time of Christ and his disciples; and

[10] Sermon on "Neglect of Divine Calls and Warnings."

we must therefore, since neither Persians nor Pharisees were inspired, either suppose that this imagery was adopted by the apostles figuratively to convey moral truths, or else that they were left, in common with their countrymen, at least partially under the dominion of the errors of their time. Thus in every alternative we deny that the interior of the earth is, or ever will be, an abode of souls, full of fire, a hell in which the damned are to be confined and physically tormented.

The elements of the popular doctrine of future punishment which we thus reject are the falsities contributed by superstition and the priestly spirit. The truths remaining in the doctrine, furnished by conscience, reason, and Scripture, we will next exhibit, in order not to dismiss this head, on the *nature* of future punishment, with negations. What is the real character of the retributions in the future state? We do not think they are necessarily connected with any peculiar locality or essentially dependent on any external circumstances. As Milton says, when speaking of the best theologians, "To banish forever into a local hell, whether in the air, or in the centre, or in that uttermost and bottomless gulf of chaos deeper from holy bliss than the world's diameter multiplied, they thought not a punishment so proper and proportionate for God to inflict as to punish sin with sin."

God does not arbitrarily stretch forth his arm, like an enraged and vindictive man, and take direct vengeance on offenders; but by his immutable laws, permeating all beings and governing all worlds, evil is, and brings, its own punishment. The intrinsic substances and forces of character and their organized correlations with the realities of eternity, the ruling principles, habits, and love of the soul, as they stand affected towards the world to which they go,—these are the conditions on which experience depends, herein is the hiding of retribution. "Each one," as Origen says, "kindles the flame of his own appropriate fire." Superior spirits must look on a corrupted human soul with a sorrow similar, though infinitely profounder, to that with which the lapidary contemplates a splendid pearl with a dark flaw in its centre. The Koran says, "Men sleep while they live, and when they die they wake." The sudden infliction of pain in the future state comes from the sudden unveiling of secrets, quickening of the moral consciousness, and exposure of the naked soul's fitnesses to the spiritual correspondences of its deserts. It is said,—

> "Death does
> Away disguise: souls see each other clear,
> At one glance, as two drops of rain in air
> Might look into each other had they life."

The quality of the soul's character decides the elements of the soul's life; and, as this becomes known on crossing the death-drawn line of futurity, conscious retribution then arises in the guilty. This is a retribution which is reasonable, moral, unavoidable, before which we may well pause and tremble. The great moral of it is that we should not so

much dread being thrust into an eternal hell as we should fear carrying a hell with us when we go into eternity. It is not so bad to be *in* hell as to be forced truly to say,—

> "Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell."

If these general ideas are correct, it follows—even as all common sense and reflection affirm—that every real preparation for death and for what is to succeed must be an *ingrained characteristic*, and cannot consist in a mere *opinion*, *mood*, or *act*. Here we strike at one of the shallowest errors, one of the most extensive and rooted superstitions, of the world. Throughout the immense kingdoms of the East, where the Brahmanic and Buddhist religions hold sway over six hundred millions of men, the notion of *yadasanna*—that is, the merit instantaneously obtained when at the point of death—fully prevails. They suppose that in that moment, regardless of their former lives and of their present characters, by bringing the mind and the heart into certain momentary states of thought and feeling, and meditating on certain objects or repeating certain sacred words, they can suddenly obtain exemption from punishment in their next life.[11] The notion likewise obtains almost universally among Christians, incredible as it may seem. With the Romanists, who are three-fourths of the Christian world, it is a most prominent doctrine, everywhere vehemently proclaimed and acted on: that is the meaning of the sacrament of extreme unction, whereby, on submission to the Church and confession to a priest, the venal sins of the dying man are forgiven, purgatory avoided or lessened, and heaven made sure. The ghost of the King of Denmark complains most of the unwarned suddenness of his murder,—not of the murder itself, but of its suddenness, which left him no opportunity to save his soul:—

> "Sleeping, was I by a brother's hand
> Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
> Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd;
> No reckoning made, but sent to my account
> With all my imperfections on my head."

Hamlet, urged by supernatural solicitings to vengeance, finds his murderous uncle on his knees at prayer. Stealing behind him with drawn sword, he is about to strike the fatal blow, when the thought occurs to him that the guilty man, if killed when at his devotions, would surely go to heaven; and so he refrains until a different opportunity. For to send to heaven the villain who had slain his father,—

> "That would be hire and salary, not revenge.
> He took my father grossly full of bread,
> With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
> And how his audit stands who knows save Heaven?
> But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
> 'Tis heavy with him. And am I then revenged

[11] Hardy, Manual of Buddhism, p. 489.

To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No; but when he is drunk, asleep, enraged,
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed,
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't:
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes."

This, though poetry, is a fair representation of the mediæval faith held by all Christendom in sober prose. The same train of thought latently underlies the feelings of most Protestants too, though it is true any one would now shrink from expressing it with such frankness and horrible gusto. But what else means the minute morbid anatomy of death-beds, the prurient curiosity to know how the dying one bore himself in the solemn passage? How commonly, if one dies without physical anguish, and with the artificial exultations of a fanatic, rejoiceful auguries are drawn! if he dies in physical suffering, and with apparent regret, a gloomy verdict is rendered! It is superstition, absurdity, and injustice, all. Not the accidental physical conditions, not the transient emotions, with which one passes from the earth, can decide his fate, but the real good or evil of his soul, the genuine fitness or unfitness of his soul, his soul's inherent merits of bliss or bale. There is no time nor power in the instant of death, by any magical legerdemain, to turn away the impending retributions of wickedness and guilt. What is right, within the conditions of Infinite wisdom and goodness, will be done in spite of all traditional juggles and spasmodic spiritual attitudinizations. What can it avail that a most vile and hardened wretch, when dying, convulsed with fright and possessed with superstition, compels, or strives to compel, a certain sentiment into his soul, conjures, or tries to conjure, his mind into the relation of belief towards a certain ancient and abstract dogma?

"Yet I've seen men who meant not ill,
Compelling doctrine out of death,
With hell and heaven acutely poised
Upon the turning of a breath."

Cruelly racking the soul with useless probes of theological questions and statements, they stand by the dying to catch the words of his last breath, and, in perfect consistence with their faith, they pronounce sentence accordingly. If, as the pallid lips faintly close, they hear the magic words, "I put my trust in the atoning blood of Christ," up goes the soul to heaven. If they hear the less stereotyped words, "I have tried to do as well as I could: I hope God will be merciful towards me and receive me," down goes the soul to hell. Strange and cruel superstition, that imagines God to act towards men only according to the evanescent temper and technical phrase with which they leave the world! The most popular English preacher of the present day, the Rev. Mr. Spurgeon, after referring to the fable that those before whom Perseus held the head of Medusa were turned into stone in the very act and

posture of the moment when they saw it, says, "Death is such a power. What I am when death is held before me, that I must be forever. When my spirit goes, if God finds me hymning his praise, I shall hymn it in heaven: doth he find me breathing out oaths, I shall follow up those oaths in hell. *As I die, so shall I live eternally!*"[12]

No: the true preparation for death and the invisible realm of souls is not the eager adoption of an opinion, the hurried assumption of a mood, or the frightened performance of an outward act: it is the patient culture of the mind with truth, the pious purification of the heart with disinterested love, the consecrated training of the life in holiness, the growth of the soul in habits of righteousness, faith, and charity, the organization of divine principles into character. Every real preparation of the soul for death must be a *characteristic* rightly related to the immortal realities to which death is the introduction of the soul. An evil soul is not thrust into a physical and fiery hell, fenced in and roofed over from the universal common; but it is revealed to itself, and consciously enters on retributive relations. In the spiritual world, whither all go at death, we suppose that like perceives like, and thus are they saved or damned, having, by the natural attraction and elective seeing of their virtues or vices, the beatific vision of God, or the horrid vision of iniquity and terror.

It cannot be supposed that God is a bounded shape so vast as to fill the entire circuits of the creation. Spirit transcends the categories of body, and it is absurd to apply the language of finite things to the illimitable One, except symbolically. When we die, we do not sink or soar to the realm of spirits, but are in it, at once, everywhere; and the resulting experience will depend on the prevailing elements of our moral being. If we are bad, our badness is our banishment from God; if we are good, our goodness is our union with God. In every world the true nature and law of retribution lie in the recoil of conduct on character, and the assimilated results ensuing. Take a soul that is saturated with the rottenness of depravity into the core of heaven, and it is in the heart of hell still. Take a soul that is compacted of divine realities to the very bottom of hell, and heaven is with it there.

We are treading on eternity, and infinitude is all around us. Now, as well as hereafter, to us, the universe is action, the soul is reaction, experience is the resultant. Death but unveils the facts. Pass that great crisis, in the passage becoming conscious of universal realities and of individual relations to them, and the Father will say to the discordant soul, "Alienated one, incapable of my embrace, change and come to me;" to the harmonious soul, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine."

Having thus considered the question as to the nature of future punishments, it now remains to discuss the question concerning their duration.

[12] Sermons, 3d Series, Sermon XIV., Thoughts on the Last Battle.

The fact of a just and varied punishment for souls we firmly believe in. The particulars of it in the future, or the degrees of its continuance, we think, are concealed from the present knowledge of man. These details we do not profess to be able to settle much about. We have but three general convictions on the subject. First, that these punishments will be experienced in accordance with those righteous and inmost laws which indestructibly express the mind of God and rule the universe, and will not be vindictively inflicted through arbitrary external penalties. Secondly, that they will be accurately tempered to the just deserts and qualifications of the individual sufferers. And thirdly, that they will be alleviated, remedial, and limited, not unmitigated, hopeless, and endless.

Upon the first of these thoughts perhaps enough has already been said, and the second and third may be discussed together. Our business, therefore, in the remainder of this dissertation, is to disprove, if truth in the hands of reason and conscience will enable us to disprove, the popular dogma which asserts that the state of the condemned departed is a state of *complete damnation absolutely eternal*. Against that form of representing future punishment which makes it unlimited by conceiving the destiny of the soul to be an eternal progress, in which their initiative steps of good or evil in this life place different souls under advantages or disadvantages never relatively to be lost, we have nothing to object. It is reasonable, in unison with natural law, and not frightful.[12] But we are to deal, if we fairly can, a refutation against the doctrine of an *intense endless misery* for the wicked, as that doctrine is prevailingly taught and received.

The advocates of eternal damnation primarily plant themselves upon the Christian Scriptures, and say that there the voice of an infallible inspiration from heaven asserts it. First of all, let us examine this ground, and see if they do not stand there only upon erroneous premises sustained by prejudices. In the beginning, then, we submit to candid minds that, if the literal eternity of future torment *be* proclaimed in the New Testament, it is not a part of the revelation contained in that volume; it is not a truth revealed by inspiration; and that we maintain for this reason. The same representations of the everlasting duration of future punishment in hell, the same expressions for an unlimited duration, which occur in the New Testament, were previously employed by the Hindus, Greeks, and Pharisees, who were not inspired, but must have drawn the doctrine from fallible sources. Now, to say the least, it is as reasonable to suppose that these expressions, when found in the New Testament, were employed by the Saviour and the evangelists in conformity with the prevailing thought and customary phraseology of their time, as to conclude that they were derived from an unerring inspiration. The former is a natural and reasonable inference; the latter is a gratuitous hypothesis for which we have never heard of any evidence. If its

[12] Lessing, Ueber Leibnitz von den Ewigen Strafen.

advocates will honestly attempt really to prove it, we are convinced they will be forced to renounce it. The only way they continue to hold it is by taking it for granted. If, therefore, the strict eternity of future woe be declared in the New Testament, we regard it not as a part of the inspired utterance of Jesus, but as an error which crept in among others from the surrounding notions of a benighted pagan age.

But, in the next place, we do not admit by any means that the literal eternity of future damnation *is* taught in the Scriptures. On the contrary, we deny such an assertion, for several reasons. First, we argue from the usage of language *before* the New Testament was written. The Egyptians, Hindus, Greeks, often make most emphatic use of phrases declaring the eternal sufferings of the wicked in hell; but they must have meant by "eternal" only a very long time, because a fundamental portion of the great system of thought on which their religions rested was the idea of recurring epochs, sundered by immense periods statedly arriving, when all things were restored, the hells and heavens vanished away, and God was all in all. If the representations of the eternal punishment of the wicked, made before the New Testament was written, were not significant, with metaphysical severity, of an eternity of duration, but only, with popular looseness, of an extremely long period, the same may be true of the similar expressions found in that record.

Secondly, we argue from the usage of language *in and after* the New Testament age. The critics have collected, as any one desirous may easily find, and as every theological scholar well knows, scores of instances from the writings of authors contemporary with Christ and his apostles, and succeeding them, where the Greek word for "eternal" is used popularly, not strictly, in a rhetorical, not in a philosophical, sense, not denoting a duration literally endless, but one very prolonged. In all Greek literature the word is undoubtedly used in a careless and qualified sense at least a hundred times where it is used once with its close etymological force. And the same is true of the corresponding Hebrew term. The writer of the "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," at the close of every chapter, describing the respective patriarch's death, says, "he slept the eternal sleep," though by "eternal" he can only mean a duration reaching to the time of the resurrection, as plainly appears from the context. Iamblichus speaks of "an eternal eternity of eternities."[14] Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa, and others, the fact of whose belief in final universal salvation no one pretends to deny, do not hesitate with earnestness and frequency to affirm the "eternal" punishment of the wicked in hell. Now, if the contemporaries of the evangelists, and their successors, often used the word "eternal" popularly, in a figurative, limited sense, then it may be so employed when it occurs in the New Testament in connection with the future pains of the bad.

Thirdly, we argue from the phraseology and other peculiarities of the

[14] De Mysteriis Egyptiorum, cap. viii. sect. 10.

representation of the future woe of the condemned, given in the New Testament itself, that its authors did not consciously intend to proclaim the rigid endlessness of that woe.[15] "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." Since the word "everlasting" was often used simply to denote a long period, what right has any one to declare that here it must mean an absolutely unending duration? How does any one know that the mind of Jesus *dialectically grasped the metaphysical notion of eternity* and deliberately intended to express it? Certainly the intrinsic probabilities are all the other way. Such a conclusion is hardly compatible with the highly tropical style of speech employed throughout the discourse. Besides, had he wished to convey the overwhelming idea that the doom of the guilty would be strictly irremediable, their anguish literally infinite, would he not have taken pains to say so in definite, guarded, explained, unmistakable terms? He might easily, by a precise prosaic utterance, by explanatory circumlocutions, have placed that thought beyond possibility of mistake.

Fourthly, we have an intense conviction not only that the leaving of such a doctrine by the Savior in impenetrable obscurity and uncertainty is irreconcilable with the supposition of his deliberately holding it in his belief, but also that a belief in the doctrine itself is utterly irreconcilable with the very essentials of his teachings and spirit, his inmost convictions and life. He taught the infinite and unchangeable goodness of God: confront the doctrine of endless misery with the parable of the prodigal son. He taught the doctrine of unconquerable forgiveness, without apparent qualification: bring together the doctrine of never-relenting punishment and his petition on the cross, "Father, forgive them." He taught that at the great judgment heaven or hell would be allotted to men according to their lives; and the notion of *endless* torment does not rest on the demerit of sinful deeds, which is the standard of judgment that he holds up, but on conceptions concerning a totally depraved nature, a God inflamed with wrath, a vicarious atonement rejected, or some other ethnic tradition or ritual consideration equally foreign to his mind and hostile to his heart.

Fifthly, if we reason on the popular belief that the letter of Scripture teaches only unerring truth, we have the strongest argument of all against the eternal hopelessness of future punishment. The doctrine of Christ's descent to hell underlies the New Testament. We are told that after his death "he went and preached to the spirits in prison." And again we read that "the gospel was preached also to them that are dead." This New Testament idea was unquestionably a vital and important feature in the apostolic and in the early Christian belief. It necessarily implies that there is probation, and that there may be salvation, after death. It is fatal to the horrid dogma which commands all who enter

[15] Corrodi, Ueber die Ewigkeit der Höllenstrafen. In den Beiträgen zur Beförderung des Vernünft. Denk. u. s. w. heft vii. ss. 41–72.

hell to abandon every gleam of hope, utterly and forever. The symbolic force of the doctrine of Christ's descent and preaching in hell is this,—as Güder says in his "Appearance of Christ among the Dead,"—that the deepest and most horrible depth of damnation is not too deep and horrible for the pitying love which wishes to save the lost: even into the veriest depth of hell reaches down the love of God, and his beatific call sounds to the most distant distances. There is no outermost darkness to which his heavenly and all-conquering light cannot shine. The book which teaches that Christ went even into hell itself, to seek and to save that which was lost, does not teach that from the instant of death the fate of the wicked is irredeemably fixed.

Upon the whole, then, we reach the clear conclusion that the Christian Scriptures do not really declare the hopeless eternity of future punishment.[16] They speak popularly, not scientifically,—speak in metaphors which cannot be analyzed and reduced to metaphysical precision. The subject is left with fearful warnings in an impressive obscurity. There we must either leave it, in awe and faith, undecided; or, if not content to do that, we must examine and decide it on other grounds than those of traditional authority, and with other instruments than those of textual interpretation.

Let us next sift and weigh the arguments from reason by which the dogma of the eternity of future misery is respectively defended and assailed. The advocates of it have sought to support it by four positions, which are such entire assumptions that only a word will be requisite to expose each of them to logical rejection. First, it is said that sin is infinite and deserves an infinite penalty because it is an outrage against an infinite being.[17] A more absurd perversion of logic than this, a more glaring violation of common sense, was never perpetrated. It directly reverses the facts and subverts the legitimate inference. Is the sin measured by the dignity of the lawgiver, or by the responsibility of the lawbreaker? Does justice heed the wrath of the offended, or the guilt of the offender? As well say that the eye of man is infinite because it looks out into infinite space, as affirm that his sin is infinite because committed against an infinite God. That man is finite, and all his acts finite, and consequently not in justice to be punished infinitely, is a plain statement of fact which compels assent. All else is empty quibbling, scholastic jugglery. The ridiculousness of the argument is amusingly apparent as presented thus in an old Miracle-Play, wherein Justice is made to tell Mercy

> "That man, havinge offended God who is endlesse,
> His endlesse punchement therefore may nevyr seese."

The second device brought forward to sustain the doctrine in question

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[16] Bretschneider, in his Systematische Entwickelung aller in der Dogmatik vorkommenden Begriffe, gives the literature of this subject in a list of thirty-six distinct works. Sect. 139, Ewigkeit der Höllenstrafen.

[17] Thomas Aquinas, Summa, pars iii. suppl. qu. 99, art. 1.

is more ingenious, but equally arbitrary. It is based on the foreknowledge of God. He foresaw that the wicked, if allowed to live on earth immortally in freedom, would go on forever in a course of constant sin. They were therefore constructively guilty of all the sin which they would have committed; but he saved the world the ravages of their actual crimes by hurling them into hell beneath the endless penalty of their latent infinite guilt. In reply to those who argue thus, it is obvious to ask, whence did they learn all this? There is no such scheme drawn up or hinted in Scripture; and surely it is not within the possible discoveries of reason. Plainly, it is not a known premise legitimating a result, not a sound argument proving a conclusion: it is merely a conceit, devised to explain and fortify a theory already embraced from other considerations. It is an imaginative hypothesis without confirmation.

Thirdly, it has been said that future punishment will be endless because sin will be so. The evil soul, growing ever more evil, getting its habits of vice and passions of iniquity more deeply infixed, and surrounded in the infernal realm with all the incentives to wickedness, will become confirmed in depravity beyond all power of cure, and, sinning forever, be necessarily damned and tortured forever. The same objection holds to this argument as to the former. Its premises are daring assumptions beyond the province of our knowledge. They are assumptions, too, contrary to analogy, probability, the highest laws of humanity, and the goodness of God. Without freedom of will there cannot be sin; and those who retain moral freedom may reform, cease to do evil and learn to do good. There are invitations and opportunities to change from evil to good here: why not hereafter? The will is free now: what shall suddenly paralyze or annihilate that freedom when the soul leaves the body? Why may not such amazing revelations be made, such regenerating motives be brought to bear, in the spiritual world, as will soften the hardest, convince the stubbornest, and, sooner or later, transform and redeem the worst? It is true the law of sinful habit is dark and fearful; but it is frequently neutralized. The argument as the support of a positive dogma is void because itself only hypothetical.

Some have tried to prove eternal condemnation by an assumed necessity of moral gravitation. There is a great deal of loose and hasty talk afloat about the law of affinities distributing souls hereafter in fitted companies. Similar characters will spontaneously come together. The same qualities and grades of sympathy will coalesce, the unlike will fly apart. And so all future existence will be arranged in circles of dead equality on stagnant levels of everlasting hopelessness of change. The law of spiritual attraction is no such force as that, produces no such results. It is broken up by contrasts, changes, multiplicity of other interacting forces. We are not only drawn by affinity to those like ourselves, but often still more powerfully, with rebuking and redeeming effect, to those above us that we may become like them, to those beneath us that we may pity and help them. The law of affinity is not in moral beings a simple force necessi-

tating an endless uniformity of state, but a complex of forces, sometimes mingling the unlike by stimulants of wedded similarity and contrast to bless and advance all, now punishing, now rewarding, but ever finally intended to redeem. Reasoning by sound analogy, the heavens and hells of the future state are not monotonous circles each filled with mutually reflecting personalities, but one fenceless spiritual world of distinctive, ever-varying degrees, sympathetic and contrasted life, circulating freshness, variety of attractions and repulsions, divine advancement.

Finally, it is maintained by many that endless misery is the fate of the reprobate because such is the sovereign pleasure of God. This is no argument, but a desperate assertion. It virtually confesses that the doctrine cannot be defended by reason, but is to be thrown into the province of wilful faith. A host of gloomy theologians have taken this ground as the forlorn hope of their belief. The damned are eternally lost because that is the arbitrary decree of God. Those who thus abandon reason for dogmatic authority and trample on logic with mere reiterated assertion can only be met with the flat denial, such is *not* the arbitrary pleasure of God. Then, as far as argument is concerned, the controversy ends where it began. These four hypotheses include all the attempted justifications of the doctrine of eternal misery that we have ever seen offered from the stand-point of independent thought. We submit that, considered as proofs, they are utterly sophistical.

There are three great arguments in refutation of the endlessness of future punishment, as that doctrine is commonly held. The first argument is ethical, drawn from the laws of right; the second is theological, drawn from the attributes of God; the third is experimental, drawn from the principles of human nature. We shall subdivide these and consider them successively.

In the first place, we maintain that the popular doctrine of eternal punishment is *unjust*, because it overlooks the differences in the sins of men, launching on all whom it embraces one infinite penalty of undiscriminating damnation. The consistent advocates of the doctrine, the boldest creeds, unflinchingly avow this, and defend it by the plea that every sin, however trivial, is equally an offence against the law of the infinite God with the most terrible crime, and equally merits an infinite punishment. Thus, by a metaphysical quibble, the very basis of morals is overturned, and the child guilty of an equivocation through fear is put on a level with the pirate guilty of robbery and murder through cold-blooded avarice and hate. In a hell where all are plunged in physical fire for eternity there are no degrees of retribution, though the degrees of evil and demerit are as numerous and various as the individuals. The Scriptures say, "Every man shall receive according to the deeds done in the body:" some "shall be beaten with many stripes," others "with few stripes."

The first principle of justice—exact discrimination of judgment according to deeds and character—is monstrously violated and all differences

blotted out by the common dogma of hell. A better thought is shown in the old Persian legend which tells that God once permitted Zoroaster to accompany him on a visit to hell. The prophet saw many in grievous torments. Among the rest, he saw one who was deprived of his right foot. Asking the meaning of this, God replied, "Yonder sufferer was a king who in his whole life did but one kind action. Passing once near a dromedary which, tied up in a state of starvation, was vainly striving to reach some provender placed just beyond its utmost effort, the king with his right foot compassionately kicked the fodder within the poor beast's reach. That foot I placed in heaven: the rest of him is here."[18]

Again: there is the grossest injustice in the first assumption or fundamental ground on which the theory we are opposing rests. That theory does not teach that men are actually damned eternally on account of their own personal sins, but on account of *original* sin: the eternal tortures of hell are the transmitted penalty hurled on all the descendants of Adam, save those who in some way avoid it, in consequence of his primal transgression. Language cannot characterize with too much severity, as it seems to us, the injustice, the immorality, involved in this scheme. The belief in a sin, called "*original*," entailed by one act of one person upon a whole immortal race of countless millions, dooming vast majorities of them helplessly to a hopeless torture-prison, can rest only on a sleep of reason and a delirium of conscience. Such a "sin" is no sin at all; and any penalty inflicted on it would not be the necessary severity of a holy God, but a species of gratuitous vengeance. For sin, by the very essence of ethics, is the free, intelligent, wilful violation of a law known to be right; and every punishment, in order to be just, must be the suffering deserved by the intentional fault, the personal evil, of the culprit himself. The doctrine before us reverses all this, and sends untold myriads to hell forever for no other sin than that of simply having been born children of humanity. Born totally depraved, hateful to God, helpless through an irresistible proclivity to sin and an ineradicable aversion to evangelical truth, and asked to save themselves, asked by a mockery like that of fettering men hand and foot, clothing them in leaden strait-jackets, and then flinging them overboard, telling them not to drown! What justice, what justice, is there in this?

Thirdly, the profound injustice of this doctrine is seen in its making the alternative of so unutterably awful a doom hinge upon such trivial particulars and upon merely fortuitous circumstances. One is born of pious, orthodox parents, another of heretics or infidels: with no difference of merit due to them, one goes to heaven, the other goes to hell. One happens to form a friendship with an evangelical believer, another is influenced by a rationalist companion: the same fearful diversity of fate ensues. One is converted by a single sermon: if he had been ill that day, or had been detained from church by any other cause, his fated bed

[18] Wilson's ed. of Mill's Hist. of British India, vol. i. p. 429, note.

would have been made in hell, heaven closed against him forever. One says, "I believe in the Trinity of God, in the Deity of Christ;" and, dying, he goes to heaven. Another says, "I believe in the Unity of God and in the humanity of Christ:" he, dying, goes to hell. Of two children snatched away by disease when twenty-four hours old, one has been baptized, the other not: the angels of heaven welcome that, the demons of hell clutch this. The doctrine of infant damnation, intolerably painful as it is, has been proclaimed thousands of times by authoritative teachers and by large parties in the Church, and is a logical sequence from the popular theology. It is not a great many years since people heard, it is said, the celebrated statement that "hell is paved with the skulls of infants not a span long!" Think of the everlasting bliss or misery of a helpless infant depending on the petty accident of whether it was baptized or not! There are hypothetical cases like the following:—If one man had died a year earlier, when he was a saint, he would not have fallen from grace, and renounced his faith, and rolled in crimes, and sunk to hell. If another had lived a year later, he would have been smitten with conviction, and would have repented, and made his peace, and gone to heaven. To the everlasting loss of each, an eternity of bliss against an eternity of woe hung fatally poised *on the time appointed for him to die.* Oh how the bigoted pride, the exclusive dogmatism of self-styled saints, self-flatterers equally satisfied of their own election and of the rejection of almost everybody else, ought to sink and fade when they reflect on the slight chances, mere chances of time and place, by which the infinite contingency has been, or is to be, decided! They should heed the impregnable good sense and logic conveyed in the humane-hearted poet's satirical humor when he advises such persons to

> "Consider well, before, like Hurlothrumbo,
> They aim their clubs at any creed on earth,
> That by the simple accident of birth
> They might have been high-priests to Mumbo Jumbo."

It is evidently but the rankest mockery of justice to suspend an infinite woe upon an accident out of the power of the party concerned.

Still further: there is a tremendous injustice even in that form of the doctrine of endless punishment, the most favorable of all, which says that no one is absolutely foreordained to hell, but that all are free, and that life is a fixed season of probation wherein the means of salvation are offered to all, and if they neglect or spurn them the fault is their own, and eternal pain their merited portion. The perfectly apparent inconsistency of this theory with known facts is fatal to it, since out of every generation there are millions on millions of infants, idiots, maniacs, heathen, within whose hearing or power the means of salvation by a personal appropriation of the atoning merit of Christ's blood were never brought; so that life to them is no scene of Christian probation. But, waiving that, the probation is not a fair one to anybody. If the indescribable horror of an eternal damnation be the consequence that follows

a certain course while we are on trial in this life, then a knowledge of that fact in all its bearings ought to be given us, clear, explicit, beyond any possibility of mistake or doubt. Otherwise the probation is not fair. To place men in the world, as millions are constantly placed, beset by allurements of every sort within and without, led astray by false teachings and evil examples, exposed in ignorance, bewildered with uncertainties of conflicting doubts and surmises, either never hearing of the way of salvation at all, or hearing of it only in terms that seem absurd in themselves and unaccompanied by sufficient, if by any, proof, and then, if under these fearful hazards they waver from strict purity of heart, rectitude of conduct, or orthodoxy of belief, to condemn them to a world of everlasting agony, would be the very climax of cruelty, with no touch of mercy or color of right.

Beneath such a rule the universe should be shrouded in the blackness of despair, and God be thought of with a convulsive shudder. Such a "probation" would be only like that on which the Inquisitors put their victims who were studiously kept ignorant in their dungeons, waiting for the rack and the flame to be made ready. Few persons will deny that, as the facts now are, a good, intelligent, candid man may doubt the reality of an endless punishment awaiting men in hell. But if the doctrine be true, and he is on probation under it, is it fair that he should be left honestly in ignorance or doubt about it? No: if it be true, it ought to be burned into his brain and crushed into his soul with such terrific vividness and abiding constancy of impression as would deter him ever from the wrong path, keep him in the right. A distinguished writer has represented a condemned delinquent, suffering on, and still interminably on, in hell, thus complaining of the unfairness of his probation:—"Oh, had it been possible for me to conceive even the most diminutive part of the weight and horror of this doom, I should have shrunk from every temptation to sin, with the most violent recoil."[19] If an endless hell is to be the lot of the sinner, he ought to have an infallible certainty of it, with all possible helps and incentives to avoid it. Such is not the case; and therefore, since God is just and generous, the doctrine is not true.

Finally, the injustice of the dogma of everlasting punishment is most emphatically shown by the fact that there is no sort of correspondence or possible proportion between the offence and the penalty, between the moment of sinning life and the eternity of suffering death. If a child were told to hold its breath thirty seconds, and, failing to do it, should be confined in a dark solitary dungeon for seventy years amidst loathsome horrors and speechless afflictions, and be frightfully scourged six times a day for that entire period, there would be just proportion—nay, an inexpressibly merciful proportion—between the offence and the punishment, in comparison with that which, being an absolutely infinite disproportion, does not really admit of any comparison,—the sentence to an eternal

[19] John Foster, Letter on the Eternity of Future Punishments.

abode in hell as a penalty for the worst kind and the greatest amount of crime a man could possibly crowd into a life of a thousand years. Think, then, of passing such a sentence on one who has struggled hard against temptation, and yielded but rarely, and suffered much, and striven to do as well as he could, and borne up courageously, with generous resolves and affections, and died commending his soul to God in hope.

"Fearfully fleet is this life," says one, "and yet in it eternal life is lost or won: profoundly wretched is this life, yet in it eternal bliss is lost or won." Weigh the words adequately, and say how improbable is the thought, and how terribly unjust. Perhaps there have already lived upon this earth, and died, and passed into the invisible world, two hundred thousand millions of men, the everlasting doom of every one of whom, it is imagined, was fixed unalterably during the momentary period of his mortal transit from cradle to grave. In respect of eternity, six thousand years—and this duration must be reduced to threescore years and ten, since that is all that each generation enjoyed—is the same as one hour. Suppose, now, that all these two hundred thousand millions of men were called into being at once; that they were placed on probation for one hour; that the result of their choice and action in that hour was to decide their irrevocable fate, actually forever, to ecstatic bliss or to ecstatic woe; that during that hour they were left, as far as clear and stable conviction goes, in utter ignorance and uncertainty as to the great realities of their condition, courted by opposing theories and modes of action; and that, when the clock of time knelled the close of that awful, that most evanescent hour, the roaring gulf of torture yawned, and its jaws of flame and blackness closed over ninety-nine hundredths of them for eternity! That is a fair picture of the popular doctrine of temporal probation and eternal punishment, when examined in the light of the facts of human life. Of course, no man at this day, who is in his senses and thinks honestly upon the subject, can credit such a doctrine, unless indeed he believes that a lawless fiend sits on the throne of the universe and guides the helm of destiny. And lives there a man of unperverted soul who would not decidedly prefer to have no God rather than to have such a one? Ay,

> "Rather than so, come FATE into the list
> And champion us to the utterance."

Let us be atheists, and bow to mortal Chance, believe there is no pilot at all at the rudder of Creation's vessel, no channel before the prow, but the roaring breakers of despair to right and left, and the granite bluff of annihilation full in front!

In the next place, then, we argue against the doctrine of eternal damnation that it is incompatible with any worthy idea of the character of God. God is love; and love cannot consent to the useless torture of millions of helpless souls for eternity. The gross contradiction of the common doctrine of hell to the spirit of love is so obvious that its advocates, un-

able to deny or conceal it, have often positively proclaimed it, avowing that, in respect to the wicked, God is changed into a consuming fire full of hatred and vengeance. But that is unmitigated blasphemy. God is unchangeable, his very nature being disinterested, immutable goodness. The sufferings of the wicked are of their own preparation. If a pestilential exhalation is drawn from some decaying substance, it is not the fault of any alteration in the sunlight. But a Christian writer assures us that when "the damned are packed like brick in a kiln, so bound that they cannot move a limb nor even an eyelid, God shall blow the fires of hell through them for ever and ever."

And another writer says, "All in God is turned into fury: in hell he draws out into the field all his forces, all his attributes, whereof wrath is the leader and general."[20] Such representations may be left without a comment. Every enlightened mind will instantly reject with horror the doctrine which necessitates a conception of God like that here pictured forth. God is a being of infinite forgiveness and magnanimity. To the wandering sinner, even while a great way off, his arms are open, and his inviting voice, penetrating the farthest abysses, says, "Return." His sun shines and his rain falls on the fields of the unjust and unthankful. What is it, the instant mortals pass the line of death, that shall transform this Divinity of yearning pity and beneficence into a devil of relentless hate and cruelty? It cannot be. We shall find him dealing towards us in eternity as he does here. An eminent theologian says, "If mortal men kill the body temporally in their anger, it is like the immortal God to damn the soul eternally in his." "God holds sinners in his hands over the mouth of hell as so many spiders; and he is dreadfully provoked, and he not only hates them, but holds them in utmost contempt, and he will trample them beneath his feet with inexpressible fierceness, he will crush their blood out, and will make it fly so that it will sprinkle his garments and stain all his raiment."[21] Oh, ravings and blasphemies of theological bigotry, blinded with old creeds, inflamed with sectarian hate, soaked in the gall of bitterness, encompassed by absurd delusions, you know not what you say!

A daring writer of modern times observes that God can never say from the last tribunal, in any other than a limited and metaphorical sense, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," because that would not be doing as he would be done by. Saving the appearance of irreverence, we maintain his assertion to be just, based on impregnable morality. A recent religious poet describes Jesus, on descending into hell after his crucifixion, meeting Judas, and when he saw his pangs and heard his stifled sobs,

> "Pitying, Messiah gazed, and had forgiven,
> But Justice her eternal bar opposed."[22]

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[20] For these and several other quotations we are indebted to the Rev. T. J. Sawyer's work, entitled "Endless Punishment: its Origin and Grounds Examined."

[21] Edwards's Works, vol. vii. p. 499.

[22] Lord, Christ in Hades.

The instinctive sentiment is worthy of Jesus, but the deliberate thought is worthy of Calvin. Why is it so calmly assumed that God *cannot* pardon, and that therefore sinners must be given over to endless pains? By what proofs is so tremendous a conclusion supported? Is it not a gratuitous fiction of theologians? The exemplification of God's character and conduct given in the spirit, teachings, and deeds of Christ is full of a free mercy, an eager charity that rushes forward to forgive and embrace the sinful and wretched wanderers. He is a very different being whom the evangelist represents saying of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," from Him whom Professor Park describes "drawing his sword on Calvary and smiting down his Son!"

Why may not pardon from unpurchased grace be vouchsafed as well after death as before? What moral conditions alter the case then? Ah! it is only the metaphysical theories of the theologians that have altered the case in their fancies and made it necessary for them to limit probation. The attributes of God are laws, his modes of action are the essentialities of his being, the same in all the worlds of boundless extension and all the ages of endless duration. How far some of the theologians have perverted the simplicity of the gospel, or rather how utterly they have strayed from it, may be seen when we remember that Christ said concerning little children, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," and then compare with this declaration such a statement as this:—"Reprobate infants are vipers of vengeance which Jehovah will hold over hell in the tongs of his wrath, till they writhe up and cast their venom in his face." We deliberately assert that no depraved, insane, pagan imagination ever conceived of a fiend malignant and horrible enough to be worthily compared with this *Christian* conception of God. Edwards repeatedly says, in his two sermons on the "Punishment of the Wicked" and "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," "You cannot stand an instant before an infuriated tiger even: what, then, will you do when God rushes against you in all his wrath?" Is this Christ's Father?

The God we worship is "the Father of lights, with whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift." It is the Being referred to by the Savior when he said, in exultant trust and love, "I am not alone; for the Father is with me." It is the infinite One to whom the Psalmist says, "Though I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." If God is in hell, there must be mercy and hope there, some gleams of alleviation and promise there, surely; even as the Lutheran creed says that "early on Easter morning, before his resurrection, Christ showed himself to the damned in hell." If God is in hell, certainly it must be to soothe, to save. "Oh, no," says the popular theologian. Let us quote his words. "Why is God here? To keep the tortures of the damned freshly plied, and to see that no one ever escapes!" Can the climax of horror and blasphemy

any further go? How much more reasonable, more moral and Christ-like, to say, with one of the best authors of our time,—

> "What hell may be I know not: this I know:—
> I cannot lose the presence of the Lord:
> One arm—humility—takes hold upon
> His dear Humanity; the other—love—
> Clasps his Divinity: so, where I go
> He goes; and better fire-wall'd Hell with him
> Than golden-gated Paradise without."

The irreconcilableness of the common doctrine of endless misery with any worthy idea of God is made clear by a process of reasoning whose premises are as undeniable as its logic is irrefragable and its conclusion consolatory. God is infinite justice and goodness. His purpose in the creation, therefore, must be the diffusion and triumph of holiness and blessedness. God is infinite wisdom and power. His design, therefore, must be fulfilled. Nothing can avail to thwart the ultimate realization of all his intentions. The rule of his omnipotent love pervades infinitude and eternity as a shining leash of law whereby he holds every child of his creation in ultimate connection with his throne, and will sooner or later bring even the worst soul to a returning curve from the career of its wildest orbit. In the realm and under the reign of a paternal and omnipotent God every being must be salvable. Remorse itself is a recoil which may fling the penitent into the lap of forgiving love. Any different thought appears narrow, cruel, heathen. The blackest fiend that glooms the midnight air of hell, bleached through the merciful purgation of sorrow and loyalty, may become a white angel and be drawn into heaven.

Lavater writes of himself,—and the same is true of many a good man,—"I embraced in my heart all that is called man, past, present, and future times and nations, the dead, the damned, even Satan. I presented them all to God with the warmest wishes that he would have mercy upon all." This is the true spirit of a good man. And is man better than his Maker? We will answer that question, and leave this head of the discussion, by presenting an Oriental apologue.

God once sat on his inconceivable throne, and far around him, rank after rank, angels and archangels, seraphim and cherubim, resting on their silver wings and lifting their dazzling brows, rose and swelled, with the splendors of an illimitable sea of immortal beings, gleaming and fluctuating to the remotest borders of the universe. The anthem of their praise shook the pillars of the creation, and filled the vault of heaven with a pulsing flood of harmony. When, as they closed their hymn, stole up, faint heard, as from some most distant region of all space, in dim accents humbly rising, a responsive "Amen." God asked Gabriel, "Whence comes that Amen?" The hierarchic peer replied, "It rises from the damned in hell." God took, from where it hung above his seat, the key that unlocks the forty thousand doors of hell, and, giving it to Gabriel, bade him go release them. On wings of light sped the enraptured messenger, rescued the millions of the lost, and, just as they were,

covered all over with the traces of their sin, filth, and woe, brought them straight up into the midst of heaven. Instantly they were transformed, clothed in robes of glory, and placed next to the throne; and henceforth, for evermore, the dearest strain to God's ear, of all the celestial music, was that borne by the choir his grace had ransomed from hell. And, because there is no envy or other selfishness in heaven, this promotion sent but new thrills of delight and gratitude through the heights and depths of angelic life.

We come now to the last class of reasons for disbelieving the dogma of eternal damnation, namely, those furnished by the principles of human nature and the truths of human experience. The doctrine, as we think can be clearly shown, is literally incredible to the human mind and literally intolerable to the human heart. In the first place, it is, viewed in the abstract, absolutely incredible because it is inconceivable: no man can possibly grasp and appreciate the idea. The nearest approximation to it ever made perhaps is in De Quincey's gorgeous elaboration of the famous Hindu myth of an enormous rock finally worn away by the brushing of a gauze veil; and that is really no approximation at all, since an incommensurable chasm always separates the finite and the infinite. John Foster says, "It is infinitely beyond the highest archangel's faculty to apprehend a thousandth part of the horror of the doom to eternal damnation." The Buddhists, who believe that the severest sentence passed on the worst sinner will be brought to an end and his redemption be attained, use the following illustration of the staggering periods that will first elapse. A small yoke is thrown into the ocean and borne about in every direction by the various winds. Once in a hundred thousand years a blind tortoise rises to the surface of the water. Will the time ever come when that tortoise shall so rise up that its neck shall enter the hole of the yoke? It may, but the time required cannot be told; and it is equally difficult for the unwise man, who has entered one of the great hells, to obtain deliverance. There is a remarkable specimen of the attempt to set forth the idea of endless misery, by Suso, a mystic preacher who flourished several centuries ago. It runs thus. "O eternity, what art thou? Oh, end without end! O father, and mother, and all whom we love! May God be merciful unto you for evermore! for we shall see you no more to love you; we must be separated forever! O separation, everlasting separation, how painful art thou! Oh, the wringing of hands! Oh, sighing, weeping, and sobbing, unceasing howling and lamenting, and yet never to be pardoned! Give us a millstone, says the damned, as large as the whole earth, and so wide in circumference as to touch the sky all around, and let a little bird come in a hundred thousand years, and pick off a small particle of the stone, not larger than the tenth part of a grain of millet, and after another hundred thousand years let him come again, so that in ten hundred thousand years he would pick off as much as a grain of millet, we wretched sinners would desire nothing but that thus the stone might

have an end, and thus our pains also; yet even that cannot be."[28] But, after all the struggles of reason and all the illustrations of laboring imagination, the meaning of the phrase "eternal suffering in hell" remains remote, dim, unrealized, an abstraction in words. If we could adequately apprehend it,—if its full significance should burst upon us, as sometimes in fearful dreams the spaceless, timeless, phantasmal, reeling sense of the infinite seems to be threatening to break into the brain,—an annihilating shudder would seize and destroy the soul.

We say, therefore, that the doctrine of the eternity of future punishment is not believed as an intellectually conceived truth, because that is a metaphysical impossibility. But more: we affirm, in spite of the general belief in it publicly professed, that it is actually held by hardly any one as a practical vivid belief even within the limits wherein, as an intellectual conception, it is possible. When intellect and imagination do not fail, heart and conscience do, with sickened faintness and convulsive protest. In his direful poem on the Last Day, Young makes one of the condemned vainly beg of God to grant

> "This one, this slender, almost no, request:
> When I have wept a thousand lives away,
> When torment is grown weary of its prey,
> When I have raved of anguish'd years in fire
> Ten thousand thousands, let me then expire."

Such a thought, when confronted with any generous holy sentiment or with any worthy conception of the Divine character, is practically incredible. The men all around us in whose Church-creed such a doctrine is written down do not truly believe it. "They delude themselves," as Martineau well says, "with the mere fancy and image of a belief. The death of a friend who departs from life in heresy affects them in the same way as the loss of another whose creed was unimpeachable: while the theoretic difference is infinite, the practical is virtually nothing." Who that had a child, parent, wife, brother, or other precious friend, condemned to be roasted to death by a slow fire, would not be frantic with agony? But there are in the world literally millions on millions, some of whose nearest and dearest ones have died under circumstances which, by their professed creeds, can leave no doubt that they must roast in the fires of hell in an anguish unutterably fiercer, and for eternity, and yet they go about as smilingly, engage in the battle for money, in the race for fame, in all the vain shows and frivolous pleasures of life, as eagerly and as gayly as others. How often do we see the literal truth of this exemplified! It is clear they do not believe in the dogma to whose technical terms they formally subscribe.

A small proportion of its professors do undeniably believe the doctrine so far as it can be sanely believed; and accordingly the world is to them robed in a sable shroud, and life is an awful mockery, under a flashing

[28] Hagenbach, Dogmengeschichte, sect. 210.

surface of sports concealing a bottomless pit of horror. Every observing person has probably known some few in his life who, in a degree, really believed the common notions concerning hell, and out of whom, consequently, all geniality, all bounding impulses, all magnanimous generosities, were crushed, and their countenances wore the perpetual livery of mourning, despair, and misanthropy. We will quote the confessions of two persons who may stand as representatives of the class of sincere believers in the doctrine. The first is a celebrated French preacher of a century and a half ago, the other a very eminent American divine of the present day. Saurin says, in his great sermon on Hell, "I sink under the weight of this subject, and I find in the thought a mortal poison which diffuseth itself into every period of my life, rendering society tiresome, nourishment insipid, pleasure disgustful, and life itself a cruel bitter." Albert Barnes writes, "In the distress and anguish of my own spirit, I confess I see not one ray to disclose to me the reason why man should suffer to all eternity. I have never seen a particle of light thrown on these subjects that has given a moment's ease to my tortured mind. It is all dark—dark—dark to my soul; and I cannot disguise it."

Such a state of mind is the legitimate result of an endeavor sincerely to grasp and hold the popularly professed belief. So often as that endeavor reaches a certain degree of success, and the idea of an eternal hell is reduced from its vagueness to an embraced conception, the overfraught heart gives way, the brain, stretched on too high a tension, reels, madness sets in, and one more case is added to that list of maniacs from religious causes which, according to the yearly reports of insane-asylums, forms so large a class. Imagine what a vast and sudden change would come over the spirit and conduct of society if nineteen-twentieths of Christendom believed that at the end of a week a horrible influx of demons, from some insurgent region, would rush into our world and put a great majority of our race to death in excruciating tortures! But the doctrine of future punishment professed by nineteen-twentieths of Christendom is, if true, an evil incomparably worse than that, though every element of its dreadfulness were multiplied by millions beyond the power of numeration; and yet all goes on as quietly, the most of these fancied believers live as chirpingly, as if heaven were sure for everybody! Of course in their hearts they do not believe the terrific formula which drops so glibly from their tongues.

Again: it is a fatal objection to the doctrine in question that if it be true it must destroy the happiness of the saved and fill all heaven with sympathetic woe. Jesus teaches that "there is joy in heaven over every sinner that repenteth." By a moral necessity, then, there is sorrow in heaven over the wretched, lost soul. That sorrow, indeed, may be alleviated, if not wholly quenched, by the knowledge that every retributive pang is remedial, and that God's glorious design will one day be fully crowned in the redemption of the last prodigal. But what shall solace or end it if they know that hell's borders are to be enlarged and to rage with

avenging misery forever? The good cannot be happy in heaven if they are to see the ascending smoke and hear the resounding shrieks of a hell full of their brethren, the children of a common humanity, among whom are many of their own nearest relatives and dearest friends.

True, a long list of Christian writers may be cited as maintaining that this is to be a principal element in the felicity of the redeemed, gloating over the tortures of the damned, singing the song of praise with redoubled emphasis as they see their parents, their children, their former bosom companions, writhing and howling in the fell extremities of torture. Thomas Aquinas says, "That the saints may enjoy their beatitude and the grace of God more richly, a perfect sight of the punishment of the damned is granted to them."[24] Especially did the Puritans seem to revel in this idea, that "the joys of the blessed were to be deepened and sharpened by constant contrast with the sufferings of the damned." One of them thus expresses the delectable thought:—"The sight of hell-torments will exalt the happiness of the saints forever, as a sense of the opposite misery always increases the relish of any pleasure." But perhaps Hopkins caps the climax of the diabolical pyramid of these representations, saying of the wicked, "The smoke of their torment shall ascend up in the sight of the blessed for ever and ever, and serve, as a most clear glass always before their eyes, to give them a bright and most affecting view. This display of the Divine character will be most entertaining to all who love God, will give them the highest and most ineffable pleasure. Should the fire of this eternal punishment cease, it would in a great measure obscure the light of heaven and put an end to a great part of the happiness and glory of the blessed."[25] That is to say, in plain terms, the saints, on entering their final state of bliss in heaven, are converted into a set of unmitigated fiends, out-sataning Satan, finding their chief delight in forever comparing their own enjoyments with the pangs of the damned, extracting morsels of surpassing relish from every convulsion or shriek of anguish they see or hear. It is all an exquisite piece of gratuitous horror arbitrarily devised to meet a logical exigency of the theory its contrivers held. When charged that the knowledge of the infinite woe of their friends in hell must greatly affect the saints, the stern old theologians, unwilling to recede an inch from their dogmas, had the amazing hardihood to declare that, so far from it, on the contrary their wills would so blend with God's that the contemplation of this suffering would be a source of ecstasy to them. It is doubly a blank assumption of the most daring character, first assuming, by an unparalleled blasphemy, that God himself will take delight in the pangs of his creatures, and secondly assuming, by a violation of the laws of human nature and of every principle of morals, that the elect will do so too. In this world a man actuated by such a spirit would be styled a devil. On entering

[24] Summa, pars iii., Suppl. Qu. 93, art. i.
[25] Park, Memoir of Hopkins, pp. 201, 202.

heaven, what magic shall work such a demoniacal change in him? There is not a word, direct or indirect, in the Scriptures to warrant the dreadful notion; nor is there any reasonable explanation or moral justification of it given by any of its advocates, or indeed conceivable. The monstrous hypothesis cannot be true. Under the omnipotent, benignant government of a paternal God, each change of character in his chosen children, as they advance, must be for the better, not for the worse.

We once heard a father say, running his fingers the while among the golden curls of his child's hair, "If I were in heaven, and saw my little daughter in hell, should not I be rushing down there after her?" There spoke the voice of human nature; and that love cannot be turned to hatred in heaven, but must grow purer and intenser there. The doctrine which makes the saints pleased with contemplating the woes of the damned, and even draw much of their happiness from the contrast, is the deification of the absolute selfishness of a demon. Human nature, even when left to its uncultured instincts, is bound to far other and nobler things. Radbod, one of the old Scandinavian kings, after long resistance, finally consented to be baptized. After he had put one foot into the water, he asked the priest if he should meet his forefathers in heaven. Learning that they, being unbaptized pagans, were victims of endless misery, he drew his foot back, and refused the rite,—choosing to be with his brave ancestors in hell rather than to be in heaven with the Christian priests. And, speaking from the stand-point of the highest refinement of feeling and virtue, who that has a heart in his bosom would not say, "Heaven can be no heaven to me, if I am to look down on the quenchless agonies of all I have loved here!" Is it not strictly true that the thought that even one should have endless woe

> "Would cast a shadow on the throne of God
> And darken heaven"?

If a monarch, possessing unlimited power over all the earth, had condemned one man to be stretched on a rack and be freshly plied with incessant tortures for a period of fifty years, and if everybody on earth could hear his terrible shrieks by day and night, though they were themselves all, with this sole exception, blessed with perfect happiness,—would not the whole human race, from Spitzbergen to Japan, from Rio Janeiro to Liberia, rise in a body and go to implore the king's clemency for the solitary victim? So, if hell had but one tenant doomed to eternal anguish, a petition reaching from Sirius to Alcyone, signed by the universe of moral beings, borne by a convoy of angels representing every star in space, would be laid and unrolled at the foot of God's throne, and He would read thereon this prayer:—"FORGIVE HIM, AND RELEASE HIM, WE BESEECH THEE, O GOD." And can it be that every soul in the universe is better than the Maker and Father of the universe?

The popular doctrine of eternal torment threatening nearly all our race is refuted likewise by the impossibility of any general observance of the obligations morally and logically consequent from it. In the first

place, as the world is constituted, and as life goes on, the great majority of men are upon the whole happy, evidently were meant to be happy. But every believer of the doctrine in debate is bound to be unutterably wretched. If he has any gleam of generous sentiment or touch of philanthropy in his bosom, if he is not a frozen petrifaction of selfishness or an incarnate devil, how can he look on his family, friends, neighbors, fellow-citizens, fellow-beings, in the light of his faith seeing them quivering over the dizzy verge of a blind probation and momentarily dropping into the lake of fire and brimstone that burns forever,—how can he do this without being ceaselessly stung with wretchedness and crushed with horror by the perception? For a man who appreciatingly believes that hell is directly under our meadows, streets, and homes, and that nine-tenths of the dead are in it, and that nine-tenths of the living soon will be,—for such a man to be happy and jocose is as horrible as it would be for a man, occupying the second story of a house, to light it up brilliantly with gas, and make merry with his friends, eating tidbits, sipping wine, and tripping it on the light fantastic toe to the strains of gay music, while, immediately under him, men, women, and children, including his own parents and his own children, were stretched on racks, torn with pincers, lacerated with surgical instruments, cauterized, lashed with whips of fire, their half-suppressed shrieks and groans audibly rising through the floor!

Secondly, if the doctrine be true, then all unnecessary worldly enterprises, labors, and studies should at once cease. One moment on earth, and then, accordingly as we spend that moment, an eternity in heaven or in hell: in heaven, if we succeed in placating God by a sound belief and ritual proprieties; in hell, if we are led astray by philosophy, nature, and the attractions of life! On these suppositions, what time have we for any thing but reciting our creed, meditating on the atonement, and seeking to secure an interest for ourselves with God by flouting at our carnal reason, praying in church, and groaning, "Lord, Lord, have mercy on us miserable sinners"? What folly, what mockery, to be searching into the motions of the stars, and the occult forces of matter, and the other beautiful mysteries of science! There will be no astronomy in hell, save vain speculations as to the distance between the nadir of the damned and the zenith of the saved; no chemistry in hell, save the experiments of infinite wrath in distilling new torture-poisons in the alembics of memory and depositing fresh despair-sediments in the crucibles of hope. If Calvin's doctrine be true, let no book be printed, save the "Westminster Catechism;" no calculation be ciphered, save how to "solve the problem of damnation;" no picture be painted, save "pictures of hell;" no school be supported, save "schools of theology;" no business be pursued, save "the business of salvation." What have men who are in imminent peril, who are in truth almost infallibly sure, of being eternally damned the next instant, —what have they to do with science, literature, art, social ambition, or commerce? Away with them all! Lures of the devil to snare souls are

they! The world reflecting from every corner the lurid glare of hell, who can do any thing else but shudder and pray? "Who could spare any attention for the vicissitudes of cotton and the price of shares, for the merits of the last opera and the bets upon the next election, if the actors in these things were really swinging in his eye over such a verge as he affects to see?"

Thirdly, those who believe the popular theory on this subject are bound to live in cheap huts, on bread and water, that they may devote to the sending of missionaries among the heathen every cent of money they can get beyond that required for the bare necessities of life. If our neighbor were perishing of hunger at our door, it would be our duty to share with him even to the last crust we had. How much more, then, seeing millions of our poor helpless brethren sinking ignorantly into the eternal fires of hell, are we bound to spare no possible effort until the conditions of salvation are brought within the reach of every one! An American missionary to China said, in a public address after his return, "Fifty thousand a day go down to the fire that is not quenched. Six hundred millions more are going the same road. Should you not think at least once a day of the fifty thousand who that day sink to the doom of the lost?" The American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions say, "To send the gospel to the heathen is a work of great exigency. Within the last thirty years a whole generation of five hundred millions have gone down to eternal death." Again: the same Board say, in their tract entitled "The Grand Motive to Missionary Effort," "The heathen are involved in the ruins of the apostasy, and are expressly doomed to perdition. Six hundred millions of deathless souls on the brink of hell! What a spectacle!" How a man who thinks the heathen are thus sinking to hell by wholesale through ignorance of the gospel can live in a costly house, crowded with luxuries and splendors, spending every week more money on his miserable body than he gives in his whole life to save the priceless souls for which he says Christ died, is a problem admitting but two solutions. Either his professed faith is an unreality to him, or else he is as selfish as a demon and as hard-hearted as the nether millstone. If he really believed the doctrine, and had a human heart, he must feel it to be his duty to deny himself every indulgence and give his whole fortune and earnings to the missionary fund. And when he had given all else, he ought to give himself, and go to pagan lands, proclaiming the means of grace until his last breath. If he does not that, he is inexcusable.

Should he attempt to clear himself of this obligation by adopting the theory of predestination, which asserts that all men were unconditionally elected from eternity, some to heaven, others to hell, so that no effort can change their fate, logical consistency reduces him to an alternative more intolerable in the eyes of conscience and common sense than the other was. For by this theory the gates of freedom and duty are hoisted, and the dark flood of antinomian consequences rushes in. All

things are fated. Let men yield to every impulse and wish. The result is fixed. We have nothing to do. Good or evil, virtue or crime, alter nothing.

Fourthly, if the common doctrine of eternal damnation be true, then surely no more children should be brought into the world: it is a duty to let the race die out and cease. He who begets a child, forcing him to run the fearful risk of human existence, with every probability of being doomed to hell at the close of earth, commits a crime before whose endless consequences of horror the guilt of fifty thousand deliberate murders would be as nothing. For, be it remembered, an *eternity in hell* is an *infinite* evil; and therefore the crime of thrusting such a fate on a single child, with the unasked gift of being, is a crime admitting of no just comparison. Rather than populate an everlasting hell with human vipers and worms, a hell whose fires, alive and wriggling with ghastly shapes of iniquity and anguish, shall swell with a vast accession of fresh recruits from every generation,—rather than this, let the sacred lights on the marriage-altar go out, no more bounding forms of childhood be seen in cottage or hall, the race grow old, thin out, and utterly perish, all happy villages be overgrown, all regal cities crumble down, and this world roll among the silent stars henceforth a globe of blasted deserts and rank wildernesses, resonant only with the shrieks of the wind, the yells of wild beasts, and the thunder's crash.

Fifthly, there is one more conclusion of moral duty deducible from the prevalent theory of infinite torment. It is this. God ought not to have permitted Adam to have any children. Let us not seem presumptuous and irreverent in speaking thus. We are merely reasoning on the popular theory of the theologians, not on any supposition of our own or on any truth; and by showing the absurdity and blasphemy of the moral consequences and duties flowing from that theory, the absurdity, blasphemy, and incredibility of the theory itself appear. We are not responsible for the irreverence, but they are responsible for it who charge God with the iniquity which we repel from his name. If the sin of Adam must entail total depravity and an infinite penalty of suffering on all his posterity, who were then certainly innocent because not in existence, then, we ask, why did not God cause the race to stop with Adam, and so save all the needless and cruel woe that would otherwise surely be visited on the lengthening line of generations? Or, to go still further back, why did he not, foreseeing Adam's fall, refrain from creating even him? There was no necessity laid on God of creating Adam. No positive evil would have been done by omitting to create him. An infinite evil, multiplied by the total number of the lost, was done by creating him. Why, then, was he not left in peaceful nonentity? On the Augustinian theory we see no way of escaping this awful dilemma. Who can answer the question which rises to heaven from the abyss of the damned?—

> "Father of mercies, why from silent earth
> Didst thou awake and curse me into birth,
> Push into being a reverse of thee,
> And animate a clod with misery?"

Satan is a sort of sublime Guy Fawkes, lurking in the infernal cellar, preparing the train of that stupendous Gunpowder Plot by which he hopes, on the day of judgment, to blow up the world-parliament of unbelievers with a general petard of damnation. Will the King connive at this nefarious prowler and permit him to carry out his design?

The doctrine of eternal damnation, as it has prevailed in the Christian Church, appears to the natural man so unreasonable, immoral, and harrowingly frightful, when earnestly contemplated, that there have always been some who have shrunk from its representations and sought to escape its conclusions. Many of its strongest advocates in every age have avowed it to be a fearful mystery, resting on the inscrutable sovereignty of God, and beyond the power of man's faculties to explain and justify. The dogma has been eluded in two ways. Some have believed in the annihilation of the wicked after they should have undergone just punishment proportioned to their sins. This supposition has had a considerable number of advocates. It was maintained, among others, by Arnobius, at the close of the third century, by the Socini, by Dr. Hammond, and by some of the New England divines.[26] All that need be said in opposition to it is that it is an arbitrary device to avoid the intolerable horror of the doctrine of endless misery, unsupported by proof, extremely unsatisfactory in many of its bearings, and really not needed to achieve the consummation desired.

Others have more wisely maintained that all will finally be saved: however severely and long they may justly suffer, they will at last all be mercifully redeemed by God and admitted to the common heaven. Defenders of the doctrine of ultimate universal salvation have appeared from the beginning of Christian history.[27] During the last century and a half their numbers have rapidly increased.[28] A dignified and influential class of theologians, represented by such names as Tillotson, Bahrdt, and Less, say that the threats of eternal punishment, in the Scriptures, are exaggerations to deter men from sin, and that God will not really execute them, but will mercifully abate and limit them.[29] Another class of theologians, much more free, consistent, and numerous, base their reception of the doctrine of final restoration on figurative explanations of the scriptural language seemingly opposed to it, and on arguments drawn from the character of God, from reason, and from morals. This view of the subject is spreading fast All independent, genial, and cultivated thought naturally leads to it. The central principles of the gospel necessitate it. The spirit of the age cries for it. Before it the old antagonistic dogma must fall and perish from respect. Dr. Spring says,

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[26] This theory has been resuscitated and advocated within a few years by quite a number of writers, among whom may be specified the Rev. C. F. Hudson, author of "Debt and Grace," a learned, earnest, and able work, pervaded by an admirable spirit.

[27] Ballou, Ancient History of Universalism.

[28] Whittemore, Modern History of Universalism.

[29] Knapp, Christian Theology, Woods's translation, sect. 158.

in reference to the hopeless condemnation of the wicked to hell, "It puts in requisition all our confidence in God to justify this procedure of his government."[30]

A few devout and powerful minds have sought to avoid the gross horrors and unreasonableness of the usual view of this subject, by changing the mechanical and arithmetical values of the terms for spiritual and religious values. They give the word "eternity" a qualitative instead of a quantitative meaning. The everlasting woe of the damned consists not in mechanical inflictions of torture and numerical increments of duration, but in spiritual discord, alienation from God, a wretched state of being, with which times and spaces have nothing to do.[31]

How much better were it for the advocates of the popular theory, instead of forcing their moral nature to bear up against the awful perplexities and misgivings as to the justice and goodness of God necessarily raised in them whenever they really face the dark problems of their system of faith,[32] resolutely to ask whether there are any such problems in the actual government of God, or anywhere else, except in their own "Bodies of Divinity"! It is an extremely unfortunate and discreditable evasion of responsibility when any man, especially when a teacher, takes for granted the received formularies handed down to him, and, instead of honestly analyzing their genuine significance and probing their foundations to see if they be good and true, spends his genius in contriving excuses and supports for them.

It is the very worst policy at this day to strive to fasten the dogma of eternal misery to the New Testament. If both must be taken or rejected together,—an alternative which we emphatically deny,—what sincere and earnest thinker now, whose will is unterrifiedly consecrated to truth, can be expected to hesitate long? The doctrine is sustained in repute at present principally for two reasons. First, because it has been transmitted to us from the Church of the past as the established and authoritative doctrine. It is yet technically current and popular because it has been so: that is, it retains its place simply by right of possession. The question ought to be sincerely and universally raised whether it is true or false. Then it will swiftly lose its prestige and disappear. Secondly, it is upheld and patronized by many as a useful instrument for frightening the people and through their fears deterring them from sin. We have ourselves heard clergymen of high reputation say that it would never do to admit, before the people, that there is any chance whatever of penitence and salvation beyond the grave, because they would be sure to abuse the hope as a sort of permission to indulge and continue in sin. Thus to ignore the only solemn and worthy standard of judging an abstract doctrine, namely, Is it a truth or a falsehood? and put it solely

[30] Glory of Christ, vol. ii. p. 268.

[31] Lange, Positive Dogmatik, sect. 131: Die Aeonen der Verdammten. Maurice, Theological Essays: Future Punishment.

[32] See Beecher's Conflict of Ages, b. ii. ch. 4, 13.

on grounds of working expediency, is disgraceful, contemptible, criminal. Watts exposes with well-merited rebuke a gross instance of pious fraud in Burnet, who advised preachers to teach the eternity of future punishment whether they believed it or not.[33] It is by such a course that error and superstition reign, that truckling conformity, intellectual disloyalty, moral indifference, vice, and infidelity, abound. It is practical atheism, debauchery of conscience, and genuine spiritual death. Besides, the course we are characterizing is actually as inexpedient in practice as it is wrong in theory. Experience and observation show it to be as pernicious in its result as it is immoral in its origin. Is a threat efficacious over men in proportion to its intrinsic terror, or in proportion as it is personally felt and feared by them? Do the menacing penalties of a sin deter a man from it in proportion to their awfulness, or in proportion to his belief in their reality and unavoidableness? Eternal misery would be a threat of infinite frightfulness, *if it were realized and believed.* But it is incredible. Some reject it with indignation and an impetuous recoil that sends them much too far towards antinomianism. Others let it float in the spectral background of imagination, the faint reflection of a disagreeable and fading dream. To all it is an unreality. An earnest belief in a sure retribution exactly limited to desert must be far more effective. If an individual had a profound conviction that for every sin he committed he must suffer a million centuries of inexpressible anguish,—realizing that thought, would he commit a sin?

If he cannot appreciate that enormous penalty, much less can he the infinite one, which is far more likely to shade off and blur out into a vague and remote nothing. Truth is an expression of God's will, which we are bound exclusively to accept and employ regardless of consequences. When we do that, *God*, the author of truth, is himself solely responsible for the consequences. But when, thinking we can devise something that will work better, we use some theory of our own, *we* are responsible for the consequences. Let every one beware how he ventures to assume that dread responsibility. It is surely folly as well as sin. For nothing can work so well as truth, the simple, calm, living truth, which is a chime in the infinite harmony of morals and things. It is only the morbid melodramatic tastes and incompetencies of an unfinished culture that make men think otherwise. The magnificent poetry of the day of judgment—an audience of five hundred thousand millions gathered in one throng as the Judge rises to pronounce the last oration over a dissolving universe—takes possession of the fancy, and people conceive it so vividly, and are so moved by it, that they think they see it to be true.

Grant for a moment the truth of the conception of hell as a physical world of fiery torture full of the damned. Suppose the scene of probation over, hell filled with its prisoners shut up, banished and buried in the blackest deeps of space. Can it be left there forever? Can it be that the

[33] World to Come, Disc. XIII.

roar of its furnace shall rage on, and the wail of the execrable anguish ascend, eternally? Endeavor to realize in some faint degree what these questions mean, and then answer. If anybody can find it in his heart or in his head to say yes, and can gloat over the idea, and wish to have it continually brandished *in terrorem* over the heads of the people, one feels impelled to declare that he of all men the most needs to be converted to the Christian spirit. An unmitigated hell of depravity, pain, and horror, would be Satan's victory and God's defeat; for the very wish of a Satanic being must be for the everlasting prevalence of sin and wretchedness. As above the weltering hosts of the lost, each dreadful second, the iron clock of hell ticked the thunder-word "eternity," how would the devil on his sulphurous dais shout in triumph! But if such a world of fire, crowded with the writhing damned, ever existed at all, could it exist forever?

Could the saved be happy and passive in heaven when the muffled shrieks of their brethren, faint from the distance, fell on their ears? In tones of love and pity that would melt the very mountains, they would plead with God to pardon and free the lost. Many a mourning lover would realize the fable of the Thracian poet who wandered into Hades searching for his Eurydice; many a heroic son would emulate the legend of the Grecian god who burst through the iron walls of Tartarus and rescued his mother, the unfortunate Semele, and led her in triumph up to heaven.

Could the angels be contented when they contemplated the far-off lurid orb and knew the agonies that fed its conscious conflagration? Their gentle bosoms would be racked with commiserating pangs, they would fly down and hover around that anguished world, to moisten its parched tongues with the dropping of their sympathetic tears and to cool its burning brows with the fanning of their wings.

Could Christ be satisfied? he who once was rich but for our sakes became poor? he whose loving soul breathed itself forth in the tender words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"? he who poured his blood on Judea's awful summit, be satisfied? Not until he had tried the efficacy of ten thousand fresh crucifixions, on as many new Calvaries, would he rest.

Could God suffer it? God! with the full rivers of superfluous bliss rolling around thy throne, couldst thou look down and hear thy creatures calling thee Father, and see them plunging in a sea of fire eternally—eternally—eternally—and never speak the pardoning word? It would not be like thee, it would be like thine adversary, to do that. Not so wouldst thou do. But if Satan had millions of prodigals, snatched from the fold of thy family, shut up and tortured in hell, paternal yearnings after them would fill thy heart. Love's smiles would light the dread abyss where they groan. Pity's tears would fall over it, shattered by the radiance into rainbows. And through that illumination THOU wouldst descend, marching beneath the arch of its triumphal glories to the rescue of thy children! Therefore we rest in hope, knowing that "Thou wilt not *leave* our souls in hell."

CHAPTER V.

THE FIVE THEORETIC MODES OF SALVATION.

THE conceptions and fore-feelings of immortality which men have entertained have generally been accompanied by a sense of uncertainty in regard to the nature of that inheritance,—by a perception of contingent conditions, yielding a twofold fate of bliss and woe, poised on the perilous hinge of circumstance or freedom. Almost as often and profoundly, indeed, as man has thought that he should live hereafter, that idea has been followed by the belief that if, on the one hand, salvation gleamed for him in the possible sky, on the other hand perdition yawned for him in the probable abyss. Heaven and Hell are the light-side and shade-side of the doctrine of a future life. Few questions are more interesting, as none can be more important, than that inquiry which is about the salvation of the soul. The inherent reach of this inquiry, and the extent of its philosophical and literary history, are great. But, by arranging under certain heads the various principal schemes of salvation which Christian teachers have from time to time presented for popular acceptance, and passing them before the mind in order and in mutual lights, we can very much narrow the space required to exhibit and discuss them. When the word "salvation" occurs in the following investigation, it means—unless something different be shown by the context—the removal of the soul's doom to misery beyond the grave, and the securing of its future blessedness. Heaven and hell are terms employed with wide latitude and fluctuating boundaries of literal and figurative meaning; but their essential force is simply a future life of wretchedness, a future life of joy; and salvation, in its prevailing theological sense, is the avoidance of that and the gaining of this. We shall not attempt to present the different theories of redemption in their historical order of development, or to give an exhaustive account of their diversified prevalence, but shall arrange them with reference to the most perspicuous exhibition of their logical contents and practical bearings.

The first scheme of Christian salvation to be noticed is the one by which it is represented that the interference and suffering of Christ, in itself, unconditionally saved all souls and emptied hell forever. This theory arose in the minds of those who received it as the natural and consistent completion of the view they held concerning the nature and consequences of the fall of Adam, the cause and extent of the lost state of man. Adam, as the federal head of humanity, represented and acted for his whole race: the responsibility of his decision rested, the conse-

quences of his conduct would legitimately descend, it was thought, upon all mankind. If he had kept himself obedient through that easy yet tremendous probation in Eden, he and all his children would have lived on earth eternally in perfect bliss. But, violating the commandment of God, the burden of sin, with its terrible penalty, fell on him and his posterity. Every human being was henceforth to be alien from the love of goodness and from the favor of God, hopelessly condemned to death and the pains of hell. The sin of Adam, it was believed, thoroughly corrupted the nature of man, and incapacitated him from all successful efforts to save his soul from its awful doom. The infinite majesty of God's will, the law of the universe, had been insulted by disobedience. The only just retribution was the suffering of an endless death. The adamantine sanctities of God's government made forgiveness impossible. Thus all men were lost, to be the prey of blackness, and fire, and the undying worm, through the remediless ages of eternity. Just then God had pity on the souls he had made, and himself came to the rescue. In the person of Christ, he came into the world as a man, and freely took upon himself the infinite debt of man's sins, by his death on the cross expiated all offences, satisfied the claims of offended justice, vindicated the inexpressible sacredness of the law, and, at the same time, opened a way by which a full and free reconciliation was extended to all. When the blood of Jesus flowed over the cross, it purchased the ransom of every sinner. As Jerome says, "it quenched the flaming sword at the entrance of Paradise." The weary multitude of captives rose from their bed, shook off the fetters and stains of the pit, and made the cope of heaven snowy with their white-winged ascent. The prison-house of the devil and his angels should be used no more to confine the guilty souls of men.[1] Their guilt was all washed away in the blood of the Lamb. Their spirits, without exception, should follow to the right hand of the Father, in the way marked out by the ascending Redeemer. This is the first form of Universalism,—the form in which it was held by several of the Fathers in the earlier ages of the Church, and by the pioneers of that doctrine in modern times. Cyril of Jerusalem says, "Christ went *into* the under-world *alone*, but came *out* with *many*."[2] Cyril of Alexandria says that when Christ ascended from the under-world he "emptied it, and left the devil there utterly alone."[3] The opinion that the whole population of Hades was released, is found in the lists of ancient heresies.[4] It was advanced by Clement, an Irish priest, antagonist of Boniface the famous Archbishop of Mentz, in the middle of the eighth century. He was deposed by the Council of Soissons, and afterwards anathematized by Pope Zachary. Gregory the Great also refers in one of his letters with extreme severity to two ecclesiastics, contemporaries of his own, who held the same belief. Indeed, this conclusion is a

[1] Doederlein, De Redemptione a Potestate Diaboli. In Opusc. Theolog.
[2] Catechesis xiv. 9. [3] De Festis Paschalibus, homilia vii. [4] Augustine, De Hæresibus, lxxix.

necessary result of a consistent development of the creed of the Orthodox Church, so called. By the sin of one, even Adam, through the working of absolute justice, hell became the portion of all, irrespective of any fault or virtue of theirs; so, by the voluntary sacrifice, the infinite atonement, of one, even Christ, through the unspeakable mercy of God, salvation was effected for all, irrespective of any virtue or fault of theirs. One member of the scheme is the exact counterpoise of the other; one doctrine cries out for and necessitates the other. Those who accept the commonly-received dogmas of original sin, total depravity, and universal condemnation entailed upon all men in lineal descent from Adam, and the dogmas of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Vicarious Atonement, are bound, by all the constructions of logic, to accept the scheme of salvation just set forth,—namely, that the death of Christ secured the deliverance of all unconditionally. We do not believe that doctrine, only because we do not believe the other associated doctrines out of which it springs and of whose system it is the complement. The reasons why we do not believe that our race fell into helpless depravity and ruin in the sin of the first man are, in essence, briefly these:—First, we have never been able to perceive any proof whatever of the truth of that dogma; and certainly the *onus probandi* rests on the side of such an assumption. It arose partially from a misinterpretation of the language of the Bible; and so far as it has a basis in Scripture, we are compelled by force of evidence to regard it as a Jewish adoption of a pagan error without authority. Secondly, this doctrinal system seems to us equally irreconcilable with history and with ethics: it seems to trample on the surest convictions of reason and conscience, and spurn the clearest principles of nature and religion,—to blacken and load the heart and doom of man with a mountain of gratuitous horror, and shroud the face and throne of God in a pall of wilful barbarity. How can men be guilty of a sin committed thousands of years before they were born, and deserve to be sent to hopeless hell for it? What justice is there in putting on one sinless head the demerits of a world of reprobates, and then letting the criminal go free because the innocent has suffered? A third objection to this whole view—an objection which, if sustained, will utterly annihilate it—is this:—It is quite possible that, momentous as is the part he has played in theology, the Biblical Adam is not at all a historical personage, but only a significant figment of poetry. The common belief of the most authoritative men of science, that the human race has existed on this earth for a vastly longer period than the Hebrew statement affirms, may yet be completely established. It may also yet be acknowledged that each distinct race of men had its own Adam.[5] Then the dogmatic theology, based on the fall of our entire race into perdition in its primary representative, will, of course, crumble.

[5] Burdach, Carus, Oken, Bayrhoffer, Agassiz. See Bunsen, Christianity and Mankind, vol. iv. p. 28; Nott and Gliddon, Types of Mankind, p. 338.

The second doctrine of Christian salvation is a modification and limitation of the previous one. This theory, like the former, presupposes that a burden of original sin and natural depravity transmitted from the first man had doomed, and, unless prevented in some supernatural manner, would forever press, all souls down to the realms of ruin and woe; also that an infinite graciousness in the bosom of the Godhead led Christ to offer himself as an expiation for the sins, an atoning substitute for the condemnation, of men. But, according to the present view, this interference of Christ did not by itself save the lost: it only removed the otherwise insuperable bar to forgiveness, and presented to a chosen portion of mankind the means of experiencing a condition upon the realization of which, in each individual case, the certainty of salvation depends. That condition is a mysterious conversion, stirring the depths of the soul through an inspired faith in personal election by the unchanging decree of God. The difference, then, in a word, between the two methods of salvation thus far explained, is this:—While both assume that mankind are doomed to death and hell in consequence of the sin of Adam, the one asserts that the interference of Christ of itself saved all souls, the other asserts that that interference cannot save any soul except those whom God, of his sovereign pleasure, had from eternity arbitrarily elected.[6] This scheme grew directly out of the dogma of fatalism, which sinks human freedom in Divine predestination. God having solely of his own will foreordained that a certain number of mankind should be saved, Christ died in order to pay the penalty of their sins and render it possible for them to be forgiven and taken into heaven without violating the awful bond of justice. The benefits of the atonement, therefore, are limited to the elect. Nor is this to be regarded as an act of severity; on the contrary, it is an act of unspeakable benevolence. For by the sin of Adam the whole race of men, without exception, were hateful to God, and justly sentenced to eternal damnation. When, consequently, he devised a plan of redemption by which he could himself bear the guilt, and suffer the agony, and pay the debt of a few, and thus ransom them from their doom, the reprobates who were left had no right to complain, but the chosen were a monument of disinterested love,—because all alike deserved the endless tortures of hell. According to this conception, all men being by their ancestral act and inherited nature irretrievably lost, God's arbitrary pleasure was the cause, Christ's voluntary death was the means, by which a certain number were to be saved. What individuals should compose this portion of the race, was determined from eternity beyond all contingencies. The effect of faith and conversion, and of the new birth, is not to save the soul, but simply to convince the soul that it is saved. That is to say, a regenerating belief and love is not the efficient *cause*, it is merely the revealed *assurance*, of salvation, proving to the soul that feels it, by the testimony of the Holy

[6] Confession of Faith of Westminster Divines, ch. iii. sect. 8.

Spirit, that it is of the chosen number. The preaching of the gospel is to be extended everywhere, not for the purpose of saving those who would otherwise be lost, but because its presentation will awaken in the elect, and in them alone, that responsive experience which will reveal their election to them, and make them sure of it, already foretasting it; though it is thought that no one can be saved who is ignorant of the gospel: it is mysteriously ordered that the terms of the covenant *shall be* preached to all the elect. There are correlated complexities, miracles, absurdities, inwrought with the whole theory, inseparable from it. The violence it does to nature, to thought, to love, to morals, its arbitrariness, its mechanical form, the wrenching exegesis by which alone it can be forced from the Bible,[1] its glaring partiality and eternal cruelty, are its sufficient refutation and condemnation. If the death of Christ has such wondrous saving efficacy, and nothing else has, what keeps him from dying again to convince the unbelieving and to save the lost? What man is there who, if he knew that, after thirty years of suffering terminated by a fearful death, he should rise again into boundless bliss and glory while rapt infinitude rung with the pæans of an applauding universe, and that by means of his humiliation he could redeem countless millions from eternal torture, would not with a joyous spring undertake the task? And is a common man better than Christ?

The third general plan of Christian salvation which we are to consider differs from the foregoing one in several essential particulars. It affirms the free will of man in opposition to a fatal predestination. It declares that the atonement is sufficient to redeem not only a portion of our race, but all who will put themselves in right spiritual relations with it. In a word, while it admits that some will actually be lost forever, it asserts that no one is *doomed* to be lost, but that the offer of pardon is made to every soul, and that every one has power to accept or reject it. The sacrifice of the incarnate Deity vindicated the majesty of the law, appeased the wrath of God, and purchased his saving favor towards all who, by a sound and earnest faith, seize the proffered justification, throw off all reliance on their own works, and present themselves before the throne of mercy clothed in the righteousness and sprinkled with the blood of Christ. Here the appropriation of the merits of Christ, through an orthodox and vivifying faith, is the real cause as well as the experimental assurance of salvation. This is free to all. As the brazen serpent was hoisted in the wilderness, and the scorpion-bitten Israelites invited to look on it and be healed, so the crucified God is lifted up, and all men, everywhere, are urged to kneel before him, accept his atonement, and thus enable his righteousness to be imputed to them, and their souls to be saved. The vital condition of salvation is an appropriating faith in the vicarious atonement. Without this no one can be saved. Thus with

[1] Schweizer, Die Lehre des Apostels Paulus vom erlösenden Tode Christi. Theologische Studien und Kritiken, Jahrg. 1858, heft 3.

one word and a single breath *whole nations and races* are whiffed into hell. All that the good-hearted Luther could venture to say of Cicero, whom he deeply admired and loved, was the kind ejaculation, "I *hope* God will be merciful to him!" To those who appreciate it with hostility, and look on all things in its light, the thought that there can be no salvation except by belief in the expiatory death of Christ, hopelessly dooming all the heathen,[8] and all infant children, unless baptized in a proxy faith,[9] builds an altar of blood among the stars and makes the universe reek with horror. Other crimes, though stained through with midnight dyes and heaped up to the brim of outrageous guilt, may be freely forgiven to him who comes heartily to credit the vicarious death of the Savior; but he who does not trust in that, though virtuous as man can be, must depart into the unappeasable fires. "Why this unintelligible crime of *not seeing* the atonement happens to be the only sin for which there is no atonement, it is impossible to say." Though this view of the method, extent, and conditions of redemption is less revolting and incredible than the other, still, it does not seem to us that any person whose mental and moral nature is unprejudiced, healthy, and enlightened, and who will patiently study the subject, can possibly accept either of them. The leading assumed doctrines common to them, out of which they severally spring, and on which they both rest, are not only unsupported by adequate proofs, but really have no evidence at all, and are absurd in themselves, confounding the broadest distinctions in morals, and subverting the best-established principles of natural religion.[10]

The fourth scheme of Christian salvation is that which predicates the power of insuring souls from hell solely of the Church. This is the sacramental theory. It is assumed that, in the state of nature subsequent to the transgression and fall of Adam, all men are alienated from God, and by the universal original sin universally exposed to damnation,—indeed, the helpless victims of eternal misery. In the fulness of time, Christ appeared, and offered himself to suffer in their stead to secure their deliverance. His death cancelled the whole sum of *original sin*, and *only that*, thus taking away the absolute impossibility of salvation, and leaving every man in the world free to stand or fall, incur hell or win heaven, by his personal merits. From that time any person who lived a perfectly holy life—which no man could find practically possible—thereby secured eternal blessedness; but the moment he fell into a single sin, however trivial, he sealed his condemnation: Christ's sacrifice, as was just said, merely removed the transmitted burden of original sin from all mankind, but made no provision for their personal sins, so that practically, all men being voluntary as well as hereditary sinners, their

[8] Bretschneider, Entwickelung der Dogmatik, sect. 112, Nos. 37–50.

[9] So affirmed by the Council of Carthage, Canon II.

[10] The violence done to moral reason by these views is powerfully exposed in Bushnell's Discourse on the Atonement: God in Christ, pp. 198–202.

condition was as bad as before: they were surely lost. To meet this state of the case, the Church, whose priests, it is claimed, are the representatives of Christ, and whose head is the vicegerent of God on earth, was empowered by the celebration of the *mass* to re-enact, as often as it pleased, the tragedy of the crucifixion. In this service Christ is supposed literally to be put to death afresh, and the merit of his substitutional sufferings is supposed to be placed to the account of the Church.[11] As Sir Henry Wotton says,—

"One rosy drop from Jesus' heart
Was worlds of seas to quench God's ire."

In one of the Decretals of Clement VI., called "Extravagants," it is asserted that "one drop of Christ's blood [*una guttula sanguinis*] being sufficient to redeem the whole human race, the remaining quantity which was shed in the garden and on the cross was left as a legacy to the Church, to be a treasure whence indulgences were to be drawn and administered by the Roman pontiffs." Furthermore, saints and martyrs, by their constant self-denial, voluntary sufferings, penances, and prayers, like Christ, do more good works than are necessary for their own salvation; and the balance of merit—the works of supererogation—is likewise accredited to the Church. In this way a great reserved fund of merits is placed at the disposal of the priests. At their pleasure they can draw upon this vicarious treasure and substitute it in place of the deserved penalties of the guilty, and thus absolve them and effect the salvation of their souls. All this dread machinery is in the sole power of the Church. Outside of her pale, heretics, heathen, all alike, are unalterably doomed to hell. But whoso will acknowledge her authority, confess his sins, receive the sacrament of baptism, partake of the eucharist, obey the priests, shall be infallibly saved. The Church declares that those who neglect to submit to her power and observe her rites are lost, by excommunicating such every year just before Easter, thereby typifying that they shall have no part in the resurrection and ascension. The scheme of salvation just exhibited we reject as alike unwarranted by the Scriptures, absurd to reason, absurd to conscience, fraught with evil practices, and traceable in history through the gradual and corrupt growths of the dogmatic policy of an interested body. There is not one text in the Bible which affords real argument, credit, or countenance to the haughty pretensions of a Church to retain or absolve guilt, to have the exclusive control of the tangible keys of heaven and hell. It is incredible to a free and intelligent mind that the opposing fates forever of hundreds of millions of men should turn on a mere accident of time and place, or at best on the moral contingence of their acknowledging or denying the doubtful authority of a tyrannical hierarchy,—a mere matter of form and profession, independent of their lives and characters, and of no spiritual worth at all. One

[11] Thomas Aquinas, Summa, Suppl. pars iii. qu. 25, art. 1.

is here reminded of a passage in Plutarch's Essay "How a Young Man ought to hear Poems." The lines in Sophocles which declare that the initiates in the Mysteries shall be happy in the future life, but that all others shall be wretched, having been read to Diogenes, he exclaimed, "What! Shall the condition of Pantæcion, the notorious robber, be better after death than that of Epaminondas, merely because he was initiated in the Mysteries?" It is also a shocking violence to common sense, and to all proper appreciation of spiritual realities, to imagine the gross mechanical transference of blame and merit mutually between the bad and the good, —as if moral qualities were not personal, but might be shifted about at will by pecuniary considerations, as the accounts in the debt and credit columns of a ledger. The theoretic falsities of such a scheme are as numerous and evident as its practical abuses have been enormous and notorious. How ridiculous this ritual *fetch* to snatch souls from perdition appears as stated by Julian against Augustine! "God and the devil, then, have entered into a covenant, that what is born the devil shall have, and what is baptized God shall have!"[12] We hesitate not to stake the argument on one question. If there be no salvation save by believing and accepting the sacraments with the authority of the Romanist or the Episcopalian Church, then less than one in a hundred thousand of the world's population thus far can be saved. Death steadily showers into hell, age after age, an overwhelming proportion of the souls of all mankind,—a rain-storm of agonized drops of immortality to feed and freshen the quenchless fires of damnation. Who can believe it, knowing what it is that he believes?

We advance *next* to a system of Christian salvation as remarkable for its simplicity, boldness, and instinctive benevolence as those we have previously examined are for complexity, unnaturalness, and severity. The theory referred to promises the natural and inevitable salvation of every created soul. It bases itself on two positions,—the denial that men are ever lost, except partially and temporarily, and the exhibition of the irresistible power, perfect wisdom, and infinite goodness of God. The advocates of this doctrine point first to observation and experience, and declare that no person is totally reprobate,—that every one is salvable; those most corrupt and abandoned to wickedness, unbelief, and hardness, have yet a spark that may be kindled, a fount that may be made to gush, unto the illumination and purification of the whole being. A stray word, an unknown influence, a breath of the Spirit, is continually effecting such changes, such salvations. True, there are many fettered by vices, torn by sins, ploughed by the caustic shares of remorse, lost to peaceful freedom, lost to spiritual joys, lost to the sweet, calm raptures of religious belief and love, and, in that sense, plunged in damnation. But this, they say, is the only hell there is. At the longest, it can endure

[12] Julian, lib. vi. ix.

but for the night of this life: deliverance and blessedness come with the morning dawn of a better world. Exact retributions are awarded to all iniquity *here;* so that at the termination of the present state there is nothing to prevent the flowing of an equal bliss impartially over all. The substantive faculties and forces of the soul are always good and right: only their action is perverted to evil.[13] This perversion will cease with the accidents of the present state; and thus death is the door to salvation. God's desires and intentions for his creatures, again they argue, must be purely gracious and blessed; for Nature, the Bible, and the Soul blend their ultimate teachings in one affirmation that he is Love. Being omnipotent and of perfect wisdom, nothing can withstand his decrees or thwart his plans. His purpose, of course, must be fulfilled. There is every thing to prove, and nothing, rightly understood, to disprove, that that purpose is the eternal blessedness of all his intelligent offspring after death. Therefore, they think they are justified in concluding, the laws of nature, God's regular habits and course of government, the normal arrangement and process of things, will of themselves work out the inevitable salvation of all mankind. After the uproar and darkness, the peril and fear, of a tempestuous night, the all-embracing smile of daylight gradually spreads over the world, and the turmoil silently subsides, and the scene sleeps. So after the sins and miseries, the condemnation and hell, of this state of existence, shall succeed the redemption, the holiness and happy peace, of heaven, into which all pass by the order of nature, the original and undisturbed arrangement of the creative Father. This view is advanced by some on grounds both of revelation and reason. It is the doctrine of those Beghards who taught that "there is neither hell nor purgatory; that no one is damned, neither Jew nor Saracen, because on the death of the body the soul returns to God."[14] But the proper doctrine of the Universalist denomination is founded directly on Scripture, and seems now to be simply the absolute certainty of final salvation for all. Balfour held that Christ, in obedience to the will of God, secures eternal life for all men in the most literal manner, by causing the resurrection of the dead from their otherwise endless sleep in the grave,—a doctrine nearly or quite fossil now.[15]

It will be noticed that by this view salvation is an unlimited necessity, not a contingency,—a boon thrown to all, and which no one has power to reject:—

> "The road to heaven is broader than the world,
> And deeper than the kingdoms of the dead;
> And up its ample paths the nations tread
> With all their banners furl'd."

This theory contains elements, it seems to us, both of truth and false-

[13] Universalist Quarterly Review, vol. x. art. xvi.: Character and its Predicates.

[14] Hagenbach, Dogmengeschichte, sect. 209, note 14.

[15] See Ballou, Examination of the Doctrine of Future Punishment, pp. 152–157. Williamson, Exposition of Universalism, Sermon XL: Nature of Salvation. Cobb, Compend. of Divinity, ch. ix. sect. 8.

hood. It casts off gross mistakes, announces some fundamental realities, overlooks, perverts, exaggerates, some essential facts in the case. There is so much in it that is grateful and beautiful that we cannot wonder at its reception where the tender instincts of the heart are stronger than the stern decisions of the conscience, where the kindly sentiments usurp the province of the critical reason and sit in judgment upon evidence for the construction of a dogmatic creed. We cannot accept it as a whole, cannot admit its great unqualified conclusion, not only because there is no direct evidence for it, but because there are many potent presumptions against it. It is not built upon the facts of our consciousness and present experience, but is resolutely constructed in defiance of them by an arbitrary process of assumption and inference; for since God's perfections are as absolute now as they ever can be, and he now permits sin and misery, there is no *impossibility* that they will be permitted for a season hereafter. If they are necessary now, they may be necessary hereafter. An experience of salvation by all, regardless of what they do or what they leave undone, would also defeat what we have always considered the chief final cause of man,—namely, the self-determined resistance of Evil and choice of Good, the free formation of virtuous character. The plan of a necessary and indiscriminate redemption likewise breaks the evident continuity of life, ignores the lineal causative power of experience, whereby each moment partially produces and moulds the next, destroys the probationary nature of our lot, and palsies the strength of moral motive. It is furthermore the height of injustice, awarding to all men the same condition, remorselessly swallowing up their infinite differences, making sin and virtue, sloth and toil, exactly alike in the end. Whoso earnestly embraces the theory, and meditates much upon it, and reasons closely, will be likely to become an Antinomian. It overlooks the loud, omnipresent hints which tell us that the present state is incomplete and dependent, the part of a great whole, the visible segment of a circle whose complement overarches the invisible world to come, where future correspondences and fulnesses will satisfy and complete present claims and deficiencies. We reject this scheme, as to its distinctive feature, for all those reasons which lead us to accept that final view to which we now turn.

The theory of Christian redemption which seems to us correct, represents the good and evil forces of personal character, harmonious or discordant with the mind of God, as the conditions of salvation or of reprobation. Swedenborg, who teaches that man in the future state is the son of his own deeds in the present state, says he once saw Melancthon in hell, writing, "Faith alone saves," the words fading out as fast as written, because expressive of a falsehood! It is not belief, but love, that dominates the soul,—not a mental act, but a spiritual substance. According as the realities of the soul are what they should be, just and pure, or what they should not be, perverted and corrupt, and according as the realities of the soul are in right relations with truth, beauty, goodness, or in

vitiated relations with them, so, and to that extent, is the soul saved or lost. This is not a matter of arbitrary determination on one hand, and of helpless submission on the other: it is a matter of Divine permission on one hand, and of free, though sometimes unintelligent and mistaken, choice on the other. The only perdition is to be out of tune with the right constitution and exercise of things and rules. That, of itself, makes a man the victim of guilt and wretchedness. The only salvation is the restoration of the balance and normal efficiency of the faculties, the restoration of their harmony with the moral law, the recommencement of their action in unison with the will of God. When a soul, through its exposure and freedom, becomes and experiences what God did not intend and is not pleased with, what his creative and executive arrangements are not purposely ordered for, it is, for the time, and so far forth, lost. It is saved, when knowledge of truth illuminates the mind, love of goodness warms the heart, energy, purity, and aspiration fill and animate the whole being. Then, having realized in its experience the purposes of Christ's mission, the original aims of its existence, it rejoices in the favor of God. In the harmonious fruition of its internal efficiencies and external relations, all things work together for good unto it, and it basks in the beams of the sun of immortality. Perdition and hell are the condemnation and misery instantaneously deposited in experience whenever and wherever a perverted and corrupt soul *touches its relations with the universe.* The meeting of its consciousness with the alienated mournful faces of things, with the hostile retributive forces of things, produces unrest and suffering with the same natural necessity that the meeting of certain chemical substances deposits poison and bitterness. Perdition being the degradation and wretchedness of the soul through ingrained falsehood, vice, impurity, and hardness, salvation is the casting out of these evils, and the replacing them with truth, righteousness, a holy and sensitive life. To ransom from hell and translate to heaven is not, then, so much to deliver from a local dungeon of gnawing fires and worms, and bear to a local paradise of luxuries, as it is to heal diseases and restore health. Hell is a wrong, diseased condition of the soul, its indwelling wretchedness and retribution, wherever it may be, as when the light of day tortures a sick eye. Heaven is a right, healthy condition of the soul, its indwelling integrity and concord, in whatever realms it may reside, as when the sunshine bathes the healthy orb of vision with delight. Salvation is nothing more nor less than the harmonious blessedness of the soul by the fruition of all its right powers and relations. Remove a man who is writhing in the agonies of some physical disease, from his desolate hut on the bleak mountain-side to a gorgeous palace in a delicious tropical clime. He is just as badly off as before. He is still, so to speak, in hell, wherever he may be in location. Cure his sickness, and then he is, so to speak, saved, in heaven. It is so with the soul. The conditions of salvation and reprobation are not arbitrary, mechanical, fickle, but are the interior and unalterable laws of

the soul and of the universe. "Every devil," Sir Thomas Browne says, "holds enough of torture in his own *ubi*, and needs not the torture of circumference to afflict him." If there are, as there may be, two entirely separate regions in space, whose respective boundaries enclose hell and heaven, banishment into the one, or admission into the other, evidently is not what constitutes the essence of perdition or of salvation, is not the all-important consideration; but the characteristic condition of the soul, which *produces* its experience and *decides* its destination,—*that* is the essential thing. The mild fanning of a zephyr in a summer evening is intolerable to a person in the convulsions of the ague, but most welcome and delightful to others. So to a wicked soul all objects, operations, and influences of the moral creation become hostile and retributive, making a hell of the whole universe. Purify the soul, restore it to a correct condition, and every thing is transfigured: the universal hell becomes universal heaven.

We may gather up in a few propositions the leading principles of this theory of salvation. First, Perdition is not an experience to which souls are helplessly born, not a sentence inflicted on them by an arbitrary decree, but is a result wrought out by free agency, in conformity to the unalterable laws of the spiritual world. Secondly, heaven and hell are not essentially particular localities into which spirits are thrust, nor states of consciousness produced by outward circumstances, but are an outward reflection from, and a reciprocal action upon, internal character. Thirdly, condemnation, or justification, is not absolute and complete, equalizing all on each side of a given line, but is a thing of degrees, not exactly the same in any two individuals, or in the same person at all times. Fourthly, we have no reason to suppose that probation closes with the closing of the present life; but every relevant consideration leads us to conclude that the same great constitution of laws pervades all worlds and reigns throughout eternity, so that the fate of souls is not unchangeably fixed at death. No analogy indicates that after death all will be thoroughly different from what it is before death. Rather do all analogies argue that the hell and heaven of the future will be the aggravation, or mitigation, or continuation, of the perdition and salvation of the present. It is altogether a sentence of exact right according to character, a matter of personal achievement depending upon freedom, an experience of inward elements and states, a thing of degrees, and a subject of continued probation.

The condition of the heathen nations in reference to salvation is satisfactory only in the light of the foregoing theory. If a person is what God wishes, as shown by his revealed will in the model of Christ, pure, loving, devout, wise, and earnest, he is saved, whether he ever heard of Christ or not. Are Plato and Aristides, Cato and Antoninus, to be damned, while Pope Alexander VI. and King Philip II. are saved, because those glorious characters merely lived at the then height of attainable excellence, but these fanatic scoundrels made a technical profession of Christianity? The "Athanasian" creed asserts that whoever doth not fully believe its

dogmas "shall without doubt perish everlastingly." And the eighteenth article in the creed of the Church of England declares "them accursed who presume to say that any man can be saved by diligently framing his life according to the law or sect which he professeth, and the light of nature."[16]

Another particular in which the present view of salvation is satisfactory, in opposition to the other theories, is in leaving the personal nature of sin clear, the realm of personal responsibility unconfused. Why should a system of thought be set up and adhered to in religion that would be instantly and universally scouted at if applied to any other subject?[17] "No one dreams that the sin of an unexercised intellect, of gross ignorance, can be pardoned only through faith in the sacrifice of some incarnation of the Perfect Reason. No one expects to be told that the violation of the bodily laws can be forgiven by the Infinite Creator only on the ground that some perfect physician honors them by obedience and death. It is by opening the mind to God's published truth, and by conformity to the discovered philosophical order, or the reception of the adopted remedy, that the mind and the frame experience new life. And our souls are redeemed, not by any expiation on account of which penalties are lifted, but by reception of spiritual truth and consecration of will, which push away penalties by wholesome life."[18]

The awful inviolability of justice is shown by the eternal course of God's laws bringing the exactly deserved penalty upon every soul that sinneth. Whoever breaks a Divine decree puts all sacred things in antagonism to him, and the precise punishment of his offences not the worth of worlds nor the blood of angels can avert. The boundless mercy of God, his atoning love, is shown by the absence of all vindictiveness from his judgments, their restorative aim and tendency. Whenever the sinner repents, reforms, puts himself in a right attitude, God is waiting to pardon and bless him, the sun shines and the happy heart is glad as at first, the cloudy screen of sin and fear and retributive alienation being removed. This view, when appreciated, affords as impressive a sanction to law, and as affecting an exhibition of love, as are theoretically ascribed to the doctrine of vicarious expiation. The infinite sanctity of justice and the fathomless love of God are certainly much more plainly and satisfactorily shown by the righteous nature and beneficent *operation* of the law, than by its terrible severity and arbitrary *subversion*. According to the present view, the relation of Christ to human redemption is as simple and rational as it is divinely appointed and perfectly fulfilled. Accredited with miraculous seals, presenting the most pathetic and in-

[16] Arnauld, Emes, Goese, and others, have written volumes to prove the indiscriminate damnation of the heathen. On the contrary, Müller, in his "Diss. de Paganorum post Mortem Conditione," and Marmontel, in his "Bellisaire," take a more favorable view of the fate of the ethnic world. The best work on the subject—a work of great geniality and ability—is Eberhard's "Neue Apologie des Socrates." Also see Knapp's Christian Theology, sect. lxxxviii.

[17] Martineau, Studies of Christianity, pp. 153–176: Mediatorial Religion. Ibid. pp. 468–477: Sin—What it is, What it is not.

[18] T. S. King, Endless Punishment Unchristian and Unreasonable, p. 65.

spiring motives, he reveals the truths and exemplifies the virtues which, when adopted, regenerate the springs of faith and character, rectify the lines of conduct, and change men from sinful and wretched to saintly and blessed. He stirs the stagnant soul, that man may replunge into his native self, and rise redeemed.

For the more distinct comprehension and remembrance of the schemes of Christian salvation we have been considering, it may be well to recapitulate them.

The first theory is this:—When, by the fall of Adam, all men were utterly lost and doomed to hell forever, the vicarious sufferings of Christ cancelled sin, and unconditionally purchased and saved all. This was the original development of Universalism. It sprang consistently from Augustinian grounds. It was taught by a party in the Church of the first centuries, was afterwards repeatedly condemned as a heresy by popes and by councils, and was revived by Kelly, Murray, and others. We are not aware that it now has any avowed disciples.

The second conception is, in substance, that God, foreseeing from eternity the fall of Adam and the consequent damnation of his posterity, arbitrarily elected a portion of them to salvation, leaving the rest to their fate; and the vicarious sufferings of Christ were the only possible means of carrying that decree into effect. This is the Augustinian and Calvinistic theology, and has had a very extensive prevalence among Christians. Many church-creeds still embody the doctrine; but in its original, uncompromising form it is rapidly fading from belief. Even now few persons can be found to profess it without essential modifications, so qualifying it as to destroy its identity.

The third plan of delivering souls from the doom supposed to rest on them attributes to the vicarious sufferings of Christ a conditional efficacy, depending upon personal faith. Every one who will heartily believe in the substitutional death of Christ, and trust in his atoning merits, shall thereby be saved. This was the system of Pelagius, Arminius, Luther. It prevails now in the so-called Evangelical Churches more generally than any other system.

The fourth received method of salvation, assuming the same premises which the three foregoing schemes assume,—namely, that through the fall all men are eternally sentenced to hell,—declares that, by Christ's vicarious sufferings, power is given to the Church, a priestly hierarchy, to save such as confess her authority and observe her rites. All others must continue lost.[19] This theory early began to be constructed and broached by the Fathers. It is held by the Roman Catholic Church, and by all the consistent portion of the Episcopalian. A part of the Baptist denomination also—through their popular preachers, if not in their recognised symbols—assert the indispensableness of ritual baptism to salvation.

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[19] Adams, Mercy to Babes. (A plea for the baptism of infants, that they may not be damned.)

The fifth view of the problem is that no soul is lost or doomed except so far as it is personally, voluntarily depraved and sinful. And even to that extent, and in that sense, it can be called lost only in the present life. After death every soul is freed from evil, and ushered at once into heaven. This is the distinctive doctrine of the ultra Universalists. It is disappearing from among its recent advocates. As a body they have already exchanged its arbitrary conceptions of "death and glory" for the more rational conclusions of the "Restorationists."[20]

The sixth and final scheme of Christian salvation teaches that, by the immutable laws which the Creator has established in and over his works and creatures, a free soul may choose good or evil, truth or falsehood, love or hate, beneficence or iniquity. Just so far and just so long as it partakes of the former it is saved; as it partakes of the latter it is lost,—that is, alienates the favor of God, forfeits so much of the benefits of creation and of the blessings of being. The conditions and means of repentance, reformation, regeneration, are always within its power, the future state being but the unencumbered, more favorable experience of the spiritual elements of the present, under the same Divine constitution and laws. This is the common belief of Unitarians and Universalists,—the latter alone teaching it as a sure doctrine of Revelation.

Salvation by purchase, by the redeeming blood of Christ; salvation by election, by the independent decree of God, sealed by the blood of Christ; salvation by faith, by an appropriating faith in the blood of Christ; salvation by the Church, by the sacraments made efficacious to that end by the blood of Christ; salvation by nature, by the irresistible working of the natural order of things, declared by the teachings of Christ; salvation by a resurrection from the dead, miraculously effected by the delegated power of Christ; salvation by character, by conformity of character to the spiritual laws of the universe, to the nature and will of God, revealed, urged, exemplified, by the *whole mission* of Christ;—these are the different theories proposed for the acceptance of Christians.

Outside of Christendom we discern, received and operative in various forms, all the theoretic modes of salvation acknowledged within it, and some others in addition. The creed and practice of the Mohammedans afford a more unflinching embodiment of the conception of salvation by election than is furnished anywhere else. Islam denotes Fate. All is predestinated and follows on in inevitable sequence. No modifying influence is possible. Can a breath move Mount Kâf? The chosen of Allah shall believe; the rejected of Allah shall deny. Every believer's bower is blooming for him in Paradise; every unbeliever's bed is burning for him in hell. And nothing whatever can avail to change the persons or the total number elected for each.

There is one theory of salvation scarcely heard of in the West, but extensively held in the East. The Brahmanic as well as the Buddhist thinker relies on obtaining salvation by knowledge. Life in a continual succession of different bodies is his perdition. His salvation is to be freed

[20] Adin Ballou, Universalism and Restorationism Moral Contraries, 1837.

from the vortex of births and deaths, the fret and storm of finite existence. Neither goodness nor piety can ever release him. Knowledge alone can do it: an unsullied intellectual vision and a free intellectual grasp of truth and love alone can rescue him from the turbid sea of forms and struggles. "As a lump of salt is of uniform taste within and without, so the soul is nothing but intelligence."[21] If the soul be an entire mass of intelligence, a current of ideas, its real salvation depends on its becoming pure and eternal truth without mixture of falsehood or of emotional disturbance. He "must free himself from virtues as well as from sins; for the confinement of fetters is the same whether the chain be of gold or of iron."[22] Accordingly, the Hindu, to secure emancipation, planes down the mountainous thoughts and passions of his soul to a desert level of indifferent insight. And when, in direct personal knowledge, free from joy and sorrow, free from good and ill, he gazes into the limitless abyss of Divine truth, then he is sure of the bosom of Brahm, the door of Nirwána. Then the wheel of the Brahmanic Ixion ceases revolving, and the Buddhist Ahasuerus flings away his staff; for salvation is attained.

The conception of salvation by ritual works based on faith—either faith in Deity or in some redemptive agency—is exhibited all over the world. Hani, a Hindu devotee, dwelt in a thicket, and repeated the name of Krishna a hundred thousand times each day,[23] and thus saved his soul. The saintly Muni Shukadev said, as is written in the most popular religious authority of India, "Who even ignorantly sing the praises of Krishna undoubtedly obtain final beatitude; just as, if one ignorant of the properties of nectar should drink it, he would still become immortal. Whoever worships Hari, with whatever disposition of mind, obtains beatitude."[24] "The repetition of the names of Vishnu purifies from all sins, even when invoked by an evil-minded person,—as fire burns even him who approaches it unwillingly."[25] Nothing is more common in the sacred writings of the Hindus than the promise that "whoever reads or hears this narrative with a devout mind shall receive final beatitude." Millions on millions of these docile and abject devotees undoubtingly expect salvation by such merely ritual observances. One cries "Lord!" "Lord!" Another thumbs a book, as if it were an omnipotent amulet. Another meditates on some mystic theme, as if musing were a resistless spell of silent exorcism and invocation. Another pierces himself with red-hot irons, as if voluntary pain endured now could accumulate merit for him and buy off future inflictions.

It is surprising to what an extent men's efforts for salvation seem underlaid by conceptions of propitiation, the placation of a hatred, the awakening of a love, in the objects of their worship. In all these cases salvation is sought indirectly through works, though not particularly

[21] Colebrooke, Essays, vol. i. p. 359.
[22] Asiatic Researches, vol. xvi. p. 115.
[23] Vishnu Purana, p. 210, note 13.
[24] Ibid. p. 363.
[25] Eastwick, Prem Ságar, p. 56.

good works. The savage makes an offering, mutters a prayer, or fiercely wounds his body, before the hideous idol of his choice. The fakir, swung upon sharp hooks, revolves slowly round a fire. The monk wears a hair shirt, and flagellates himself until blood trickles across the floor of his cell. The Portuguese sailor in a storm takes a leaden saint from his bosom and kneels before it for safety. The offending Bushman crawls in the dust and shudders as he seeks to avert the fury of the fetich which he has carved and set in a tree. The wounded brigand in the Apennines, with unnumbered robberies and murders on his soul, finds perfect ease to his conscience as his glazing eye falls on a carefully-treasured picture of the Virgin, and he expires in a triumph of faith, saying, "Sweet Mother of God, intercede for me." The Calvinistic convert, about to be executed for his fearful crimes, kneels at the foot of the gallows, and exclaims, as in a recent well-known instance, "I hold the blood of Christ between my soul and the flaming face of God, and die happy, assured that I am going to heaven."

It is all a terrible delusion, arising from perverted sentiment and degraded thought. Of the five theoretical modes of salvation taught in the world,—Election, Faith, Works, Knowledge, Harmony,—one alone is real and divine, although it contains principles taken from all the rest and blended with its own. There is no salvation by foregone *election;* for that would dethrone the moral laws and deify caprice. There is no salvation by dogmatic *faith;* because faith is not a matter of will, but of evidence, not within man's own power, and a thousand varieties of faith are necessitated among men. There is no salvation by determinate *works;* for works are measurable quantities, whose rewards and punishments are meted and finally spent, but salvation is qualitative and infinite. There is no salvation by intellectual *knowledge;* for knowledge is sight, not being, an accident, not an essence, an attribute of one faculty, not a right state and ruling force in all. The true salvation is by *harmony;* for harmony of all the forces of the soul with themselves and with all related forces beyond, harmony of the individual will with the Divine will, harmony of personal action with the universal activity,—what other negation of perdition is possible? what other definition and affirmation of salvation conceivable? By the Creator's fiat, man is first elected to be. By the guiding stimulus of faith, he is next animated to spiritual exertion. By the performance of good works, he then brings his moral nature into beautiful form and attitude. By knowledge of truth, he furthermore sees how to direct, govern, and attune himself. And finally, by the accomplishment of all this in the organized harmony of a wise and holy soul, there results that state of being whose passive conditions constitute salvation, and whose active experience is eternal life.

CHAPTER VI.

RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS IN A FUTURE LIFE.

Of all the sorrows incident to human life, none is so penetrating to gentle hearts as that which fills them with aching regrets, and, for a time, writes hollowness and vanity on their dearest treasures, when death robs them of those they love. And so, of all the questions that haunt the soul, wringing its faculties for a solution, beseeching the oracles of the universe for a response, none can have a more intense interest than gathers about the irrepressible inquiry, "Shall we ever meet again, and know, the friends we have lost?—somewhere in the ample creation and in the boundless ages, join, with the old familiar love, our long-parted, fondly-cherished, never-forgotten dead?" The grief of bereavement and the desire of reunion are experienced in an endless diversity of degrees by different persons, according as they are careless, hard, and sense-bound, or thoughtful, sympathizing, and imaginative; undisciplined by the mysteries and afflictions of our mortal destiny, or profoundly tried by the disappointments and prophecies of time and fate; and as they are shadowed by the gloom of despair, or cheered by the radiance of belief. But to all who feel, even the least, the uncertain but deep monitions of the silent pall, the sad procession, and the burial-mound, the impressive problem must occur, with frequency and power, Does the grave sunder us and the objects of our affection forever? or, across that dark gulf, shall we be united again in purer bonds? Outside of the atheistic dissolution and the pantheistic absorption, it is supposable that, surviving the blow of death, our spirits may return to God and run their endless course in divine solitude. On the other hand, it is supposable that, possessed with all the memories of this probationary state, blessed by the companionship of our earthly friends, we may aspire together along the interminable gradations of the world to come. If the former supposition be true, and the farewell of the dying is the announcement of an irrevocable separation, then the tears we shed over the shrouded clay, once so prized, should be distillations from Lethe's flood, to make us forget all. But if the latter be true, then our deadly seeming losses are as the partings of travellers at night to meet in the morning; and, as friend after friend retires, we should sigh to each departing spirit a kind adieu till we meet again, and let pleasing memories of them linger to mingle in the sacred day-dreams of remaining life.

Evidently it is of much importance to a man which of these views he shall take; for each exerts a distinctive influence in regard to his peace of mind, his moral strength, and his religious character. On one who

believes that hereafter, beyond all the partings in this land of tombs, he shall never meet the dear companions who now bless his lot, the death of friends must fall, if he be a person of strong sensibilities, as a staggering blow, awakening an agony of sorrow, taking from the sky and the earth a glory nothing can ever replace, and leaving in his heart a wretched void nothing can ever fill. Henceforth he will be deprived mostly—for all felt connection between them is hopelessly sundered—of the good influences they exerted on him when present: he must try, by all expedients, to forget them; think no more of their virtues, their welcome voices and kindly deeds; wipe from the tablets of his soul all fond records of their united happy days; look not to the future, let the past be as though it had never been, and absorb his thoughts and feelings in the turmoil of the present. This is his only course; and even then, if true to the holiest instincts of his soul, he will find the fatal separation has lessened his being and impoverished his life,—

> "For this losing is true dying;
> This is lordly man's down-lying,
> This his slow but sure reclining,
> Star by star his world resigning."

But to him who earnestly expects soon to be restored under fairer auspices and in a deathless world to those from whom he parted as he laid their crumbling bodies in the earth, the death of friends will come as a message from the Great Father,—a message solemn yet kind, laden indeed with natural sadness yet brightened by sure promise and followed by heavenly compensations. If his tears flow, they flow not in scalding bitterness from the Marah fountain of despair, but in chastened joy from the smitten rock of faith. So far from endeavoring to forget the departed, he will cling to their memories with redoubled tenderness, as a sacred trust and a redeeming power. They will be more precious to him than ever,—stronger to purify and animate. Their saintly examples will attract him as never before, and their celestial voices plead from on high to win him to virtue and to heaven. The constant thought of seeing them once more, and wafting in their arms through the enchanted spaces of Paradise, will wield a sanctifying force over his spirit. They will make the invisible sphere a peopled reality to him, and draw him to God by the diffused bonds of a spiritual acquaintance and an eternal love.

Since the result in which a man rests on this subject, believing or disbelieving that he shall recognise his beloved ones the other side of the grave, exerts a deep influence on him, in one case disheartening, in the other uplifting, it is incumbent on us to investigate the subject, try to get at the truth, clear it up, and appreciate it as well as we can. It is a theme to interest us all. Who has not endeared relatives, choice friends, freshly or long ago removed from this earth into the unknown clime? In a little while, as the ravaging reaper sweeps on his way, who will not have still more there, or be there himself? Whether old acquaintance shall be all forgot or be well remembered there, is an inquiry which must

profoundly interest all who have hearts to love their companions, and minds to perceive the creeping shadows of mystery drawing over us as we approach the sure destiny of age and the dim confines of the world. It is a theme, far removed from noisy strifes and vain shows, penetrating that mysterious essence of affection and thought which we are. The thing of first importance is not the conclusion we reach, but the spirit in which we seek and hold it. The Christian says to his friend, "Our souls will be united in yonder heaven." Danton, with a horrible travesty, said to his comrades on the scaffold, "Our heads will meet in that sack."

Before engaging directly in the discussion, it will be interesting to notice, for an instant, the verdict which history, in the spontaneous suppositions and rude speculations of ancient peoples, pronounces on this subject.[1] Among their various opinions about the state after death, it is a prominent circumstance that they generally agree in conceiving it as a social state in which personal likenesses and memories are retained, fellow-countrymen are grouped together, and friends united. This is minutely true of those nations with the details of whose faith we are acquainted, and is implied in the general belief of all others, except those who expected the individual spirit to be absorbed in the soul of the universe. Homer shows Ulysses—and Virgil in like manner shows Æneas—upon his entrance into the other world mutually recognising his old comrades and recognised by them. The two heroes whose inseparable friendship on earth was proverbial are still together in Elysium:—

> "Then, side by side, along the dreary coast
> Advanced Achilles' and Patroclus' ghost,
> A friendly pair."

In this representation that there was a full recognition of acquaintances, all the accounts of the other world given in Greek and Roman literature harmonize. The same is true of the accounts contained in the literature of the ancient Hebrews. In the Book of Genesis, when Jacob hears of the death of his favorite child, he exclaims, "I shall go down to my son Joseph in the under-world, mourning." When the witch of Endor raised the ghost of Samuel, Saul knew him by the description she gave of him as he rose. The monarch-shades in the under-world are pictured by Isaiah as recognising the shade of the king of Babylon and rising from their sombre thrones to greet him with mockery. Ezekiel shows us each people of the heathen nations in the under-world in a company by themselves. When David's child died, the king sorrowfully exclaimed, "He will not return to me; but I shall go to him." All these passages are based on the conception of a gloomy subterranean abode where the ghosts of the dead are reunited after their separation at death on earth. An old commentator on the Koran says a Mohammedan priest was once

[1] Alexius, Tod und Wiedersehen. Eine Gedankenfolge der besten Schriftsteller aller Zeiten und Völker.

asked how the blessed in paradise could be happy when missing some near relative or dear friend whom they were thus forced to suppose in hell. He replied, God will either cause believers to forget such persons or else to rest in expectation of their coming. The anecdote shows affectingly that the same yearning heart and curiosity are possessed by Moslem and Christian. A still more impressive case in point is furnished by a picture in a Buddhist temple in China. The painting represents the story of the priest Lo Púh, who, on passing into paradise at death, saw his mother, Yin Te, in hell. He instantly descended into the infernal court, Tsin Kwang Wang, where she was suffering, and, by his valor, virtues, and intercessions, rescued her. The picture vividly portraying the whole story may be seen and studied at the present time by Christian missionaries who enter that temple of the benevolent Buddha.[1] From the faith of many other nations illustrations might be brought of the same fact,—that the great common instinct which has led men to believe in a future life has at the same time caused them to believe that in that life there would be a union and recognition of friends. Let this far-reaching historical fact be taken at its just value, while we proceed to the labor in hand. The fact referred to is of some value, because, being an expression of the heart of man as God made it, it is an indication of his will, a prophecy.

There are three ways of trying the problem of future recognition. The cool, skeptical class of persons will examine the present related facts of the case; argue from what they now know; test the question by induction and inference. Let us see to what results they will thus be led. In the first place, we learn upon reflection that we now distinguish each other by the outward form, physical proportion, and combination of looks, tones of voice, and other the like particulars. Every one has his individuality in these respects, by which he is separable from others. It may be hastily inferred, then, that if we are to know our friends hereafter it will be through the retention or the recovery of their sensible peculiarities. Accordingly, many believe the soul to be a perfect reflection or immaterial fac-simile of the body, the exact correspondence in shadowy outline of its gross tabernacle, and consequently at once recognizable in the disembodied state. The literature of Christendom—we may almost say of the world—teems with exemplifications of this idea. Others, arguing from the same acknowledged premises, conclude that future recognition will be secured by the resurrection of the material body as it was in all its perfection, in renovated and unfading prime. But, leaving out of view the inherent absurdity of the doctrine of a physical resurrection, there is a fatal difficulty in the way of both these supposititious modes of mutual knowledge in another world. It is this. The outward form, features, and expression sometimes alter so thoroughly that it is impossible for us to recognise our once most intimate com-

[1] Asiatic Journal, 1840, p. 211.

panions. Cases are not rare of this kind. Let one pass in absence from childhood to maturity, and who that had not seen him in the mean time could tell that it was he? The trouble arising thence is finely illustrated by Shakspeare in the motherly solicitude of Constance, who, on learning that her young son has been imprisoned by his uncle, King John, and will probably be kept until he pines to death, cries in anguish to her confessor,—

> "Father cardinal, I have heard you say
> That we shall see and know our friends in heaven:
> If that be true, I shall see my boy again;
> For, since the birth of Cain, the first male child,
> To him that did but yesterday suspire,
> There was not such a gracious creature born.
> But now will canker sorrow eat my bud
> And chase the native beauty from his cheek,
> And he will look as hollow as a ghost,
> As dim and meagre as an ague's fit;
> And so he'll die; and, rising so again,
> When I shall meet him in the court of heaven
> I shall not know him: therefore never, never
> Must I behold my pretty Arthur more."

Owing to the changes of all sorts which take place in the body, future recognition cannot safely depend upon that or upon any resemblance of the spirit to it. Besides, not the faintest proof can be adduced of any such perceptible correspondence subsisting between them.

Turning again to the facts of experience, we find that it is not alone, nor indeed chiefly, by their visible forms and features that we know our chosen ones. We also, and far more truly, know them by the traits of their characters, the elements of their lives, the effluence of their spirits, the magic atmosphere which surrounds them, the electric thrill and communication which vivify and conjoin our souls. And even in the exterior, that which most reveals and distinguishes each is not the shape, but the expression, the lights and shades, reflected out from the immortal spirit shrined within. We know each other really by the mysterious motions of our souls. And all these things endure and act uninterrupted though the fleshly frame alter a thousand times or dissolve in its native dust. The knowledge of a friend, then, being independent of the body, spirits may be recognised in the future state by the associations mutually surrounding them, the feelings connecting them. Amidst all the innumerable thronging multitudes, through all the immeasurable intervening heights and depths, of the immaterial world, remembered and desired companions may be selected and united by inward laws that act with the ease and precision of chemical affinities. We may therefore recognise each other by the feelings which now connect us, and which shall spontaneously kindle and interchange when we meet in heaven, as the signs of our former communion.

It needs but little thought to perceive that by this view future recognition is conditional, being made to depend on the permanence of our sympathies: there must be the same mutual relations, affinities, fitness

to awaken the same emotions upon approaching each other's sphere, or we shall neither know nor be known. But in fact our sympathies and aversions change as much as our outward appearance does. The vices and virtues, loves and hatreds, of our hearts alter, the peculiar characteristics of our souls undergo as great a transformation, sometimes, as thorough a revolution, as the body does in the interval between childhood and manhood. These changes going on in our associates frequently change our feelings towards them, heightening or diminishing our affection, creating a new interest, destroying an old one, now making enemies lovers, and now thoroughly alienating very friends. Such fundamental alterations of character may occur in us, or in our friend, before we meet in the unseen state, that we shall no more recognise each other's spirits than we should know each other on earth after a separation in which our bodily appearances and voices had been entirely changed. These considerations would induce us to think that recognition hereafter is not sure, but turns on the condition that we preserve a remembrance, desire, and adaptedness for one another.

If now the critical inquirer shall say there is no evidence, and it is incredible, that the body will be restored to a future life, or that the soul has any resemblance to the body by which it may be identified,—furthermore, if he shall maintain that the doctrine of the revelation and recognition of the souls of friends in another life by an instinctive feeling, a mysterious attraction and response, is fanciful, an overdrawn conclusion of the imagination, not warranted by a stern induction of the average realities of the subject,—and if he shall then ask, how are we to distinguish our former acquaintances among the hosts of heaven?—there is one more fact of experience which meets the case and answers his demand. When long absence and great exposures have wiped off all the marks by which old companions knew each other, it has frequently happened that they have met and conversed with indifference, each being ignorant of whom the other was; and so it has continued until, by some indirect means, some accidental allusion, or the agency of a third person, they have been suddenly revealed. Then, with throbbing hearts, in tears and rapture, they have rushed into each other's arms, with an instantaneous recurrence of their early friendship in all its original warmth, fulness, and flooding associations. Many such instances are related in books of romance with strict truth to the actual occurrences of life. Several instances of it are authenticated in the early history of America, when children, torn from their homes by the Indians, were recovered by their parents after twenty or thirty years had elapsed and they were identified by circumstantial evidence. Let any parent ask his heart, any true friend ask his heart, if, discovering by some foreign means the object of his love, he would not embrace him with just as ardent a gratitude and devotion as though there were no outward change and they had known one another at sight. So, in the life beyond the grave, if we are not able to recognise our earthly companions directly, either by spiritual

sight or by intuitive feeling, we may obtain knowledge of each other indirectly by comparison of common recollections, or by the mediation of angels, or by some other Divine arrangement especially prepared for that purpose. And therefore, whether in heaven we look or feel as we do here or not, whether there be any provision in our present constitution for future recognition or not, is of no consequence. In a thousand ways the defect can be remedied, if such be the will of God. And that such is his will every relevant fact and consideration would seem to prove. It is a consistent and seemingly requisite continuation and completion of that great scheme of which this life is a part. It is an apparently essential element and fulfilment of the wonderful apparatus of retribution, reward, and discipline, intended to educate us as members of God's eternal family. Because from the little which we now understand we cannot infer with plainness and certainty the precise means and method by which we can discriminate our friends in heaven need be no obstacle to believing the fact itself; for there are millions of undoubted truths whose conditions and ways of operation we can nowise fathom. Upon the whole, then, we conclude that we cannot by our mere understandings decide with certainty the question concerning future recognition; but we are justified in trusting to the accuracy of that doctrine, since it rests safely with the free pleasure of God, who is both infinitely able and disposed to do what is best, and we cannot help believing that it is best for us to be with and love hereafter those whom we are with and love here.[3]

There is a way of dealing with the general subject before us wholly different from the course thus far pursued. Ceasing to act the philosopher, laying aside all arguments and theories, all dry speculations, we may come as simple believers to the Christian Scriptures and investigate their teachings to accept whatever they pronounce as the word of God's truth. Let us see to what results we shall thus be led. Searching the New Testament to learn its doctrine in regard to reunion in a future state, we are very soon struck with surprise at the mysterious reserve, so characteristic of its pages, on this entire theme. Instead of a full and minute revelation blazing along the track of the gospel pens, a few fragmentary intimations, incidental hints, scattered here and there, are the substance of all that it expressly says. But though little is directly declared, yet much is plainly implied: especially the one great inference with which we are now concerned may be unequivocally and repeatedly drawn. In the parable of the Rich Man and the Beggar the Savior pictures forth the recognition of their souls in the disembodied state. Dives also is described as recollecting with intense interest, with the most anxious sympathy, his endangered brethren on earth. Although this occurs in a parable, yet it is likely that so prominent and vital a feature

[3] Münch, Werden wir uns wiedersehen nach dem Tode. This work, based on the Kantian philosophy, denies future recognition. There is an able reply to it by Vogel, Ueber die Hoffnung des Wiedersehens.

of it would be moulded, as to its essential significance, in accordance with what the author intended should be received as truth. Jesus also speaks of many who should come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; from which it would appear that the patriarchs are together in fellowship and that the righteous of after-times were to be received with them in mutual acquaintance. On the Mount of Transfiguration the witnessing disciples saw Moses and Elias together with Jesus, and recognised them, probably from their resemblance to traditional descriptions of them. Jesus always represented the future state as a society. He said to his followers, "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also;" and he prayed to his Father that his disciples might be with him where he was going. At another time he declared of little children, "Their angels always behold the face of my Father in heaven:" he also taught that "there is joy in heaven over every sinner that repenteth;" passages that presuppose such a community of faculties, sympathies, in heaven and earth, in angels and men, as certainly implies the doctrine of continued knowledge and fellowship. When heaven was opened before the dying Stephen, he saw and instantly knew his Divine Master, the Lord Jesus, and called to him to welcome his ascending spirit. Paul writes to the Thessalonians that he would not have them sorrow concerning the dead as those who have no hope, assuring them that when Christ reappears they shall all be united again. In the Apocalypse, John saw, in a vision, the souls of the martyrs, who had died for the faith of the gospel, together, under the altar. From community of suffering and a common abode together in heaven we may safely infer their recognition of each other. The Gospels declare that Christ after his death remembered his disciples and came back to them to assure them that they should rejoin him on high; and the apostles assert that we are to be with Christ and to be like him in the future state. It follows from the admission of these declarations that we shall remember our friends and be united with them in conscious knowledge. Few, and brief, and vague as the utterances of the Scriptures are in relation to this theme, they necessarily involve all the results of an avowed doctrine. They undeniably involve the supposition that in the other life we shall be conscious personalities as here, retaining our memories and constituting a society. From these implications the fact of the future recognition of friends irresistibly results, unless there be some special interference to prevent it; and such an interposition there is no hint of and can be no reason for fearing. Such is really all that we can learn from the Scriptures on the subject of our inquiry.[4] Its indirectness and brevity would convince us that God did not intend to betray to us in clear light the secrets of the shrouded future, that for some reason it is best that his teaching

[4] Harbaugh, The Heavenly Recognition. Gisborne, Recollections of Friends in the World to Come. Muston, Perpetuation of Christian Friendship.

should be so reserved, and leave us to the haunting wonder, the anxious surmise, the appalling mystery, the alluring possibilities, that now meet our gaze on the unmoving veil of death. God intends we shall trust in him without knowledge, and by faith, not by sight, pursue his guidance into the silent and unknown land.

Therefore, after analyzing the relevant facts of present experience and inferring what we can from them, and after studying the Scriptures and finding what they say, there is yet another method of considering the problem of recognition in the future state. That is without caring for critical discussion, without deferring to extraneous authority, we may follow the gravitating force of instinct, imagination, and moral reason. We are made to love and depend on each other. The longer, the more profoundly, we know and admire the good, the more our being becomes intertwined with theirs, so much the more intensely we desire to be with them always, and so much the more awful is the agony of separation. This,—what is it but great Nature's testimony, God's silent avowal, that we are to meet in eternity? Can the fearful anguish of bereavement be gratuitous? can the yearning prophecies of the smitten heart be all false? Belief in reunion hereafter is spontaneously adopted by humanity. We therefore esteem it divinely ordered or true. Without that soothing and sustaining trust, the unrelieved, intolerable wretchedness in many cases would burst through the fortress of the mind, hurl reason from its throne, and tear the royal affections and their attendants in the trampled dust of madness. Many a rarely-gifted soul, unknown in his nameless privacy of life, has been so conjoined with a worthy peer, through precious bonds of unutterable sympathy, that, rather than be left behind, "the divided half of such a friendship as had mastered time," he has prayed that they, dying at once, might, involved together, hover across the dolorous strait to the other shore, and

> "Arrive at last the blessed goal
> Where He that died in Holy Land
> Might reach them out the shining hand
> And take them as a single soul."

Denied that inmost wish, the rest of his widowed life below has been one melancholy strain of "In Memoriam." Many a faithful and noble mourner, whose garnered love and hope have been blighted for this world, would tell you that, without meeting his lost ones there, heaven itself would be no heaven to him. In such a state of soul we must expect to know again in an unfading clime the cherished dead. That belief is of Divine inspiration, an arrangement to heal the deadly wounds of sorrow. It is madness not to think it a verity. Who believes, as he shall float through the ambrosial airs of heaven, he could touch, in passing, the radiant robes of his chosen friends without a thrill of recognition, the prelude to a blissful and immortal communion? Is there

not truth in the poet's picture of the meeting of child and parent in heaven?—

> "It was not, mother, that I knew thy face:
> The luminous eclipse that is on it now,
> Though it was fair on earth, would have made it strange
> Even to one who knew as well as he loved thee;
> But my heart cried out in me, Mother!"

Think of the unfathomable yearnings, the infinite ecstasies of desire and faith from age to age swelling in the very heart of the world, all set on the one hope of future union, and who then can believe that God will coldly blast them all? They are innocent, they are holy, they are meritorious, they are unspeakably dear. We would not destroy them; and God will not.

Man's life is the true fable of that beautiful youth, Narcissus, who had a twin-sister of remarkable loveliness, strongly resembling himself, and to whom he was most tenderly attached. She dies young. He frequents fountains to gaze upon his own image reflected in the waters, it seeming to him the likeness of her he has lost. He is in pity transformed into a flower on the border of a stream, where, bending on his fragile stem, he seeks his image in the waters murmuring by, until he fades and dies. Has not God, the all-loving Author who composed the sweet poem of Man and Nature, written at the close a reconciling Elysium wherein these pure lovers, the fond Narcissus and his echo-mate, shall wander in perennial bliss, their embracing forms mirrored in unruffled fountains?

Looking now for the conclusion of the whole matter, we find that it lies in three different aspects, both of inquiring thought and of practical morality, according to the lights and modes in which three different classes of minds approach it. To the *consistent metaphysician*, reasoning rigidly on grounds of science and philosophy, every thing pertaining to the methods and circumstances of the future life is an affair of entire uncertainty and hypothesis.[5] If in the future state the soul retains its individuality as an identical force, form, life, and memory, and if associates in the present state are brought together, it is probable that old friends will recognise each other. But if they are oblivious of the past, if they are incommunicably separated in space or state, if one progresses so much farther that the other can never overtake him, if the personal soul blends its individual consciousness with the unitary consciousness of the Over-Soul, if it commences a new career from a fresh psychical germ, then, by the terms, there will be no mutual recognition. In that case his comfort and his duty are to know that the anguish and longing he now feels will cease then; to trust in the benignity of the Infinite Wisdom, who knows best what to appoint for his creatures; and to submit with harmonizing resignation to the unalterable decree, offering his private wish a voluntary sacrifice on the altar of natural piety. That he

[5] Grötvell, Das Wiedersehen nach dem Tode. Wie es nur sein könne.

shall know his friends hereafter is not impossible, not improbable; neither is it certain. He may desire it, expect it, but not with speculative pride dogmatically affirm it, nor with insisting egotism presumptuously demand it.

To the *uncritical Christian* the recognising reunion of friends in heaven is an unshaken assurance.[6] There is nothing to disturb his implicit reception of the plain teaching of Scripture. The legitimate exhortations of his faith are these. Mourn not too bitterly nor too long over your absent dead; for you shall meet them in an immortal clime. As the last hour comes for your dearest ones or for yourself, be of good cheer; for an imperishable joy is yours. You

> "Cannot lose the hope that many a year
> Hath shone on a gleaming way,
> When the walls of life are closing round
> And the sky grows sombre gray."

Put not away the intruding thoughts of the departed, but let them often recur. The dead are constant. You know not how much they may think of you, how near they may be to you. Will you pass to meet them not having thought of them for years, having perhaps forgotten them? Let your mind have its nightly firmament of religious communion, beneath which white and sable memories shall walk, and the sphered spirits of your risen friends, like stars, shed down their holy rays to soothe your feverish cares and hush every murmuring doubt to rest. From the dumb heavings of your loving and trustful heart, sometimes exclaim, Parents who nurtured and watched over me with unwearied affection, I would remember you oft, and love you well, and so live that one day I may meet you at the right hand of God. Early friends, so close and dear once, who in the light of young romance trod with me life's morning hills, neither your familiar faces nor your sweet communion are forgotten by me: I fondly think of you, and aspire towards you, and pray for a purer soul, that I may mount to your celestial circle at last;—

> "For many a tear these eyes must weep,
> And many a sin must be forgiven,
> Ere these pale lids shall sink to sleep,
> Ere you and I shall meet in heaven."

Blessed Jesus, elder Brother of our race, who sittest now by thy Father's throne, or pacest along the crystal coast as a leader, chief among ten thousand, whose condescending brow the bloody thorns no longer press, but the dazzling crown of thy Divinity encircles, oh, remember us, poor erring pilgrims after thine earthly steps; pity us, help us, and after death bring us to thy home.

To the *sympathetic poet*, the man of sentiment and meditation, who views the question from the position of the heart, in the glory and vistas of the imagination, but with all the known facts and relations of the

[6] Grätz, Biblische Beiträge zu der Frage, Werden wir uns wiedersehen nach dem Tode.

subject lying bare under his sight, the uniting restoration, in another sphere, of earth's broken ties and parted friends, is an unappeasable craving of the soul, in harmony with the moral law, powerfully prophesied to his experience from all quarters, and seemingly confirmed to his hopes by every promise of God and nature.[7] Received as a truth, it is a well of inexhaustible comfort, making experience a green oasis where it overflows. The denial of it as a proven falsehood is a withering blast of dust blowing on the friendly caravan of sojourners in the desert of life. If existence is the enjoyment of a largess of social love, and death is to have a solitary hand snatch it all away forever, how dismal is the prospect to the poor heart that loves and clings, loses and despairs, and can only falter hopelessly on! It cannot be so. Love is the true prophet. Heaven will restore the treasures earth has lost.

The mourner by the grave! Eve convulsed over the form of Abel! Jesus weeping where Lazarus lay! America embracing the urn of Washington! The Genius of Humanity at the Tomb of the Past! It is the most pathetic spectacle of the world. As in the old myth the pelican, hovering over her dead broodlets, pierced her own breast in agony and fluttered there until by the fanning of her wings above them and the dropping of her warm blood on them they were brought to life again, so the great Mother of men seems in history to brood over the ashes of departed ages, dropping the tears of her grief and faith into the future to restore her deceased children to life and draw them together within her embrace. And that sublime Rachel will not easily be comforted except when her thoughts, migrating whither her offspring have gone, seem to find them happy in some happy heaven.

The poet, lover of his race, who cannot trust his happier instinct, but perforce believes that beyond the sepulchral line of mortality he shall know no more of his friends, may find, as helps to a willing acquiescence in what is fated, either one of two possible contemplations.[8] He may sadly lay upon his heart the stifling solace, There will be no baffled wants nor unhappiness, but all will be over when *hic jacet* is sculptured on the headstone of my grave. Or, with measureless rebound of faith, he may crowd the capacity of his soul with the mysterious presentiment, In the unchangeable fulness of an infinite bliss, all specialties will be merged and forgotten, and I shall be one of those to whom "the wearisome disease" of remembered sorrow and anticipated joy "is an alien thing."

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[7] Engel, Wir werden uns wiedersehen. Halst, Beleuchtung der Hauptgründe für den Glauben an Erinnerung und Wiedersehen nach dem Tode. Streicher, Neue Beiträge zur Kritik des Glaubens an Rückerinnerung nach dem Tode.

[8] Wieland's Euthanasia expresses disbelief in the preservation of personality and consciousness after death. The same ground had been taken in the work published anonymously at Halle in 1775, Plato und Leibnitz jenseits des Styx. See, on the other side of the question, Wohlfahrt, Tempel der Unsterblichkeit, oder neue Anthologie der wichtigsten Aussprüche, besonders neuerer Weisen über Wiedersehen u. s. w.

CHAPTER VII.

LOCAL FATE OF MAN IN THE ASTRONOMIC UNIVERSE.

According to the imagining of some speculative geologists, perhaps this earth first floated in the abyss as a volume of vapor, wreathing its enormous folds of mist in fantastic shapes as it was borne along on the idle breath of law. Ages swept by, until this stupendous fog-ball was condensed into an ocean of fire, whose billows heaved their lurid bosoms and reared their ashy crests without a check, while their burning spray illuminated its track around the sable vault. During periods which stagger computation, this molten world was gradually cooled down; constant rivers wrung from the densely-swathing vapor poured over the heated mass and at last submerged its crust in an immense sea. Then, for unknown centuries, fire, water, and wind waged a Titanic war, that imagination shudders to think of,—jets of flame licking the stars, massive battlements and columns of fire piled to terrific heights,—now the basin of the sea suddenly turned into a glowing caldron and the atmosphere saturated with steam,—again explosions hurling mountains far into space and tearing the earth open in ghastly rents to its very heart. At length the fire was partially subdued, the peaceful deep glassed the sky in its bosom or rippled to the whispers of the breeze, and from amidst the fertile slime and mould of its sheltered floor began to sprout the first traces of organic life, the germs of a rude species of marine vegetation. Thousands of years rolled on. The world-ocean subsided, the peaks of mountains, the breasts of islands, mighty continents, emerged, and slowly, after many tedious processes of preparation, a gigantic growth of grass, every blade as large as our vastest oak, shot from the soil, and the incalculable epoch of ferns commenced, whose tremendous harvest clothed the whole land with a deep carpet of living verdure. While unnumbered growths of this vegetation were successively maturing, falling, and hardening into the dark layers of inexhaustible coal-beds, the world, one waving wilderness of solemn ferns, swept in its orbit, voiceless and silent, without a single bird or insect of any kind in all its magnificent green solitudes, the air everywhere being heavily surcharged with gases of the deadliest poison. Again innumerable ages passed, and the era of mere botanic growths reaching its limit, the lowest forms of animal life moved in the waters, the earliest creatures being certain marine reptiles, worms, and bugs of the sea. Then followed various untimed periods, during which animal life rose by degrees from mollusk and jelly-fish, by plesiosaurus and pterodactyl,—horrible monsters, hundreds of feet

in length, whose tramp crashed through the woods, or whose flight loaded the groaning air,—to the dolphin and the whale in the sea, the horse and the lion on the land, and the eagle, the nightingale, and the bird of paradise in the air. Finally, when millions of æons had worn away, the creative process culminated in Humanity, the crown and perfection of all; for God said, "Let us make man in our own image;" and straightway Adam, with upright form, kingly eye, and reason throned upon his brow, stood on the summit of the world and gave names to all the races of creatures beneath.[1]

At this stage two important questions arise. The first is, whether man is the final type of being intended in the Divine plan for this world, or whether he too is destined in his turn to be superseded by a higher race, endowed with form, faculties, and attributes transcending our conceptions, even as our own transcended the ideas of the previous orders of existence. Undoubtedly, had the ichthyosaurus, ploughing through the deep and making it boil like a pot, or one of those mammoth creatures of the antediluvian age who browsed half a dozen trees for breakfast, crunched a couple of oxen for luncheon and a whole flock of sheep for his dinner, been consulted on a similar problem, he would have replied, without hesitation, "I exhaust the uses of the world. What animal can there be superior to me? beyond a question, my race shall possess the earth forever!" The mastodon could not know any uses of nature except those he was fitted to experience, nor imagine a being with the form and prerogatives of man. Therefore he would not believe that the mastodon-race would ever be displaced by the human. We labor under the same disqualification for judgment. There may be in the system of nature around us adaptations, gifts, glories, as much higher than any we enjoy as our noblest powers and privileges are in advance of those of the tiger or the lark.

It is a remarkable fact that the mature states of the antediluvian races correspond with the fœtal states of the present races, and that the fœtal states of embryonic man are counterparts of the mature states of the lower races now contemporaneous with him. This great discovery of modern science, though perhaps destitute of logical value, suggests to the imagination the thought that man may be but the fœtal state of a higher being,—a regent temporarily presiding here until the birth and inauguration of the true king of the world, and destined himself to be born from the womb of this world into the free light and air of the spirit-kingdom!

The resources of God are inexhaustible; and in the evolution of his prearranged ages it may be that there will arise upon the earth a race of beings of unforetold majesty, who shall disinter the remnant bones and ponder the wrecked monuments of forgotten man as we do those of the disgusting reptiles of the Saurian epoch. But this is a mere con-

[1] Harris, The Pre-Adamite Earth.

ceit of possibility; and, so far as the data for forming an opinion are in our hands, it is altogether incredible. So far as appears, the adaptation between man and the earth is exhaustive. He is able to subdue all her forces, reign over all her provinces, enjoy all her delights, and gather into his consciousness all her prophecies. And our practical conviction is absolute that the race of men is the climax of being destined for this earth, and that they will occupy its hospitable bosom forever with their toils and their homes, their sports and their graves.[2]

The other question is this:—Was the subjection of the human race to physical death a part of the Creator's original plan, or the retributive result of a subsequent dislocation of that plan by sin?—a part of the great harmony of nature, or a discord marring the happy destiny of man? Approaching this problem on grounds of science and reason alone, there can be no hesitation as to the reply. There are but two considerations really bearing upon the point and throwing light upon it; and they both force us to the same conclusion. First, it is a fact admitting no denial that death was the predetermined natural fate of the successive generations of the races that preceded man. Now, what conceivable reason is there for supposing that man, constructed from the same elements, living under the same organic laws, was exempt from the same doom? There is not in the whole realm of science a single hint to that effect. Secondly, the reproductive element—an essential feature in the human constitution, leading our kind to multiply and replenish the earth—is a demonstration that the office of death entered into God's original plan of the world. For otherwise the earth at this moment could not hold a tithe of the inhabitants that would be demanding room. When God had permitted this world to roll in space for awful ages, a lifeless globe of gas, fire, water, earth, and then let it be occupied for incommensurable epochs more by snails, vermin, and iguanodons, would he wind up the whole scene and destroy it when the race of man, crowning glory of all, had only flourished for a petty two thousand years? It is not credible. And yet it must have been so unless it was decreed that the successive generations should pass away and thus leave space for the new-comers. We conclude, then, that it is the will of God—and was in the beginning—that the human race shall possess the earth through all the unknown periods of the future, the parents continually passing off the stage in death as the children rise upon it to maturity. We cannot discern any authority in those old traditions which foretell the impending destruction of the world. On what grounds are we to believe them? The great system of things is a stable harmony. There is no wear or tear in the perfect machinery of the creation, rolling noiseless in its blue bearings of ether. It seems, comparatively speaking, to have just begun. Its

[2] Agassiz says no higher creature than man is to be expected on earth, because the capacities of the earthly plan of organic creation are completed and exhausted with him. Introduction to Study of Natural History, p. 57.

oscillations are self-adjusted, and science prophesies for humanity an illimitable career on this earthly theatre. The swift melting of the elements and restoration of chaos is a mere heathen whim or a poetic figment. It is the bards who sing,—

> "The earth shall shortly die. Her grave is dug.
> I see the worlds, night-clad, all gathering
> In long and dark procession. And the stars,
> Which stand as thick as glittering dewdrops on
> The fields of heaven, shall pass in blazing mist."

Such pictures are delusion winning the imagination, not truth commanding the reason. In spite of all the Cassandra-screams of the priesthood, vaticinating universal ruin, the young old earth, fresh every spring, shall remain under God's preserving providence, and humanity's inexhaustible generations renewedly reign over its kingdoms, forever. Plotinus said, "If God repents having made the world, why does he defer its destruction? If he does not yet repent, he never will, as being now accustomed to it, and becoming through time more friendly to it."[3] Lucan says, "Our bones and the stars shall be mingled on one funeral pyre."

> Communis mundo superest rogus, ossibus astra
> Misturus.

But to receive such a good piece of poetry as veritable prevision is surely a puerile error which a mature mind in the nineteenth century should be ashamed to commit.

The most recently-broached theory of the end of the world is that developed from some remarkable speculations as to the composition and distribution of force. The view is briefly this. All force is derived from heat. All heat is derived from the sun.[4] The mechanical value of a cubic mile of sunlight at the surface of the earth is one horse-power for a third of a minute; at the sun it is fifteen thousand horse-power for a minute. Now, it is calculated that enough heat is radiated from the sun to require for its production the annual consumption of the whole surface of the sun to the depth of from ten to twenty miles. Of course, ultimately the fuel will be all expended; then the forces of the system will expire, and the creation will die.[5] This brilliant and sublime theorem assumes, first, that the heat of the sun arises from consumption of matter, —which may not be true; secondly, that it is not a self-replenishing process,—as it certainly may be. Some have even surmised that the zodiacal light is an illuminated tornado of stones showering into the sun to feed its tremendous conflagration. The whole scheme is a fine toy, but a very faint terror. Even if it be true, then we are to perish at last from *lack* of fire, and not, as commonly feared, from its abundance!

The belief of mankind that a soul or ghost survives the body has been

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[3] Ennead ii. lib. ix.: Contra Gnosticos, cap. 4.

[4] Helmholtz, Edinburgh Phil. Mag., series iv. vol. xi.: Interaction of Natural Forces.

[5] Thomson, Ibid. Dec. 1854: Mechanical Energies of the Solar System.

so nearly universal as to appear like the spontaneous result of an instinct. We propose to trace the history of opinions concerning the physical destination of this disembodied spirit,—its connection with localities,—to give the historical topography of the future life.

The earliest conception of the abode of the dead was probably that of the Hebrew Sheol or the Greek Hades,—namely, the idea—born from the silence, depth, and gloom of the grave—of a stupendous subterranean cavern full of the drowsy race of shades, the indiscriminate habitation of all who leave the land of the living. Gradually the thought arose and won acceptance that the favorites of Deity, peerless heroes and sages, might be exempt from this dismal fate, and migrate at death to some delightful clime beyond some far shore, there, amidst unalloyed pleasures, to spend immortal days. This region was naturally located on the surface of the earth, where the cheerful sun could shine and the fresh breezes blow, yet in some untrodden distance, where the gauntlet of fact had not smitten the sceptre of fable. The paltry portion of this earth familiar to the ancients was surrounded by an unexplored region, which their fancy, stimulated by the legends of the poets, peopled with mythological kingdoms,—the rainbow bowers and cloudy synods of Olympus, from whose glittering peak the Thunderer threw his bolts over the south; the Golden Garden of the Hesperides, whose dragons lay on guard in the remote west; the divine cities of Meru, whose encircling towers pierced the eastern sky; the Banquet-Halls of Ethiopia, gleaming through the fiery desert; the fragrant Islands of Immortality, musical and luring in the central ocean; the happy land of the Hyperboreans, beyond the snowy summits of northern Caucasus:—

> "How pleasant were the wild beliefs
> That dwelt in legends old!
> Alas! to our posterity
> Will no such tales be told.
> We know too much: scroll after scroll
> Weighs down our weary shelves:
> Our only point of ignorance
> Is centred in ourselves."

There was a belief among the Persians that Kâf, a mountain two thousand miles high, formed a rim to the flat world and prevented travellers from ever falling off.[6] The fact that the earth is a globe inhabited on all sides is a comparatively recent piece of knowledge. So late as in the eighth century Pope Zachary accused Virgilius, an Irish mathematician and monk, of heresy for believing in the existence of antipodes.[7] St. Boniface wrote to the Pope against Virgilius; and Zachary ordered a council to be held to expel him from the Church, for "professing, against God and his own soul, so perverse and wicked a doctrine." To the ancients all beyond the region they had traversed was an unknown land, clothed in darkness, crowded with mystery and allurement. Across the weltering wastes of

[6] Adventures of Hatim Tâi, p. 36, note.

[7] Whewell, Hist. Inductive Sciences, vol. i. book iv. ch. i. sect. 7.

brine, in a halcyon sea, the Hindu placed the White Isle, the dwelling of translated and immortalized men.[8] Under the attraction of a mystic curiosity, well might the old, wearied Ulysses say,—

> "Come, my friends,
> 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
> Push off, and, sitting well in order, smite
> The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
> To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
> Of all the western stars, until I die.
> It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
> It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
> And see the great Achilles, whom we knew."

Decius Brutus and his army, as Florus relates, reaching the coast of Portugal, where, for the first time, they saw the sun setting in the blood-tinged ocean, turned back their standards with horror as they beheld "the huge corpse of ruddy gold let down into the deep." The Phœnician traders brought intelligence to Greece of a people, the Cimmerians, who dwelt on the borders of Hades in the umbered realms of perpetual night. To the dying Roman, on the farthest verge of the known horizon hovered a vision of Elysian Fields. And the American Indian, sinking in battle or the chase, caught glimpses of happier Hunting-Grounds, whose woods trooped with game, and where the arrows of the braves never missed, and there was no winter. There was a pretty myth received among some of the ancient Britons, locating their paradise in a spot surrounded by tempests, far in the Western Ocean, and named Flath-Innis, or Noble Island.[9] The following legend is illustrative. An old man sat thoughtful on a rock beside the sea. A cloud, under whose squally skirts the waters foamed, rushed down; and from its dark womb issued a boat, with white sails bent to the wind, and hung round with moving oars. Destitute of mariners, itself seemed to live and move. A voice said, "Arise, behold the boat of heroes: embark, and see the Green Isle of those who have passed away!" Seven days and seven nights he voyaged, when a thousand tongues called out, "The Isle! the Isle!" The black billows opened before him, and the calm land of the departed rushed in light on his eyes. We are reminded by this of what Procopius says concerning the conveyal of the soul of the barbarian to his paradise. At midnight there is a knocking at the door, and indistinct voices call him to come. Mysteriously impelled, he goes to the sea-coast, and there finds a frail, empty wherry awaiting him. He embarks, and a spirit-crew row him to his destination.[10]

> "He finds with ghosts
> His boat deep-freighted, sinking to the edge
> Of the dark flood, and voices hears, yet sees
> No substance; but, arrived where once again
> His skiff floats free, hears friends to friends

[8] Wilford, Essays on the Sacred Isles, in Asiatic Researches, vols. viii.–xi.

[9] Macpherson, Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland, pp. 180–186.

[10] Procopius, Gothica, lib. iv.

Give lamentable welcome. The unseen
Shore faint resounds, and all the mystic air
Breathes forth the names of parent, brother, wife."

During that period of poetic credulity while the face of the earth remained to a great extent concealed from knowledge, wherever the Hebrew Scriptures were known went the cherished traditions of the Garden of Eden from which our first parents were driven for their sin. Speculation naturally strove to settle the locality of this lost paradise. Sometimes it was situated in the mysterious bosom of India; sometimes in the flowery vales of Georgia, where roses and spices perfumed the gales; sometimes in the guarded recesses of Mesopotamia. Now it was the Grand Oasis in the Arabian desert, flashing on the wilted pilgrim, over the blasted and blazing wastes, with the verdure of palms, the play of waters, the smell and flavor of perennial fruits. Again it was at the equator, where the torrid zone stretched around it as a fiery sword waving every way so that no mortal could enter. In the "Imago Mundi," a Latin treatise on cosmography written early in the twelfth century, we read, "Paradise is the extreme eastern part of Asia, and is made inaccessible by a wall of fire surrounding it and rising unto heaven." At a later time the Canaries were thought to be the ancient Elysium, and were accordingly named the Fortunate Isles. Indeed, among the motives that animated Columbus on his adventurous voyage no inferior place must be assigned to the hope of finding the primeval seat of Paradise.[11] The curious traveller, exploring these visionary spots one by one, found them lying in the light of common day no nearer heaven than his own natal home; and at last all faith in them died out when the whole surface of the globe had been surveyed, no nook left wherein romance and superstition might any longer play at hide-and-seek.

Continuing our search after the local abode of the departed, we now leave the surface of the earth and descend beneath it. The first haunted region we reach is the realm of the Fairies, which, as every one acquainted with the magic lore of old Germany or England knows, was situated just under the external ground, and was clothed with every charm poets could imagine or the heart dream. There was supposed to be an entrance to this enchanted domain at the Peak Cavern in Derbyshire, and at several other places. Sir Walter Scott has collected some of the best legends illustrative of this belief in his "History of Demonology." Sir Gawaine, a famous knight of the Round Table, was once admitted to dine, above ground, in the edge of the forest, with the King of the Fairies:—

"The banquet o'er, the royal Fay, intent
To do all honor to King Arthur's knight,
Smote with his rod the bank on which they leant,
And Fairy-land flash'd glorious on the sight;

[11] Irving, Life of Columbus: Appendix on the Situation of the Terrestrial Paradise. By far the most valuable book ever published on this subject is that of Schulthess, Das Paradies, das irdische und überirdische historische, mythische und mystische, nebst einer kritischen Revision der allgemeinen biblischen Geographie.

Flash'd, through a silvery, soft, transiucent mist,
The opal shafts and domes of amethyst;
Flash'd founts in shells of pearl, which crystal walls
And phosphor lights of myriad hues redouble.
There, in the blissful subterranean halls,
When morning wakes the world of human trouble
Glide the gay race; each sound our discord knows,
Faint heard above, but lulls them to repose."

To this empire of moonlit swards and elfin dances, of jewelled banks, lapsing streams, and enchanting visions, it was thought a few favored mortals might now and then find their way. But this was never an earnest general faith. It was a poetic superstition that hovered over fanciful brains, a legendary dream that pleased credulous hearts; and, with the other romance of the early world, it has vanished quite away.

The popular belief of Jews, Greeks, Etruscans, Romans, Germans, and afterwards of Christians, was that there was an immense world of the dead deep beneath the earth, subdivided into several subordinate regions. The Greenlanders believed in a separated heaven and hell, both located far below the Polar Ocean. According to the old classic descriptions of the under-world, what a scene of colossal gloom it is! Its atmosphere murmurs with a breath of plaintive sighs. Its population, impalpable ghosts timidly flitting at every motion, crowd the sombre landscapes in numbers surpassing imagination. There Cocytus creeps to the seat of doom, his waves emitting doleful wails. Styx, nine times enfolding the whole abode, drags his black and sluggish length around. Charon, the slovenly old ferryman, plies his noiseless boat to and fro laden with shadowy passengers. Far away in the centre grim Pluto sits on his ebony throne and surveys the sad subjects of his dreadful domain. By his side sits his stolen and shrinking bride, Proserpine, her glimmering brows encircled with a wreath of poppies. Above the subterranean monarch's head a sable rainbow spans the infernal firmament; and when, with lifted hand, he announces his decrees, the applause given by the twilight populace of Hades is a rustle of sighs, a vapor of tears, and a shudder of submission.

The belief in this dolorous kingdom was early modified by the reception of two other adjacent realms,—one of reward, one of torture; even as Goethe says, in allusion to the current Christian doctrine, "Hell was originally but one apartment: limbo and purgatory were afterwards added as wings." Passing through Hades, and turning in one direction, the spirit-traveller would arrive at Elysium or Abraham's bosom:—

"To paradise the gloomy passage winds
Through regions drear and dismal, and through pain,
Emerging soon in beatific blaze
Of light."

There the blessed ones found respite and peaceful joys in flowery fields, pure breezes, social fellowship, and the similitudes of their earthly pursuits. In this placid clime, lighted by its own constellations, favored

souls roamed or reposed in a sort of ineffectual happiness. According to the pagans, here were such heroes as Achilles, such sages as Socrates, to remain forever, or until the end of the world. And here, according to the Christians, the departed patriarchs and saints were tarrying expectant of Christ's arrival to ransom them. Dante thus describes that great event:—

"Then he, who well my covert meaning knew,
Answer'd, Herein I had not long been bound,
When an All-puissant One I saw march through,
With victory's radiant sign triumphal crown'd.
He led from us our Father Adam's shade,
Abel and Noah, whom God loved the most,
Lawgiving Moses, him who best obey'd,
Abraam the patriarch, royal David's ghost;
Israel, his father, and his sons, and her
Whom Israel served for, faithfully and long,
Rachel, with more, to bliss did He transfer:
No souls were saved before this chosen throng."[12]

At the opposite extremity of Hades was supposed to be an opening that led down into Tartarus, "a place made underneath all things, so low and horrible that hell is its heaven." Here the old earth-giants, the looming Titans, lay, bound, transfixed with thunderbolts, their mountainous shapes half buried in rocks, encrusting lava, and ashes. Rivers of fire seam the darkness, whose borders are braided with sentinel furies. On every hand the worst criminals, perjurers, blasphemers, ingrates, groan beneath the pitiless punishments inflicted on them without escape. Any realization of the terrific scenery of this whole realm would curdle the blood.[13] There were fabled entrances to the dread under-world at Acherusia, in Bithynia, at Avernus, in Campania, where Ulysses evoked the dead and traversed the grisly abodes, through the Sibyl's cave at Cumæ, at Hermione, in Argolis, where the people thought the passage below so near and easy that they neglected to give the dying an obolus to pay ferriage to Charon, at Tænarus, the southernmost point of Peloponnesus, where Herakles went down and dragged the three-headed dog up into day, at the cave of Trophonius, in Lebadea, and at several other places.

Similar conceptions have been embodied in the ecclesiastical doctrine which has generally prevailed in Christendom. Locating the scene in the hollow of the earth, thus has it been described by Milton,—

"A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible,
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of anguish, doleful shades, where peace
Nor hope can come, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed;"

[12] Parsons's trans. Dell' Inferno, canto iv. ll. 55–63.

[13] Descriptions of the sufferings of hell, according to the popular notions at different periods, are given in the work published at Weimar in 1817, Das Rad der ewigen Höllenqual. In den Curiositäten der physisch-literarisch-artistisch-historischen Vor-und Mitwelt, band vi. st. 2.

wherein, confined by adamantine walls, the fallen angels and all the damned welter overwhelmed with floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire. Shapes once celestially fair and proud, but now scarred from battle and darkened by sin into faded forms of haggard splendor, support their uneasy steps over the burning marl. Everywhere shrieks and moans resound, and the dusky vault of pandemonium is lighted by a blue glare cast pale and dreadful from the tossings of the flaming lake. This was hell, where the wicked must shrink and howl forever. Etna, Vesuvius, Stromboli, Hecla, were believed to be vent-holes from this bottomless and living pit of fire. The famous traveller, Sir John Maundeville, asserted that he found a descent into hell "in a perilous vale" in the dominions of Prester John. Many a cavern in England still bears the name of "Hell-hole." In a dialogue between a clerk and a master, preserved in an old Saxon catechism, the following question and reply occur:—"Why is the sun so red when she sets?" "Because she looks down upon hell." Antonius Rusca, a learned professor at Milan, in the year 1621, published a huge quarto in five books, giving a detailed topographical account of the interior of the earth, hell, purgatory, and limbo.[14] There is a lake in the south of Ireland in which is an island containing a cavern said to open down into hell. This cave is called St. Patrick's Purgatory, and the pretence obtained quite general credit for upwards of five centuries. Crowds of pilgrims visited the place. Some who had the hardihood to venture in were severely pinched, beaten, and burned, by the priests within, disguised as devils, and were almost frightened out of their wits by the diabolical scenes they saw where

> "Forth from the depths of flame that singed the gloom
> Despairing wails and piercing shrieks were heard."

Several popes openly preached in behalf of this gross imposition; and the Church virtually authorized it by receiving the large revenues accruing from it, until at last outraged common sense demanded its repudiation and suppression.[15]

Few persons now, as they walk the streets and fields, are much disturbed by the thought that, not far below, the vivid lake of fire and brimstone, greedily roaring for new food, heaves its tortured surges convulsed and featured with souls. Few persons now shudder at a volcanic eruption as a premonishing message freshly belched from hell.[16] In fact, the old belief in a local physical hell within the earth has almost gone from the public mind of to-day. It arose from pagan myths and figures of speech based on ignorant observation and arbitrary fancy, and with the growth of science and the enlightenment of reason it has very extensively fallen and faded away. No honest and intelligent inquirer

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[14] De Inferno et Statu Daemonum ante Mundi Exitium.

[15] Wright, St. Patrick's Purgatory: an Essay on the Legends of Paradise, Hell, and Purgatory, current during the Middle Ages.

[16] Patuzzi, De Sede inferni in Terris quaerenda.

into the matter can find the slightest valid support for such a notion. It is now a mere tradition, upheld by groundless authority. And yet the dim shadow of that great idea of a subterranean hell which once burned so fierce and lurid in the brain of Christendom still vaguely haunts the modern world. The dogma still lies in the prevalent creeds, and is occasionally dragged out and brandished by fanatic preachers. The transmitted literature and influences of the past are so full of it that it cannot immediately cease. Accordingly, while the common understanding no longer grasps it as a definite verity, it lingers in the popular fancy as a half-credible image. The painful attempts made now and then by some antiquated or fanatical clergyman to compel attention to it and belief in it as a tangible fact of science, as well as an unquestionable revelation of Scripture, scarcely win a passing notice, but provoke a significant smile. Father Passaglia, an eminent Jesuit theologian, in 1856 published in Italy a work on the Literality of Hell-Fire and the Eternity of the Punishments of the Damned. He says, "In this world fire burns by chemical operations; but in hell it burns by the breath of the Lord!" The learned and venerable Faber, a voluminous author and distinguished English divine, published in the year 1851 a large octavo entitled "The Many Mansions in the House of the Father," discussing with elaborate detail the question as to the locality of the scenes awaiting souls after death. His grand conclusion—the unreasonableness of which will be apparent without comment—is as follows:—"The saints having first risen with Christ into the highest regions of the air, out of reach of the dreadful heat, the tremendous flood of fire hitherto detained inside the earth will be let loose, and an awful conflagration rage till the whole material globe is dissipated into sublimated particles. Then the world will be formed anew, in three parts. First, there will be a solid central sphere of fire—the flaming nucleus of Gehenna—two thousand miles in diameter. Secondly, there shall roll around this central ball on all sides an ignited ocean of liquid fire two thousand miles in depth, the peculiar residence of the wicked, the sulphurous lake spoken of in the Apocalypse. Thirdly, around this infernal sea a vast spherical arch will hang, a thousand miles thick, a massive and unbroken shell, through which there are no spiracles, and whose external surface, beautiful beyond conception, becomes the heaven of the redeemed, where Christ himself, perfect man as well as perfect God, fixes his residence and establishes the local sovereignty of the Universal Archangel."[17] A comfortable thought it must be for the saints, as they roam the flowery fields, basking in immortal bliss, to remember that under the crust they tread, a sound-

[17] Part iv. chap. ix. p. 417. Dr. Cumming (The End, Lect. X.) teaches the doctrine of the literal resurrection of the flesh, and the subsequent residence of the redeemed on this globe as their eternal heaven under the immediate rule of Christ. Quite a full detail of the historic and present belief in this scheme may be found in the recent work of its earnest advocate, D. T. Taylor,—The Voice of the Church on the Coming of the Redeemer, or a History of the Doctrine of the Reign of Christ on Earth.

less sea of fire is forever plunging on its circular course, all its crimson waves packed with the agonized faces of the damned as thick as drops! The whole scheme is without real foundation. Science laughs at such a theory. Its scriptural supports are either ethnic figments or rhetorical tropes. Reason, recollecting the immateriality of the soul, dissipates the ghastly dream beyond the possibility of restoration to belief.

Following the historic locations of the abode of departed souls, we next ascend from the interior of the earth, and above the surface of the earth, into the air and the lofty realms of ether. The ancient Caledonians fixed the site of their spirit-world in the clouds. Their bards have presented this conception in manifold forms and with the most picturesque details. In tempests the ghosts of their famous warriors ride on the thunderbolts, looking on the earth with eyes of fire, and hurling lances of lightning. They float over the summits of the hills or along the valleys in wreaths of mist, on vapory steeds, waving their shadowy arms in the moonlight, the stars dimly glimmering through their visionary shapes. The Laplanders also placed their heaven in the upper air, where the Northern Lights play. They regarded the auroral streamers as the sport of departed spirits in the happy region to which they had risen. Such ideas, clad in the familiar imagery furnished by their own climes, would naturally be suggested to the ignorant fancy, and easily commended to the credulous thoughts, of the Celts and Finns. Explanation and refutation are alike unnecessary.

Plutarch describes a theory held by some of the ancients locating hell in the air, elysium in the moon.[18] After death all souls are compelled to spend a period in the region between the earth and the moon,—the wicked in severe tortures and for a longer time, the good in a mild discipline soon purging away all their stains and fitting them for the lunar paradise. After tarrying a season there, they were either born again upon the earth, or transported to the divine realm of the sun. Macrobius, too, says, "The Platonists reckon as the infernal region the whole space between the earth and the moon."[19] He also adds, "The tropical signs Cancer and Capricorn are called the gates of the sun, because there he meets the solstice and can go no farther. Cancer is the gate of men, because by it is the descent to the lower regions; Capricorn is the gate of gods, because by it is a return for souls to the rank of gods in the seat of their proper immortality."[20] The Manicheans taught that souls were borne to the moon on leaving their bodies, and there washed from their sins in water, then taken to the sun and further cleansed in fire. They described the moon and sun as two splendid ships prepared for transferring souls to their native country,—the world of perfect light in the heights of the creation.[21]

The ancient Hebrews thought the sky a solid firmament overarching

[18] In his Essay on the Face in the Orb of the Moon.
[19] In Somnium Scipionis, lib. i. cap. xi. [20] Ibid. cap. xii.
[21] Augustine, De Natura Boni, cap. xliv.

the earth, and supporting a sea of inexhaustible waters, beyond which God and his angels dwelt in monopolized splendor. Eliphaz the Temanite says, "Is not God in the height of heaven? And behold the stars, how high they are; but he walketh upon the arch of heaven!" And Job says, "He covereth the face of his throne, and spreadeth his clouds under it. He hath drawn a circular bound upon the waters to the confines of light and darkness." From the dazzling realm above this supernal ocean all men were supposed, until after the resurrection of Christ, to be excluded. But from that time the belief gradually spread in Christendom that a way was open for faithful souls to ascend thither. Ephraim the Syrian,[22] and Ambrose, located paradise in the outermost East on the highest summit of the earth, stretching into the serene heights of the sky. The ancients often conceived the universe to form one solid whole, whose different provinces were accessible from each other to gods and angels by means of bridges and golden staircases. Hence the innumerable paradisal legends associated with the mythic mountains of antiquity, such as Elborz, Olympus, Meru, and Kâf. Among the strange legends of the Middle Age, Gervase of Tilbury preserves the following one, illustrative of this belief in a sea over the sky:—"One Sunday the people of an English village were coming out of church,—a dark, gloomy day,—when they saw the anchor of a ship hooked to one of the tombstones, the cable, tightly stretched, hanging down the air. Presently they saw a sailor sliding down the rope to unfix the anchor. When he had just loosened it the villagers seized hold of him; and, while in their hands, he quickly died, as though he had been drowned!" There is also a famous legend called "St. Brandon's Voyage." The worthy saint set sail from the coast of Ireland, and held on his way till he arrived at the moon, which he found to be the location of hell. Here he saw Judas Iscariot in execrable tortures, regularly respited, however, every week from Saturday eve till Sunday eve!

The thought—so entirely in accordance with the first impression made by the phenomenon of the night-sky on the ignorant senses and imagination—that the stars are set in a firm revolving dome, has widely prevailed; and the thought that heaven lies beyond that solid arch, in the unknown space, is a popular notion lingering still. The scriptural image declaring that the convulsions of the last day will shake the stars from their sockets in the heavenly floor, "as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind," although so obviously a figure of speech, has been very generally credited as the description of a literal fact yet to occur. And how many thousands of pious Christians have felt, with the sainted Doddridge,

> "Ye stars are but the shining dust
> Of my Divine abode,—
> The pavement of those heavenly courts
> Where I shall see my God!"

[22] De Paradiso Eden, Sermo I.

The universal diffusion in civilized nations of the knowledge that the visible sky is no substantial expanse, but only an illimitable void of space hung with successive worlds, has by no means banished the belief, originally based on the opposite error, in a physical heaven definitely located far overhead, the destination of all ransomed souls. This is undoubtedly the most common idea at the present time. An English clergyman once wrote a book, afterwards translated into German, to teach that the sun is hell, and that the black spots often noticed on the disk of that orb are gatherings of damned souls.[23] Isaac Taylor, on the contrary, contends with no little force and ingenuity that the sun may be the heaven of our planetary system, a globe of immortal blessedness and glory.[24] The celebrated Dr. Whiston was convinced that the great comet which appeared in his day was hell. He imagined it remarkably fitted for that purpose by its fiery vapor, and its alternate plunges, now into the frozen extremity of space, now into the scorching breath of the sun. Tupper fastens the stigma of being the infernal prison-house on the moon, in this style:—

"I know thee well, O Moon, thou cavern'd realm,
Sad satellite, thou giant ash of death,
Blot on God's firmament, pale home of crime,
Scarr'd prison-house of sin, where damned souls
Feed upon punishment: Oh, thought sublime,
That amid night's black deeds, when evil prowls
Through the broad world, thou, watching sinners well,
Glarest o'er all, the wakeful eye of—Hell!"

Bailey's conception is the darker birth of a deeper feeling:—

"There is a blind world, yet unlit by God,
Rolling around the extremest edge of light,
Where all things are disaster and decay:
That black and outcast orb is Satan's home.
That dusky world man's science counteth not
Upon the brightest sky. He never knows
How near it comes to him; but, swathed in clouds,
As though in plumed and palled state, it steals,
Hearse-like and thief-like, round the universe,
Forever rolling, and returning not,—
Robbing all worlds of many an angel soul,—
With its light hidden in its breast, which burns
With all concentrate and superfluent woe."

In the average faith of individuals to-day, heaven and hell exist as separate places located somewhere in the universe; but the notions as to the precise regions in which they lie are most vague and ineffectual when compared with what they formerly were.

The Scandinavian kosmos contained nine worlds, arranged in the following order:—Gimle, a golden region at the top of the universe, the eternal residence of Allfather and his chosen ones; next below that, Muspel,

[23] Swinden, On the Nature and Location of Hell.
[24] Physical Theory of Another Life, chap. xvi.

the realm of the genii of fire; Asgard, the abode of the gods in the starry firmament; Vindheim, the home of the air-spirits; Manheim, the earth, or middle realm; Jötunheim, the world of the giants, outside the sea surrounding the earth; Elfheim, the world of the black demons and dwarfs, just under the earth's surface; Helheim, the domain of the goddess of death, deep within the earth's bosom; and finally, Niflheim, the lowest kingdom of horror and pain, at the very bottom of the creation. The Buddhist kosmos, in the simplest form, as some of them conceived it, was composed of a series of concentric spheres each separated from the next by a space, and successively overarching and underarching each other with circular layers of brightness above and blackness beneath; each starry hollow overhead being a heaven inhabited by gods and blessed souls, each lurid hollow underfoot being a hell filled with demons and wicked souls in penance. The Arabian kosmos, beginning with the earth, ascended to a world of water above the firmament, next to a world of air, then to a world of fire, followed in rising order by an emerald heaven with angels in the form of birds, a heaven of precious stones with angels as eagles, a hyacinth heaven with angels as vultures, a silver heaven with angels as horses, a golden and a pearl heaven each peopled with angel girls, a crystal heaven with angel men, then two heavens full of angels, and finally a great sea without bound, each sphere being presided over by a chief ruler, the names of all of whom were familiar to the learned Arabs. The Syrian kosmos corresponded closely to the foregoing. It soared up the mounting steps of earth, water, air, fire, and innumerable choruses successively of Angels, Archangels, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Dominations, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim, unto the Expanse whence Lucifer fell; afterwards to a boundless Ocean; and lastly to a magnificent Crown of Light filling the uppermost space of all.[35]

It is hard for us to imagine the aspects of the universe to the ancients and the impressions it produced in them, all seemed so different then, in the dimness of crude observation, from the present appearance in the light of astronomic science. Anaximander held that the earth was of cylindrical form, suspended in the middle of the universe and surrounded by envelopes of water, air, and fire, as by the coats of an onion, but that the exterior stratum was broken up and collected into masses, and thus originated the sun, moon, and stars, which are carried around by the three spheres in which they are fixed.[36] Many of the Oriental nations believed the planets to be animated beings, conscious divinities, freely marching around their high realms, keeping watch and ward over the creation, smiling their favorites on to happy fortune, fixing their baleful eyes and shedding disastrous eclipse on "falling nations and on kingly lines about to sink forever." This belief was cherished among the later Greek philosophers and Roman priests, and was vividly held by such

[35] Dupuis, L'Origine de tous les Cultes, Planche No. 21. [36] Arist. de Cœl. ii. 13.

men as Philo, Origen, and even Kepler. It is here that we are to look for the birth of astrology, that solemn lore, linking the petty fates of men with the starry conjunctions, which once sank so deeply into the mind of the world, but is now wellnigh forgotten:—

"No more of that, ye planetary lights!
Your aspects, dignities, ascendancies,
Your partile quartiles, and your plastic trines,
And all your heavenly houses and effects,
Shall meet no more devout expounders here.
The joy of Jupiter,
The exaltation of the Dragon's head,
The sun's triplicity and glorious
Day-house on high, the moon's dim detriment,
And all the starry inclusions of all signs,
Shall rise, and rule, and pass, and no one know
That there are spirit-rulers of all worlds,
Which fraternize with earth, and, though unknown,
Hold in the shining voices of the stars
Communion on high and everywhere."

The belief that the stars were living beings, combining with the fancy of an unscientific time, gave rise to the stellar apotheosis of heroes and legendary names, and was the source of those numerous asterisms, outlined groups of stars, which still bedeck the skies and form the landmarks of celestial topography. It was these and kindred influences that wrought together

"To make the firmament bristle with shapes
Of intermittent motion, aspect vague,
And mystic bearings, which o'ercreep the earth,
Keeping slow time with horrors in the blood;"—

the Gorgon's petrific Head, the Bear's frightful form, Berenice's streaming Hair, the curdling length of Ophiuchus, and the Hydra's horrid shape. The poetic eye of old religion saw gods in the planets walking their serene blue paths,—

"Osiris, Bel, Odin, Mithras, Brahm, Zeus,
Who gave their names to stars which still roam round
The skies, all worshipless, even from climes
Where their own altars once topp'd every hill."

By selected constellations the choicest legends of the antique world are preserved in silent enactment. On the heavenly sea the Argonautæ keep nightly sail towards the Golden Fleece. There Heraklês gripes the hydra's heads and sways his irresistible club; Arion with his harp rides the docile Dolphin; the Centaur's right hand clutches the Wolf; the Hare flees from the raging eye and inaudible bark of the Dog; and space crawls with the horrors of the Scorpion.

In consequence of the earth's revolution in its orbit, the sun appears at different seasons to rise in connection with different groups of stars. It seems as if the sun made an annual journey around the ecliptic. This circuit was divided into twelve parts corresponding to the months, and each marked by a distinct constellation. There was a singular

agreement in regard to these solar houses, residences of the gods, or signs of the zodiac, among the leading nations of the earth,—the Persians, Chaldeans, Hebrews, Syrians, Hindus, Chinese, Arabians, Japanese, Siamese, Goths, Javanese, Mexicans, Peruvians, and Scandinavians.[37] Among the various explanations of the origin of these artificial signs, we will notice only the one attributed by Volney to the Egyptians. The constellations in which the sun successively appeared from month to month were named thus:—at the time of the overflow of the Nile, the *stars of inundation*, (Aquarius;) at the time of ploughing, *stars of the ox*, (Taurus;) when lions, driven forth by thirst, appeared on the banks of the Nile, *stars of the lion*, (Leo;) at the time of reaping, *stars of the sheaf*, (Virgo;) *stars of the lamb and two kids*, (Aries,) when these animals were born; *stars of the crab*, (Cancer,) when the sun, touching the tropic, returned backwards; *stars of the wild goat*, (Capricorn,) when the sun reached the highest point in his yearly track; *stars of the balance*, (Libra,) when days and nights were in equilibrium; *stars of the scorpion*, (Scorpio,) when periodical simooms burned like the venom of a scorpion; and so on of the rest.[38]

The progress of astronomical science—from the wild time when men thought the stars were mere spangles stuck in a solid expanse not far off, to the vigorous age when Ptolemy's mathematics spanned the scope of the sky; from the first reverent observations of the Chaldean shepherds watching the constellations as gods, to the magnificent reasonings of Copernicus dashing down the innumerable crystalline spheres, "cycle on epicycle, orb on orb," with which crude theorizers had crowded the stellar spaces; from the uncurbed poetry of Hyginus writing the floor of heaven over with romantic myths in planetary words, to the more wondrous truth of Le Verrier measuring the steps from nimble Mercury flitting moth-like in the beard of the sun to dull Neptune sagging in his cold course twenty-six hundred million miles away; from the half-inch orb of Hipparchus's naked eye, to the six-feet speculum of Rosse's awful tube; from the primeval belief in one world studded around with skyey torch-lights, to the modern conviction of octillions of inhabited worlds all governed by one law—constitutes the most astonishing chapter in the history of the human mind. Every step of this incredible progress has had its effect in modifying the conceptions of man's position and importance in nature and of the connection of his future fate with localities. Of old, the entire creation was thought to lie pretty much within the comprehension of man's unaided senses, and man himself was supposed to be the chief—if not the sole—object of Divine providence. The deities often came down in incarnations and mingled with their favorites and rescued the earth from evils. Every thing was anthropomorphized. Man's relative magnitude and power were believed to be such that he fancied during an eclipse that, by screams, the crashing of gongs, and

[37] Pigott, Scandinavian Mythology, chap. i. p. 31.

[38] Volney, Ruins, chap. xxii. sect. 3. Maurice, Hist. Hindostan, vol. i. pp. 145–147.

magic rites, he could scare away the monsters who were swallowing the sun or the moon. Meteors shooting through the evening air the Arabs believed were fallen angels trying to get back into heaven but hurled from the crystal battlements by the flaming lances of the guardian watchers. Then the gazer saw

> "The top of heaven full of fiery shapes,
> Of burning cressets."

Now the student contemplates an abyss swarming with orbs each outweighing millions of our earth. Then they read their nativities in the planets and felt how great must be the state overwatched by such resplendent servitors. Now

> "They seek communion with the stars that they may know
> How petty is this ball on which they come and go."

Then the hugest view of the extent of the universal sphere was that an iron mass would require nine days and nights to plunge from its Olympian height to its Tartarean depth. Now we are told by the masters of science that there are stars so distant that it would take their light, travelling at a rate of nearly twelve million miles a minute, thirty million years to reach us. The telescope has multiplied the size of the creation by hundreds of millions, and the grandest conception of the stellar universe possible to the most capacious human mind probably bears no larger proportion to the fact than an orrery does to the solar system. Our earth is a hundred million miles from the sun, whose diameter is so monstrous that a hundred such orbs strung in a straight line would occupy the whole distance. The sun, with all his attendant planets and moons, is sweeping around his own centre—supposed by some to be Alcyone—at the rate of four hundred thousand miles a day; and it will take him eighteen million years to complete one revolution. Our firmamental cluster contains, it has been calculated, in round numbers about twenty million stars. There are many thousands of such nebulæ visible, some of them capable of packing away in their awful bosoms hundreds of thousands of our galaxies. Measure off the abysmal space into seven hundred thousand stages each a hundred million miles wide, and you reach the nearest fixed stars,—for instance, the constellation of the Lyre. Multiply that inconceivable distance by hundreds of thousands, and still you will discern enormous sand-banks of stars obscurely glittering on the farthest verge of telescopic vision. And even all this is but a little corner of the whole.

Coleridge once said, "To some infinitely superior Being, the whole universe may be as one plain,—the distance between planet and planet being only as the pores in a grain of sand, and the spaces between system and system no greater than the intervals between one grain and the grain adjacent." One of the vastest thoughts yet conceived by any mortal mind is that of turning the universe from a mechanical to a chemical problem, as illustrated by Prof. Lovering.[29] Assuming the acknowledged

[29] Cambridge Miscellany, 1842.

truths in physics, that the ultimate particles of matter never actually touch each other, and that water in evaporating expands into eighteen hundred times its previous volume, he demonstrates that the porosity of our solar system is no greater than that of steam. "The porosity of granite or gold may be equal to that of steam, the greater density being a stronger energy in the central forces." And the conclusion is scientifically reached that "the vast interval between the sun and Herschel is an enormous pore, while the invisible distance that separates the most closely-nestled atoms is a planetary space,—a stupendous gulf when compared with the little spheres between which it flows." Thus we may think of the entire universe as a living organism, like a ripening orange, its component atoms worlds, the sidereal movements its vital circulation.

Surely, when a man looks up from his familiar fields and household roof to such incommensurable objects as scientific imagination reveals in the sparkling sword-handle of Perseus and the hazy girdle of Andromeda, overpowering humility will fill his breast, an unutterable solemnity will "fall on him as from the very presence-chamber of the Highest." And will he not, when he contemplates the dust-like shoals of stars, the shining films of firmaments, that retreat and hover through all the boundless heights,—the Nubecula nebula, looking like a bunch of ribbons disposed in a true-love's knot,—that most awful nebula whirled into the shape and bearing the name of the Dumb-Bell,—the Crab nebula, hanging over the infinitely remote space, a sprawling terror, every point holding millions of worlds,—thinking of these all-transcendent wonders, and then remembering his own inexpressible littleness, how that the visible existence of his whole race does not occupy a single tick of the great Sidereal Clock, will he not sink under helpless misgivings, will he not utterly despair of immortal notice and support from the King of all this? In a word, how does the solemn greatness of man, the supposed eternal destiny of man, stand affected by the modern knowledge of the vastness of creation? Regarding the immensities receding over him in unfathomable abysses bursting with dust-heaps of suns, must not man be dwarfed into unmitigated contempt, his life and character rendered absolutely insignificant, the utmost span of his fortunes seeming but as the hum and glitter of an ephemeron in a moment's sunshine? Doubtless many a one has at times felt the stupendous truths of astronomy thus palsying him with a crushing sense of his own nothingness and burying him in fatalistic despair. Standing at night, alone, beneath the august dome studded from of old with its ever-blazing lights, he gazes up and sees the innumerable armies of heaven marshalled forth above him in the order and silence of their primeval pomp. Peacefully and forever they shine there. In nebula separated from nebula by trillions of leagues, plane beyond plane, they stretch and glitter to the feet of God. Falling on his knees, he clasps his hands in speechless adoration, but feels, with an intolerable ache of the heart, that in this infinitude such an one as he can be of no consequence whatever. He waits passively for the resistless

round of fate to bear him away,—ah, whither? "Conscious that he dwells but as an atom of dust on the outskirts of a galaxy of inconceivable glory" moving through eternity in the arms of law, he becomes, in his own estimation, an insensible dot lost in the uncontainable wilderness of firmamental systems. But this conclusion of despair is a mistake as sophistical as it is injurious, as baseless in reality as it is natural in seeming. Its antidote and corrective are found in a more penetrative thought and juster understanding of the subject, which will preserve the greatness and the immortal destiny of man unharmed despite the frowning vastitudes of creation. This will appear from fairly weighing the following considerations.

In the first place, the immensity of the material universe is an element *entirely foreign* to the problem of human fate. When seeking to solve the question of human destiny, we are to study the facts and prophecies of human nature, and to conclude accordingly. It is a perversion of reason to bring from far an induction of nebular magnitudes to crush with their brute weight the plain indications of the spirit of humanity. What though the number of telescopic worlds were raised to the ten-thousandth power, and each orb were as large as all of them combined would now be? what difference would that make in the facts of human nature and destiny? It is from the experience going on in man's breast, and not from the firmaments rolling above his head, that his importance and his final cause are to be inferred. The human mind, heart, and conscience, thought, love, faith, and piety, remain the same in their intrinsic rank and capacities whether the universe be as small as it appeared to the eyes of Abraham or as large as it seems in the cosmical theory of Humboldt. Thus the spiritual position of man really remains precisely what it was before the telescope smote the veils of distance and bared the outer courts of being.

Secondly, if we do bring in the irrelevant realms of science to the examination of our princely pretensions, it is but fair to look in both directions. And then what we lose above we gain below. The revelations of the microscope balance those of the telescope. The animalcula magnify man as much as the nebulæ belittle him. We cannot help believing that He who frames and provides for these infinitesimal animals quadrillions of whom might inhabit a drop of water or a leaf and have ample room and verge enough, and whose vital and muscular organization is as complicated and perfect as that of an elephant, will much more take care of man, no matter how numerous the constellations are. Let us see how far scientific vision can look beneath ourselves as the question is answered by a few well-known facts. In each drop of human blood there are three million vitalized corpuscular disks. Considering all the drops made up in this way, man is a kosmos, his veins galaxies through whose circuits these red clustering planets perform their revolutions. How small the exhaling atoms of a grain of musk must be, since it will perfume every breath of air blowing through a hall for a

quarter of a century, and then not be perceptibly diminished An ounce of gold may be reduced into four hundred and thirty-two billion parts, each microscopically visible.[30] There is a deposit of slate in Bohemia covering forty square miles to the depth of eight feet, each cubic inch of which Ehrenberg found by microscopic measurement to contain forty-one thousand million infusorial animals. Sir David Brewster says, "A cubic inch of the Bilin polieschiefer slate contains above one billion seven hundred and fifty thousand millions of distinct individuals of Galionella ferruginea."[31] It is a fact that the size of one of these insects as compared with the bulk of a man is virtually as small as that of a man compared with the whole scheme of modern astronomy. Thus, if the problem of our immortal consequence is prejudicially vitiated by contemplating the immense extremity of vision, it is rectified by gazing on the opposite extremity. If man justly scrutinized, without comparisons, is fitted for and worthy of eternity, no foreign facts, however magnificent or minute, should alter our judgment from the premises.

Thirdly, is it not evident that man's greatness keeps even pace along the scale of magnitude with the widening creation, since it is his mind that sees and comprehends how wondrous the dimensions of the universe are? The number of stars and the limits of space are not more astounding than it is that he should be capable of knowing such things, enumerating and staking them off. When man has measured the distance and weighed the bulk of Sirius, it is more appropriate to kneel in amazement before the inscrutable mystery of his genius, the irrepressible soaring of his soul, than to sink in despair under the swinging of those lumps of dirt in their unapproachable spheres because they are so gigantic! The appearance of the creation to man is not vaster than his perception of it. They are exactly correlated by the very terms of the statement. As the astronomic world expands, the astronomer's mind dilates and must be as large as it in order to contain it in thought. What we lose in relative importance from the enlargement of the boundaries of the universe we gain from the new revelation of our capacities that is made through these transcendent achievements of our science. That we are favorites of the Creator and destined for immortal glories is therefore logically and morally just as credible after looking through Herschel's forty-feet reflector and reading La Place's Mécanique Céleste as it would be were this planet, suspended in a hollow dome, the entirety of material being.

Furthermore, we can reason only from the data we have; and, doing that, we should conclude, from the intrinsic and incomparable superiority of spirit to matter, that man and his kindred scattered in families over all the orbs of space were the especial objects of the infinite Author's care. They are fitted by their filial attributes to commune with Him in

[30] Lardner, Hand-Book of Natural Philosophy, book i. chap. v.

[31] More Worlds than One, ch. viii. note 3.

praise and love. They know the prodigious and marvellous works of mechanical nature; mechanical nature knows nothing. Man can return his Maker's blessing in voluntary obedience and thanks; matter is inanimate clay for the Potter's moulding. Turning from the gleaming wildernesses of star-land to the intellect and heart, appreciating the infinite problems and hopes with which they deal and aspire, we feel the truth expressed by Wordsworth in his tremendous lines:—

> "I must, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
> To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
> Not chaos, darkest pit of Erebus,
> Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scoop'd out
> By help of dreams, can breed such fear and awe
> As fall upon us often when we look
> Into our minds, into the mind of man."

Is not one noble thought of truth, one holy emotion of love, one divine impulse of devotion, better than a whole planet of mud, a whole solar system of gas and dust? Who would not rather be the soul that gauges the deeps, groups the laws, foretells the movements, of the universe, writing down in a brief mathematical formula a complete horoscope of the heavens as they will appear on any given night thousands of years hence, than to be all that array of swooping systems? To think the world is to be superior to the world. That which appreciates is akin to that which makes; and so we are the Creator's children, and these crowding nebulæ, packed with orbs as thick as the ocean-beach with sands, are the many mansions of the House fitted up for His abode and ours. An only prince would be of more consideration than a palace, although its foundation pressed the shoulders of Serpentarius, its turret touched the brow of Orion, and its wings reached from the Great Bear to the Phœnix. So a mind is of more importance than the material creation, and the moral condition of a man is of greater moment than the aspect of stellar firmaments.

Another illustration of the truth we are considering is to be drawn from the idealist theory, to which so many of the ablest thinkers of the world have given their devoted adhesion, that matter is merely phenomenal, no substantial entity, but a transient show preserved in appearance for some ulterior cause, and finally, at the withdrawal or suspension of God's volition, to return into annihilating invisibility as swiftly as a flash of lightning. The solid-seeming firmaments are but an exertion of Divine force projected into vision to serve for a season as a theatre for the training of spirits. When that process is complete, in the twinkling of an eye the phantasmal exhibition of matter will disappear, leaving only the ideal realm of indestructible things, souls with their inward treasures remaining in their native sphere of the infinite, while the outward universe

> "Doth vanish like a ghost before the sun."

The same practical result may also be reached by a different path,—

may be attained by the road of physics as well as by that of transcendental metaphysics. For Newton has given in his Principia a geometrical demonstration of the *infinite compressibility* of matter. All the worlds, therefore, that cluster in yon swelling vault can be condensed into a single globe of the size of a walnut; and then, on that petty lump of apparent substance, the enfranchised soul might trample in an exultation of magnanimous scorn upon the whole universe of earths, and soar through its own unlimited dominion, Monarch of Immortality, the snatched glory of shrunken firmaments flashing from its deathless wings.

Finally, a proper comprehension of the idea of God will neutralize the skepticism and despondency sometimes stealthily nourished or crushingly impressed by contemplations of the immensity of nature. If one, from regarding the cold and relentless mechanism of the surrounding system, tremble for fear of there being no kind Overruler, let him gaze on the warm beauty that flushes the countenance of day, the mystic meditativeness that hangs on the pensive and starry brow of night, let him follow the commanding instincts of his own heart, and he will find himself clinging in irresistible faith and filial love to the thought of an infinite Father. If still the atheistic sentiment obtrudes upon him and oppresses him, let him observe how every spot of immensity whereon the eye of science has fallen is crowded with unnumbered amazing examples of design, love, beneficence, and he will perceive that the irrefragable lines of argument drawn through the boundless spaces of creation light up the stupendous contour of God and show the expression of his features to be love. It seems as though any man acquainted with the truths and magnitudes of astronomy, who, after seeing the star-strewn abysses, would look in his mirror and ask if the image reflected there is that of the greatest being in the universe, would need nothing further to convince him that a God, the Creator, Preserver, Sovereign, lives. And then, if, mistakenly judging from his own limitations, he thinks that the particular care of all the accumulated galaxies of worlds, every world perhaps teeming with countless millions of conscious creatures, would transcend the possibilities even of God, a moment's reflection will dissolve that sophistry in the truth that God is infinite, and that to his infinite attributes globule and globe are alike,—the oversight of the whole and of each part a matter of instantaneous and equal ease. Still further: if this abstract truth be insufficient to support faith and bestow peace, what will he say to the visible fact that all the races of beings, and all the clusters of worlds, from the motes in a sunbeam to the orbs of the remotest firmament, are now taken care of by Divine Providence? God now keeps them all in being and order, unconfused by their multiplicity, unoppressed by their magnitude, and not for an instant forgetting or neglecting either the mightiest or the least. Morbidly suspicious, perversely incredulous, must be the mind that denies, since it is so now in this state, that it may be so as well in the other state and forever! Grasp-

ing the conception of one God, who creates, rules, and loves all, man may unpresumptuously feel himself to be a child of the Infinite and a safe heir of immortality. Looking within and without, and soaring in fancy amidst the blue and starry altitudes interspersed with blazing suns and nebulous oceans, he may cry, from a sober estimate of all the experimental and phenomenal facts within his reach,—

> "Even here I feel,
> Among these mighty things, that as I am
> I am akin to God; that I am part
> Of the use universal, and can grasp
> Some portion of that reason in the which
> The whole is ruled and founded; that I have
> A spirit nobler in its cause and end,
> Lovelier in order, greater in its powers,
> Than all these bright and swift immensities."

Perhaps the force of these arguments may be better condensed and expressed by help of an individual illustration. While the pen is forming these words, the announcement of the death of Dr. Kane saddens the world. Alas that the gallant heart no longer beats, the story of whose noble generosity and indomitable prowess has just thrilled the dull nations of men of meaner mould! Who—even though standing before a telescope under the full architecture of the heavens—can believe that that maiden soul of heroism and devotion is now but an extinguished spark,—that the love, honor, intelligence, self-sacrificing consecration which enswathed him as with a saintly halo have all gone out? Turning from that pale form, stretched on the couch of death in fatal Cuba, through the receding gulfs of space where incomputable systems of worlds are wheeling on their eternal courses, and then looking back again from the noiseless glitter and awful bulk of the creation, do you despair of the immortal consequence of the poor sufferer whose fleshly moorings to existence are successively loosening at every gasp? Ah, remember that Matter and the Soul are not alone! Far above that clay-bound, struggling soul, and far above those measureless, firmamental masses, is God, the Maker of them both, and the Lover of his child. Glancing in His omniscience down upon that human death-couch, around which affectionate prayers are floating from every part of the earth, and from whose pallid occupant confiding sighs are rising to His ear, He sees the unutterable mysteries of yearning thought, emotion, and power, which are the hidden being of man, and which so ally the filial spirit to the parent Divinity. As beneath His gaze the faithful soul of Elisha Kane—slowly extricating itself from its overwrought tabernacle, and also extricating itself from the holy network of heart-strings which sixty millions of men speaking one speech have flung around him, if haply so they might retain him to earth to take their love and waiting honors—rises into the invisible, seeking to return, bearing its virgin purity with it, to the bosom of God, will He overlook it, or carelessly spurn it into night, because the banks of stars are piled up so thick and high that

they absorb His regards? My soul, come not thou into the counsels of them that think so! It should not be believed though astronomy were a thousand times astronomy. But it shall rather be thought that, ere now, the brave American has *discovered* the Mariner whom he sought, though sailing on far other seas, where there is no destroying winter and no need of rescue.

In association with the measureless spaces and countless worlds brought to light by astronomic science naturally arises the question whether the other worlds are, like our earth, peopled with responsible intelligences. In ancient times the stars were not generally thought to be worlds, but to be persons,—genii or gods. At the dawn of creation "the morning stars sang together;" that is, "the sons of God shouted for joy." The stars were the living army of "Jehovah of hosts." At the time when the theological dogmas now prevalent were first conceived, the greatness and glory of the universe were supposed to centre on this globe. The fortunes of man wellnigh absorbed, it was imagined, the interest of angels and of God. The whole creation was esteemed a temporary theatre for the enactment of the sublime drama of the fall and redemption of man. The entire heavens with all their host were thought to revolve in satellite dependence around this stationary and regal planet. For God to hold long, anxious, repeated councils to devise means to save us, was not deemed out of keeping with the relative dignity of the earth and the human race. But at length the progress of discovery put a different aspect on the physical conditions of the problem. The philosopher began to survey man's habitation and history, and to estimate man's comparative rank and destiny, not from the stand-point of a solitary planet dating back only a few thousand years, but in the light of millions of centuries of duration and from a position among millions of crowded firmaments whence our sun appears as a dim and motionless star. This new vision of science required a new construction of theology. The petty and monstrous notions of the ignorant superstition of the early age needed rectification. In the minds of the wise and devout few this was effected; but with the great majority the two sets of ideas existed side by side in unreconciled confusion and contradiction, as they even continue to do unto this day.

When it came to be believed that the universe teemed with suns, moons, and planets, composed of material substances, subject to day and night, and various other laws and changes, like our own abode, it was natural to infer that these innumerable worlds were also inhabited by rational creatures akin to ourselves and capable of worshipping God. Numerous considerations, possessing more or less weight, were brought forward to confirm such a conclusion. The most striking presentation ever made of the argument, perhaps, is that in Oersted's essay on the "Universe as a Single Intellectual Realm." It became the popular faith, and is undoubtedly more so now than ever before. Towards the end of the seventeenth century a work was published in explicit support of this

faith by Fontenelle. It was entitled "Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds," and had marked success, running through many editions. A few years later, Huygens wrote a book, called "Cosmotheoros," in maintenance of the same thesis. The more this doctrine obtained root and life in the convictions of men, the more strongly its irreconcilableness with the ordinary theology must have made itself felt by fearless and competent thinkers. Could a quadrillion firmaments loaded with stars, each inhabited by its own race of free intelligences, all be burned up and destroyed in the Day of Judgment provoked on this petty grain of dust by the sin of Adam?[33] Were the stars mere sparks and spangles stuck in heaven for us to see by, it would be no shock to our reason to suppose that they might be extinguished with our extinction; but, grasping the truths of astronomy as they now lie in the brain of a master in science, we can no longer think of God expelling our race from the joys of being and then quenching the splendors of his hall "as an innkeeper blows out the lights when the dance is at an end." God rules and overrules all, and serenely works out his irresistible ends, incapable of wrath or defeat. Would it be more incongruous for Him to be angry with an ant-hill and come down to trample it, than to be so with the earth and appear in vindictive fire to annihilate it?

From time to time, in the interests of the antiquated ideas, doubts have been raised as to the validity of the doctrine of stellar worlds stocked with intellectual families.[34] Hegel, either imbued with that Gnostic contempt and hatred for matter which described the earth as "a dirt-ball for the extrication of light-spirits," or from an obscure impulse of pantheistic thought, sullies the stars with every demeaning phrase, even stigmatizing them as "pimples of light." Michelet, a disciple of Hegel, followed his example, and, in a work published in 1840, strove vigorously to aggrandize the earth and man at the expense of the accepted teachings of astronomy.[34] With argument and ridicule, wit and reason, he endeavored to make it out that the stars are no better than gleaming patches of vapor. *We* are the exclusive autocrats of all immensity. Whewell has followed up this species of thought with quite remarkable adroitness, force, and brilliance.[35] Whether his motive in this undertaking is purely scientific and artistic, or whether he is impelled by a fancied religious animus,—having been bitten by some theological fear which has given him the astrophobia,—does not clearly

[33] As specimens of the large number of treatises which have been published asserting the destruction of the whole creation in the Day of Judgment, the following may be consulted. Oslander, De Consummatione Seculi Dissertationum Pentas. Lund, De Excidio Universi Totali et Substantiali. Frisch, Die Welt im Feuer, oder das wahre Vergehen und Ende der Welt durch den letzen Sündenbrand. For a century past the opinion has been gaining favor that the great catastrophe will be confined to our earth, and that even this is not to be annihilated, but to be transformed, purged, and beautified by the crisis. See, e.g., Brumhey, Ueber die endliche Umwandlung der Erde durch Feuer.

[34] Kurtz, Bibel und Astronomie. Simonton's Eng. trans., ch. vi. sect. 14: Incarnation of God.

[34] Vorlesungen über die ewige Persönlichkeit des Geistes.

[35] Of a Plurality of Worlds: An Essay.

appear. Brewster has replied to Whewell's disturbing essay in a volume which more commands our sympathies and carries our reason, but is less sustained in force and less close in logic.[36] Powell has still more recently published a very valuable treatise on the subject;[37] and with this work the discussion rests thus far, leaving, as we believe, the popular faith in an astronomic universe of inhabited worlds unshaken, however fatal the legitimate implications of that faith may be to other doctrines simultaneously held.[38] It is curious to observe the shifting positions taken up by skepticism in science, now, with powerful recoil from the narrow bigotries of theology, eagerly embracing the sublimest dreams of astronomic speculation, and now inclining to the faith that the remoter stars are but brilliant globules trickling from the poles of some terrible battery in the godless heights of space. But if there be any thing sure in science at all, it is that the material creation is inconceivably vast, including innumerable systems, and all governed by invariable laws. But let us return from this episode.

The foregoing sixfold argument, preserving us from the remorseless grasp of annihilation, leaves to us unchanged the problem of the relations which shall be sustained by the disembodied soul to time and space,—the question as to the locality of the spirit-world, the scene of our future life. Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, Valhalla with its mead-brimmed horns, Blessed Isles, Elysium, supernal Olympus, firmamental Heaven, paradisal Eden, definite sites of celestial Worlds for departed souls, the Chaldee's golden orbs, the Sanscrit Meru, the Indian Hunting-Ground, the Moslem's love-bowers, and wine-rivers, and gem-palaces thronged with dark-eyed houris,—these notions, and all similar ones, of material residences for spirits, located and bounded, we must dismiss as dreams and cheats of the childish world's unripe fancy. There is no evidence for any thing of that coarse, crude sort. The fictitious theological Heaven is a deposit of imagination on the azure ground of infinity, like a bird's nest on Himalaya. What, then, shall we say? Why, in the first place, that, while there are reasons enough and room enough for an undisheartened faith in the grand fact of human immortality, it is beyond our present powers to establish any detailed conclusions in regard to its locality or its scenery.

But surely, in the second place, we should say that it becomes us, when reflecting on the scenes to be opened to us at death, to rise to a more ideal and sublime view than any of those tangible figments which were the products of untrained sensual imagination and gross materialistic theory. When the fleshly prison-walls of the mind fall, its first in-

[36] More Worlds than One the Creed of the Philosopher and the Hope of the Christian.

[37] Essay on the Unity or Plurality of Worlds. See, furthermore, in Westminster Review, July, 1856, Recent Astronomy and the Nebular Hypothesis.

[38] Volger, Erde und Ewigkeit. (Natural History of the Earth as a Periodical Process of Development in Opposition to the Unnatural Geology of Revolutions and Catastrophes.) Treise, Das Endlose der grossen und der kleinen materiellen Welt.

heritance is a stupendous freedom. The narrow limits that caged it here are gone, and it lives in an ethereal sphere with no impeding bounds. Leaving its natal threshold of earth and the lazar-house of time, its home is immensity, and its lease is eternity. Even in our present state, to a true thinker there is no ascent or descent or terminating wall in space, but equal motion illimitably in all directions; and no absolute standard of duration, only a relative and variable one from the insect of an hour, to man, to an archangel, to that incomprehensible Being whose shortest moments are too vast to be noted by the awful nebula of the Hour-Glass, although its rushing sands are systems of worlds. The soul emerges from earthly bondage emancipated into eternity, while

> "The ages sweep around him with their wings,
> Like anger'd eagles cheated of their prey."

We have now sufficient premonitions and examples of this wondrous enlargement to base a rational belief on. What hems us in when we think, feel, and imagine? And what is the heaven that shall dawn for us beyond the veil of death's domain but the realm of Thought, the sphere of the spirit's unhampered powers? There are often vouchsafed to us here hours of outsoaring emotion and conception which make the enclosures in which the astronomer loiters seem narrow. "His skies are shoal, and imagination, like a thirsty traveller, pants to be through their desert. The roving mind impatiently bursts the fetters of astronomical orbits, like cobwebs in a corner of its universe, and launches itself to where distance fails to follow, and law, such as science has discovered, grows weak and weary." There are moods of spiritual expansion and infinite longing that illustrate the train of thought so well expressed in the following lines:—

> "Even as the dupe in tales Arabian
> Dipp'd but his brow beneath the beaker's brim,
> And in that instant all the life of man
> From youth to age roll'd its slow years on him,
> And, while the foot stood motionless, the soul
> Swept with deliberate wing from pole to pole;
> So when the man the Grave's still portal passes,
> Closed on the substances or cheats of earth,
> The Immaterial, for the things earth glasses,
> Shapes a new vision from the matter's dearth:
> Before the soul that sees not with our eyes
> The undefined Immeasurable lies."[39]

Then we realize that the spiritual world does not form some now unseen and distant region of the visible creation, but that the astronomic universe is a speck lying in the invisible bosom of the spiritual world. "Space is an attribute of God in which all matter is laid, and other attributes he may have which are the home of mind and soul." We suppose the difference between the present embodied and the future disembodied

[39] Bulwer, King Arthur, book xi.

state to be so vast that the conditions of the latter cannot be intelligibly illustrated by the analogies of the former. It is not to be expected that the human soul will ever be absolutely independent of time and space, literally transcending them, but only relatively so as compared with its earthly predicament. For, as an able thinker and writer—a philosopher of the Swedenborgian school, too—has said, "The conception of a mind absolutely sundered from all connection with space is a mere pretence which words necessarily repudiate."

The soul—on the hypothesis that there is a soul—is now *in* the body. Evidently, on leaving the body, it must either be *nowhere*,—and that is annihilation, which the vehement totality of our thought denies; or *everywhere*,—and that implies infinity, the loss of finite being in boundless Deity, a conclusion which we know of nothing to warrant; or *somewhere*,—and that predicates a surviving individuality related to surrounding externals, which is the prophesied and satisfactory result in which we rest in faith, humbly confessing our ignorance as to all the minutiæ. It does not necessarily follow from this view, however, that the soul is limited to a fixed region in space. It may have the freedom of the universe. More wonders, and sublimer than mortal fancies have ever suspected, are waiting to be revealed when we die:—

> "For this life is but being's first faint ray,
> And heaven on heaven make up God's dazzling day."

We are here living unconsciously engirt by another universe than the senses can apprehend, thinly veiled, but real, and waiting for us with hospitable invitation. "What are those dream-like and inscrutable thoughts which start up in moments of stillness, apparently as from the deeps,—like the movement of the leaves during a silent night, in prognostic of the breeze that has yet scarce come,—if not the rustlings of schemes and orders of existence near though unseen?" Perchance the range of the abode and destiny of the soul after death is all immensity. The interstellar spaces, which we usually fancy are barren deserts where nonentity reigns, may really be the immortal kingdom colonized by the spirits who since the beginning of the creation have sailed from the mortal shores of all planets. They may be the crowded aisles of the universal temple trod by bright throngs of worshipping angels. The soul's home, the heaven of God, may be suffused throughout the material universe, ignoring the existence of physical globes and galaxies. So light and electricity pervade some solid bodies, as if for them there were no solidity. So, doubtless, there are millions of realities around us utterly eluding our finest senses. "A fact," Emerson says, "is the last issue of spirit," and not its entire extent. "The visible creation is the terminus of the invisible world," and not the totality of the universe. There are gradations of matter and being, from the rock to the flower, from the vegetable to man. Is it most probable that the scale breaks abruptly there, or that other ranks of spiritual existence successively rise peopling the seeming abysses unto the very confines of God?—

"Can every leaf a teeming world contain,—
Can every globule gird a countless race,—
Yet one death-slumber in its dreamless reign
Clasp all the illumed magnificence of space?
Life crowd a grain,—from air's vast realms effaced?
The leaf a world,—the firmament a waste?"

An honest historical criticism forces us, however reluctantly, to loose our hold from the various supposed localities of the soul's destination, which have pleased the fancies and won the assent of mankind in earlier times. But it cannot touch the simple and cardinal fact of an immortal life for man. It merely forces us to acknowledge that while the fact stands clear and authoritative to instinct, reason, and faith, yet the *how*, and the *where*, and all such problems, are wrapped in unfathomable mystery. We are to obey and hope, not dissect and dogmatize. However the fantastic dreams of the imagination and the subtle speculations of the intellect may shift from time to time, and be routed and vanish, the deep yearning of the heart remains the same, the divine polarity of the reason changes not, and men will never cease fondly to believe that although they cannot tell where heaven is, yet surely there is a heaven reserved for them somewhere within the sheltering embrace of God's infinite providence. We may not say of that kingdom, Lo, here! or Lo, there! but it is wherever God's approving presence extends; and is that not wherever the pure in heart are found?[40]

Let every elysian clime the breezes blow over, every magic isle the waves murmur round, every subterranean retreat fancy has devised, every cerulean region the moon visits, every planet that hangs afar on the neck of night, be disenchanted of their imaginary charms, and brought, by the advance of discovery, within the relentless light of familiarity, for the common gaze of fleshly eyes and tread of vulgar feet, still the prophetic MIND would not be robbed of its belief in immortality; still the unquenchable instincts of the HEART would retain, uninjured, the great expectation of ANOTHER WORLD, although no traveller returns from its voiceless bourne to tell in what local direction it lies, no voyager comes back from its mystic port to describe its latitude and longitude on the chartless infinite of space.

Turn we now from the lateral distribution of notions as to a future life, to their lineal development. We have seen that the development of belief as to the locality of our future destination has been a chase of places, over the earth, under the earth, through the sky, as fast as the unknown was brought within the known, until it has stopped at the verge of the unknowable. There we stand, confessing our inability to fix the scene. The doctrine of the *conditions and contents* of the future life has followed the same course as that of its locality.

In the first stage of belief the future life consists of the gross conditions and materials of the known present reflected, under the impulse of

[40] Chalmers, Sermon, Heaven a Character and not a Locality.

the senses, into the unknown future. This style of faith prevailed for a vast period, and is not yet obsolete. When the King of Dahomey has done a great feat, he kills a man to carry the tidings to the ghost of his royal father. When he dies himself, a host are killed, that he may enter Deadland with a becoming cortege. His wives also are slain, or commit suicide, that they may rejoin him.

The second stage of belief is reached when, under the ethical impulse, only certain refined elements of the present, discriminated portions of the products of reason, imagination and sentiment, are reflected into the future, and accepted as the facts of the life there. Critical processes, applied to thought and faith, cause the rejection of much that was received. That alone which answers to our wants, and has coherence, continues to be held as truth. An example is afforded by Augustine in his essay, *De Libero Arbitrio*. He argues that the wicked are kept in being on the outskirts of the material universe; partly wretched, partly happy; too bad for heaven, too good for annihilation; incapable of attaining the summit of their beatified destiny. Not the crude reflection of the present state, but a criticized and purged portion of the results of speculation on it, is thrown forward, and composes the doctrine of the future life. This is the condition of faith in which civilized mankind, for the most part, now are.

The third stage of development is that wherein the thinker perceives that it is illegitimate to reflect into the future any of the realities or relations of the present, and then to regard them as the truths of the experience which awaits him after death. His experience here is the resultant of his faculties as related to the universe. Destroy his organisation, and what follows? One will say, "Nonentity." Another, more wise and modest, will say, "Something necessarily unknown as yet." We have no better right to project into the ideal space of futurity the ingredients of our thoughts than we have to project there the objects of our senses. Bunsen, whose thought and scholarship included pretty much all the knowledge of mankind, represents this stage of faith. He stands on the religious side of the movement of Science, believing in immortality without defining it. Comte stands on the positivist side, blankly denying all objective immortality. These two represent the results in which, advancing from its opposite sides, the logical development of the doctrine of a future life ends. With Comte, atheistic dogmatism crushing every eternal hope; with Bunsen, Christian faith pointing the child to an eternal home in the Father. For all but fetichistic minds the only choice lies between these two.

The organic evolution of the doctrine of a life to come is, therefore, a process of faith beginning with the crude transference of the elements of the present into the future, continuing with refined modifications of that transference, ending with an entire cessation of it as inapplicable and incompetent. Having examined all the historic, experimental, and scientific data within our reach, we pause on the edge of the PART which we know, and wait, with serene trust, though with bowed head and silent lip, before the UNKNOWABLE WHOLE.

CHAPTER VIII.

CRITICAL HISTORY OF DISBELIEF IN A FUTURE LIFE.

If the first men were conscious spirits who, at the command of God, dropped from the skies into organic forms of matter, or who were created here on an exalted plane of insight and communion far above any thing now experienced by us, then the destination of man to a life after death may originally have been a fact of direct knowledge, universally seen and grasped without any obscuring peradventure. From that state it gradually declined into dubious dimness as successive generations grew sinful, sensual, hardened, immersed and bound in affairs of passion and earth. It became remoter, assumed a questionable aspect, gave rise to discussions and doubts, and here and there to positive disbelief and open denial. Thus, beginning as a clear reality within the vision of all, it sank into a matter of uncertain debate among individuals.

But if the first men were called up into being from the earth, by the creative energy of God, as the distinct climax of the other species, then the early generations of our race, during the long ages of their wild and slowly-ameliorating state, were totally ignorant of any conscious sequel to the fate seemingly closed in death. They were too animal and rude yet to conceive a spiritual existence outside of the flesh and the earth. Among the accumulating trophies of their progressive intellectual conquests hung up by mankind in the historic hall of experience, this marvellous achievement is one of the sublimest. What a day was that for all humanity forever after, when for the first time, on some climbing brain, dawned from the great Sun of the spirit-world the idea of a personal immortality! It was announced. It dawned separately wherever there were prepared persons. It spread from soul to soul, and became the common faith of the world. Still, among every people there were pertinacious individuals, who swore not by the judge and went not with the multitude, persons of less credulous hearts and more skeptical faculties, who demurred at the great doctrine, challenged it in many particulars, gainsaid it on various grounds, disbelieved it from different motives, and fought it with numerous weapons.

Whichever of the foregoing suppositions be adopted,—that the doctrine of a future life subsided from universal acceptance into party contention, or that it arose at length from personal perception and authority into common credit,—the fact remains equally prominent and interesting that throughout the traceable history of human opinion there is a line of dissenters who have thought death the finality of man, and the next world

an illusion. The history of this special department of thought opens a wide and fertile subject. To gain a comprehensive survey of its boundaries and a compact epitome of its contents, it will be well to consider it in these two lights and divisions, all the time trying to see, step by step, what justice, and what injustice, is done: first, the dominant motive forces animating the disbelievers; secondly, the methods and materials they have employed.

At first thought it would appear difficult to tell what impulses could move persons to undertake, as many constantly have undertaken, a crusade against a faith so dear to man, so ennobling to his nature. Peruse the pages of philosophical history with careful reflection, and the mystery is scattered, and various groups of disbelievers stand revealed, with earnest voices and gestures assailing the doctrine of a future life.[1]

One company, having their representatives in every age, reject it as a protest in behalf of the right of private judgment against the tyranny of authority. The doctrine has been inculcated by priesthoods, embodied in sacred books, and wrought into the organic social life of states; and acceptance of it has been commanded as a duty, and expected as a decent and respectable thing. To deny it has required courage, implied independent opinions, and conferred singularity. To cast off the yoke of tradition, undermine the basis of power supporting a galling religious tyranny, and be marked as a rebellious freethinker in a generation of slavish conformists,—this motive could scarcely fail to exhibit results. Some of the radical revolutionists of the present time say that the doctrine of the divine right of kings and the infallible authority of the priesthood is the living core of the power of tyranny in the world. They therefore deny God and futurity in order to overthrow their oppressors, who reign over them and prey upon them in the name of God and the pretended interests of a future life.[2] The true way to secure the real desideratum corruptly indicated in this movement is not by denying the reality of a future life, but by removing the adjustment of its conditions and the administration of its rewards and penalties out of the hands of every clique of priests and rulers. A righteously and benignly ordered immortality, based in truth and adjudicated by the sole sovereignty of God, is no engine of oppression, though a doctrine of heaven and hell irresponsibly managed by an Orphic association, the guardians of a Delphic tripod, the owners of a secret confessional, or the interpreters of an exclusive creed, may be. In a matter of such grave importance, that searching and decisive discrimination, so rare when the passions get enlisted, is especially needed. Because a doctrine is abused by selfish tyrants is no reason for supposing the doctrine itself either false or injurious.

No little injury has been done to the common faith in a future life,

[1] J. A. Luther, Recensetur numerus eorum, qui immortalitatem inficiati sunt.

[2] Schmidt, Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur im neunzehnten Jahrhundert, band iii. kap. iv.: Der philosophische Radicalismus.

great disbelief has been provoked unwittingly, by writers who have sought to magnify the importance of revealed religion at the expense of natural religion. Many such persons have labored to show that all the scientific, philosophical, and moral arguments for immortality are worthless, the teachings and resurrection of Christ, the revealed word of God, alone possessing any validity to establish that great truth. An accomplished author says, in a recent work, "The immortality of the soul cannot be proved without the aid of revelation."[3] Bishop Courtenay published, a few years since, a most deliberate and unrelenting attack upon the arguments for the deathlessness of the soul, seeking with persevering remorselessness to demolish every one of them, and to prove that man totally perishes, but will be restored to life at the second coming of Christ.[4] There can scarcely be a question that such statements usually awaken and confirm a deep skepticism as to a future life, instead of enhancing a grateful estimate of the gospel. If man is once annihilated, it is hardly credible that he will be identically restored. Such a stupendous and arbitrary miracle clashes with the continuity of the universe, and staggers rather than steadies faith. We should beg such volunteers—however sincere and good their intentions—to withhold the impoverishing gift of their service. And when kindred reasonings are advanced by such men as the unbelieving Hume, we feel tempted to say, in the language of a distinguished divine speaking on this very point, "Ah, gentlemen, we understand you: you belong to the sappers and miners in the army of the aliens!"

Another party of disbelievers have repudiated the whole conception of a future state as a protest against the nonsense and cruelty associated with it in the prevailing superstitions and dogmatisms of their time. From the beginning of history in most nations, the details of another existence and its conditions have been furnished to the eager credulity of the people by the lawless fancies of poets, the fine-spinning brains of metaphysicians, and the cold-blooded calculations or hot-headed zeal of sectarian leaders. Of course a mass of absurdities would grow up around the central germ and a multitude of horrors sprout forth. While the common throng would unquestioningly receive all these ridiculous and revolting particulars, they could not but provoke doubt, satire, flat rejection, from the bolder and keener wits. So we find it was in Greece. The fables about the under-world—the ferriage over the Styx, poor Tantalus so torturingly mocked, the daughters of Danaus drawing water in sieves—all were accredited by the general crowd on one extreme.[5] On the other extreme the whole scheme, root and branch,

[3] Bowen, Metaphysical and Ethical Science, part ii. ch. ix.

[4] The Future States: Their Evidences and Nature considered on Principles Physical, Moral, and Scriptural, with the Design of Showing the Value of the Gospel Revelation.

[5] Plutarch, De Superstitione. The reality of the popular credulity and terror in later Rome clearly appears from the fact that Marcus Aurelius had a law passed condemning to banishment "those who do any thing through which men's excitable minds are alarmed by a superstitious fear

was flung away with scorn. The following epitaph on an unbeliever is attributed to Callimachus. "O Charidas, what are the things below? Vast darkness. And what the returns to earth? A falsehood. And Pluto? A fable. We have perished: this is my true speech to you; but, if you want the flattering style, the Pellæan's great ox is in the shades."[8] Meanwhile, a few judicious mediators, neither swallowing the whole gross draught at a gulp, nor throwing the whole away with utter disgust, drank through the strainer of a discriminative interpretation. Because caprice, hatred, and favoritism are embalmed in some perverse doctrine of future punishment is no defensible reason for denying a righteous retribution. Because heaven has been located on a hill-top, and its sublime denizens made to eat ambrosia and sometimes to fall out among themselves, is no adequate reason for rejecting the idea of a heavenly life. Puerilities of fancy and monstrosities of passion arbitrarily connected with principles claiming to be eternal truths should be carefully separated, and not the whole be despised and trodden on together. From lack of this analysis and discrimination, in the presence of abnormal excrescences and offensive secretions dislike and disbelief have often flourished where, if judicial thought and conscience had cut off the imposed deformities and dispelled the discoloring vengeance, faith and love would have been confirmed in contemplating the pure and harmonious form of doctrine left exposed in the beauty of benignant truth. The aim ostensibly proposed by Lucretius, in his elaborate and masterly exposition of the Epicurean philosophy, is to free men from their absurd belief in childish legends and their painful fears of death and hell. As far as merely this purpose is concerned, he might have accomplished it as effectually, perhaps, and more directly, by exposing the adventitious errors without assailing the great doctrine around which they had been gathered. Bion the Borysthenite is reported by Diogenes Laertius to have said, with a sharp humor, that the souls below would be more punished by carrying water in whole buckets than in such as had been bored! A soul may pass into the unseen state though there be no Plutonian wherry, suffer woe though there be no river Pyriphlegethon, enjoy bliss though there be no cup of nectar borne by Hebe. But to fly to rash extremes and build positive conclusions on mere ignorance has always been natural to man, not only as a believer, but also as an iconoclastic denier.

A third set of disbelievers in a future life consists of those who advocate the "emancipation of the flesh" and assert the sufficiency of this life when fully enjoyed. They attack the dogma of immortality as the essential germ of asceticism, and abjure it as a protest against that superstitious distrust and gloom which put a ban on the pleasures of the world.

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of the Deity." Nero, after murdering his mother, haunted by her ghost and tortured by the Furies, attempted by magical rites to bring up her shade from below, and soften her vindictive wrath. Suetonius, Vita Neronis, cap. xxxiv.

[8] Epigram. XIV.

These are the earthlings who would fain displace the stern law of self-denial with the bland permission of self-indulgence, rehabilitate the senses, feed every appetite full, and, when satiated of the banquet of existence, fall asleep under the table of the earth. The countenance of Duty, severe daughter of God, looks commands upon them to turn from dallying ease and luxury, to sacrifice the meaner inclinations, to gird themselves for an arduous race through difficulties, to labor and aspire evermore towards the highest and the best. They prefer to install in her stead Aphrodite crowned with Paphian roses, her eyes aglow with the light of misleading stars, her charms bewitching them with fatal enchantments and melting them in softest joys. The pale face of Death, with mournful eyes, lurks at the bottom of every winecup and looks out from behind every garland; therefore brim the purple beaker higher and hide the unwelcome intruder under more flowers. We are a cunning mixture of sense and dust, and life is a fair but swift opportunity. Make haste to get the utmost pleasure out of it ere it has gone, scorning every pretended bond by which sour ascetics would restrain you and turn your days into penitential scourges. This gospel of the senses had a swarm of apostles in the last century in France, when the chief gates of the cemetery in Paris bore the inscription, "Death is an eternal sleep." It has had more in Germany in this century; and voices of enervating music are not wanting in our own literature to swell its siren chorus.[7] Perhaps the greatest prophet it has had was Heine, whose pages reek with a fragrance of pleasure through which sighs, like a fading wail from the solitary string of a deserted harp struck by a lonesome breeze, the perpetual refrain of death! death! death! His motto seems to be, "Quick! let me enjoy what there is; for I must die. Oh, the gusty relish of life! Oh, the speechless mystery, the infinite reality, of death!" He says himself, comparing the degradation of his later experience with the soaring enthusiasm of his youth, "It is as if a star had fallen from heaven upon a hillock of muck, and swine were gnawing at it!"

These men think that the doctrine of a future life, like a great magnet, has drawn the needle of human activity out of its true direction; that the dominant tendency of the present age is, and of right ought to be, towards the attainment of material well-being, in a total forgetfulness to lay up treasures in heaven. The end is enjoyment; the obstacle, asceticism; the means to secure the end, the destruction of faith in immortality, so that man, having nothing left but this world, will set himself to improve and enjoy it. The monkish severity of a morbid and erroneous theology, darkening the present and prescribing pain in it to brighten the future and increase its pleasures, legitimates an earnest reaction. But that reaction should be wise, measured by truth. It should rectify, not demolish, the prevailing faith. For the desired end is most likely

[7] Pierer, Universal-Lexikon, dritte Auflage, Deutsche Literatur, sect. 42. Schmidt, Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur im neuntzehnten Jahrhundert, band iii. kap. i.: Das junge Deutschland.

to be reached by perceiving, not that all terminates in the grave, but that the greatest enjoyment flows from a self-controlling devotedness to noble ends, that the claims of another life are in perfect unison with the interests of this life, that the lawful fruition of every function of human nature, each lower faculty being subordinated to each higher one, and the highest always reigning, at once yields the most immediate pleasure and makes the completest preparation for the hereafter. In the absence of the all-irradiating sun of immortality, these disbelievers, exulting over the pale taper of sensual pleasure, remind us of a parcel of apes gathered around a cold glow-worm and rejoicing that they have found a fire in the damp, chilly night.

Besides the *freethinkers*, who will not yield to authority, but insist upon standing apart from the crowd, and the *satirists*, who level their shafts undiscriminatingly against what they perceive associated with absurdity, and the *worldlings*, who prefer the pleasures of time to the imaginarily contrasted goods of eternity, there is a fourth class of men who oppose the doctrine of a personal immortality as a protest against the burdensome miseries of individuality. The Gipseys exclaimed to Borrow, "What! is it not enough to have borne the wretchedness of this life, that we must also endure another?"[8] A feeling of the necessary limitations and suffering exposures of a finite form of being has for untold ages harassed the great nations of the East with painful unrest and wondrous longing. Pantheistic absorption—to lose all imprisoning bounds, and blend in that ecstatic flood of Deity which, forever full, never ebbs on any coast—has been equally the metaphysical speculation, the imaginative dream, and the passionate desire, of the Hindu mind. It is the basis and motive of the most extensive disbelief of individual immortality the world has known. "The violence of fruition in these foul puddles of flesh and blood presently glutteth with satiety," and the mortal circuits of earth and time are a round of griefs and pangs from which they would escape into the impersonal Godhead. Sheerly against this lofty strain of poetic souls is that grovelling life of ignorance which, dominated by selfish instincts, crawling on brutish grounds, cannot awaken the creative force of spiritual wants slumbering within, nor lift its head high enough out of the dust to see the stars of a deathless destiny; and a fifth group of disbelievers deny immortality because their degraded experience does not prophesy it. Many a man might say, with Autolycus, "For the life to come, I sleep out the thought of it." A mind holy and loving, communing with God and an ideal world, "lighted up as a spar-grot" with pure feelings and divine truths, is mirrored full of incorporeal shapes of angels, and aware of their immaterial disentanglement and eternity. A brain surcharged with fires of hatred, drowsed with filthy drugs, and drenched with drunkenness, will teem, on the contrary, with vermin writhing in the meshes of decaying matter. Cleav-

[8] The Zincali, part ii. ch. i.

ing to evanescent things, men feel that they are passing away like leaves on waves; filled with convictions rooted and breathing in eternity, they feel that they shall abide in serene survival, like stars above tempests. Turn from every obscene sight, curb every base propensity, obey every heavenly vision by assimilation of immortal things, sacred self-denials and toils, disinterested sympathies and hopes, accumulate divine treasures and kindle the mounting flame of a divine life, and at the same time consciousness will crave and faith behold an illimitable destiny. Experiences worthy of being eternal generate faith in their own eternity. But the ignorant and selfish sensualist, whose total experience is of the earth earthy, who has no realization of pure truth, goodness, beauty, is incapable of sincere faith in immortal life. The dormancy of his higher powers excludes the necessary conditions of such a faith. His ignoble bodily life does not furnish the conscious basis and prophecy of a glorious spiritual life, but shudderingly proclaims the cessation of all his experience with the destruction of his senses. The termination of all the functions he knows,—what else can it be but his virtual annihilation? When to the privative degradations of an uncultivated and earthy experience, naturally accompanied by a passive unbelief in immortality, are added the positive coarseness and guilt of a thick insensibility and a wicked life, aggressive disbelief is quite likely to arise, the essay of an uneasy conscience to slay what it feels would be a foe, and strangle the worm that never dies. The denial springing from such sources is refuted when it is explained. Its motive should never by any man be yielded to, much less be willingly nourished. It should be resisted by a devout culture courting the smiles of God, by rising into the loftier airs of meditation and duty, by imaginative sentiment and practical philanthropy, until the eternal instinct, long smothered under sluggish loads of sense and sin, reached by a soliciting warmth from heaven, stirs with demonstrating vitality.

The last and largest assemblage of dissenters from the prevailing opinion on this subject comprises those who utter their disbelief in a future existence out of simple loyalty to seeming truth, as a protest against what they think a false doctrine, and against the sophistical and defective arguments by which it has been propped. It may be granted that the five previously-named classes are equally sincere in their convictions, honest assailants of error and adherents of truth; but they are actuated by animating motives of a various moral character. In the present case, the ruling motive is purely a determination, as Büchner says, to stand by the facts and to establish the correct doctrine. The directest and clearest way of giving a descriptive account of the active philosophical history of this class of disbelievers will be to follow on the lines of their tracks with statements and criticisms of their procedures.[9] Disbelief in the doctrine of a future life for man has planted

[9] Spasier, Antiphädon, oder Prüfung einiger Hauptbeweise für die Einfachheit und Unsterblichkeit der menschlichen Seele.

itself upon bold affirmation, and fortified itself with arguments which may most conveniently be considered under five distinct heads.

First is the sensational Argument from Appearance. In death the visible functions cease, the organism dissolves, the mind disappears; there is apparently a total scattering and end of the individual. That these phenomena should suggest the thought of annihilation is inevitable; to suppose that they prove the fact is absurd. It is an arrant begging of the question; for the very problem is, Does not an invisible spiritual entity survive the visible material disintegration? Among the unsound and superstitious attempts to prove the fact of a future life is that founded on narratives of ghosts, appearances and visions of the dead. Dr. Tafel published at Tübingen in 1853 a volume aiming to demonstrate the immortality and personal identity of the soul by citation of ninety cases of supernatural appearances, extending from the history of the ghost whose address to Curtius Rufus is recorded by Tacitus, to the wonderful story told by Renatus Lüderitz in 1837. Such efforts are worse than vain. Their data are so explicable in many cases, and so inconclusive in all, that they quite naturally provoke deeper disbelief and produce telling retorts. While here and there a credulous person is convinced of a future life by the asserted appearance of a spirit, the well-informed psychologist refers the argument to the laws of insanity and illusions, and the skeptic adds as a finality his belief that there is no future life, because no ghost has ever come back to reveal and certify it. The argument on both sides is equally futile, and removed from the true requisitions of the problem.

To the philosophical thinker a mere appearance is scarcely a presumption in favor of a conclusion in accordance with it. Science and experience are full of examples exposing the nullity or the falsity of appearances. The sun seems to move around the earth; but truth contradicts it. We seem to discern distances and the forms of bodies by direct sight; but the truth is we see nothing but shades and colors: all beyond is inference based on acquired experience. The first darkness would seem to the trembling contemplator absolutely to blot out the universe; but in truth it only prevented him from seeing it. The first thorough unconscious sleep would seem to be the hopeless destruction of the soul in its perfect oblivion. *Death is forever for the first time*, shrouded in the misleading obscurities of an unknown novelty. Appearances are often deceitful, yielding obvious clews only to mistakes and falsehoods. They are always superficial, furnishing no reliable evidence of the reality.

> "Who could have thought such darkness lay conceal'd
> Within thy beams, O Sun! Or who could find,
> Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood reveal'd,
> That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
> Why then do we shun death with anxious strife?
> If *light* can thus deceive, wherefore not *life*?"

When the body dies, the mind is no longer manifested through it. That

is all we immediately know by perception. The inference that the mind has therefore ceased to be at all, is a mere supposition. It may still live and act, independently of the body. An outside phenomenon can prove nothing here. We must by some psychological probe pierce to the core of the being and discern, as there concealed, the central interpretation of truth, or else, in want of this, turn from these surface-shadows and seek the solution in some other province. Millions of appearances being opposed to the truth or inadequate to hint it, we must never implicitly trust their suggestions. What microscope can reveal the organic life in a kernel of corn, and show that through the decay of that kernel a stalk will spring up and bear a thousand kernels more? But if a new mental life emerges from the dying form of man, it lies in a spiritual realm whereinto we have no instruments to gaze. Every existent thing has its metes and limits. In fact, the only final weapon and fort of a thing is its environing limitation. It goes into nothing if that be taken down, the atheist says; into infinity, the mystic says. The mistake and difficulty lie in discerning what the last wall around the essence is. "The universe is the body of our body." The boundary of our life is boundless life. Schlegel has somewhere asked the question, "Is life in us, or are we in life?" Because man appears to be wholly extinguished in death, we have no right whatever in reason to conclude that he really is so. The star which seemed to set in the western grave of aged and benighted time, we, soon coming round east to the true spirit-sky, may discern bright in the morning forehead of eternity. There can be no safe reasoning from the outmost husk and phenomenon of a thing to its inmost essence and result. And, in spite of any possible amount of appearance, man himself may pass distinct and whole into another sphere of being when his flesh falls to dust. That science should search in vain with her finest glasses to discern a royal occupant reigning in the purple-chambered palace of the heart, or to trace any such mysterious tenant departing in sudden horror from the crushed and bleeding house of life, belongs to the necessary conditions of the subject; for spirit can only be spiritually discerned. As well might you seek to smell a color, or taste a sound, tie a knot of water, or braid a cord of wind.

Next comes the abstract Argument from Speculative Philosophy. Under this head are to be included all those theories which deny the soul to be a spiritual entity, but reduce it to an atomic arrangement, or a dependent attribute, or a process of action. Heracleitus held that the soul was fire: of course, when the fuel was exhausted the fire would go out. Thales taught that it was water: this might all evaporate away. Anaximenes affirmed that it was air, of which all things were formed by rarefaction and condensation: on such a supposition it could have no permanent personal identity. Critias said it was blood: this might degenerate and lose its nature, or be poured out on the ground. Leucippus maintained that it was a peculiar concourse of atoms: as these came together, so they might fly apart and there be an end of what they

formed. The followers of Aristotle asserted that it was a fifth unknown substance, with properties of its own, unlike those of fire, air, water, and earth. This might be mortal or immortal: there was nothing decisive in the conception or the defining terms to prove which it was. Accordingly, the Peripatetic school has always been divided on the question of the immortality of the soul, from the time of its founder's immediate disciples to this day. It cannot be clearly shown what the mighty Stagyrite's own opinion really was.

Speculative conceptions as to the nature of the soul like the foregoing, when advanced as arguments to establish its proper mortality, are destitute of force, because they are gratuitous assumptions. They are not generalizations based on careful induction of facts; they are only arbitrary hypotheses. Furthermore, they are inconsistent both with the facts and phenomena of experience. Mind cannot fairly be brought into the category of the material elements; for it has properties and performs functions emphatically distinguishing it from every thing else, placing it in a rank by itself, with exclusive predicates of its own. Can fire think? Can water will? Can air feel? Can blood see? Can a mathematical number tell the difference between good and evil? Can earth be jealous of a rival and loyal to a duty? Can a ganglion solve a problem in Euclid or understand the Theodicée of Leibnitz? It is absurd to confound things so distinct. Mind is mind, and matter is matter; and though we are now consciously acquainted with them only in their correlation, yet there is as much reason for supposing that the former survives the close of that correlation as for supposing that the latter does. True, we perceive the material remaining and do not perceive the spirit. Yes; but the differentiation of the two is exactly this, that one is appreciable by the senses, while the other transcends and baffles them. It is absolutely inconceivable in imagination, wholly incredible to reason, intrinsically nonsensical every way, that a shifting concourse of atoms, a plastic arrangement of particles, a regular succession of galvanic shocks, a continuous series of nervous currents, or any thing of the sort, should constitute the reality of a human soul, the process of a human life, the accumulated treasures of a human experience, all preserved at command and traversed by the moral lines of personal identity. The things lie in different spheres and are full of incommunicable contrasts. However numerously and intimately correlated the physical and psychical constituents of man are, yet, so far as we can know any thing about them, they are steeply opposed to each other both in essence and function. Otherwise consciousness is mendacious and language is unmeaning. A recent able author speaks of "that congeries of organs whose union forms the brain and *whose action constitutes the mind.*"[10] The mind, then, is an action! Can an *action* love and hate, choose and resolve, rejoice and grieve, remember, repent, and pray? Is not an *agent* necessary for an action? All such

[10] Bucknill and Tuke, Psychological Medicine, p. 371.

speculative conceptions as to the nature of soul as make it purely phenomenal are to be offset, if they can be, by the view which exhibits the personal ego or conscious selfhood of the soul, not as an empty spot in which a swarm of relations centre as their goal-point, but as an indestructible monad, the innermost and substantial essence and cause of the organization, the self-apprehending and unchangeable axis of all thinking and acting. Some of the most free, acute, learned, wise, and powerful thinkers of the world have been champions of this doctrine; especially among the moderns may be named Leibnitz, Herbart, Goethe, and Hartenstein. Jacobi most earnestly maintained it both against Mendelssohn and against Fichte.

That the mind is a substantial entity, and therefore may be conceived as immortal,—that it is not a mere functional operation accompanying the organic life, a phantom procession of conscious states filing off on the stage of the cerebrum "in a dead march of mere effects,"—that it is not, as old Aristoxenus dreamed, merely a harmony resulting from the form and nature of the body in the same way that a tune springs from the consenting motions of a musical instrument,—seems to be shown by facts of which we have direct knowledge in consciousness. We think that the mind is an independent force, dealing with intellectual products, weighing opposing motives, estimating moral qualities, resisting some tendencies, strengthening others, forming resolves, deciding upon its own course of action and carrying out its chosen designs accordingly. If the soul were a mere process, it could not pause in mid-career, select from the mass of possible considerations those adapted to suppress a base passion or to kindle a generous sentiment, deliberately balance rival solicitations, and, when fully satisfied, proceed. Yet all this it is constantly doing. So, if the soul were but a harmony, it would give no sounds contrary to the affections of the lyre it comes from. But actually it resists the parts of the instrument from which they say it subsists, exercising dominion over them, punishing some, persuading others, and ruling the desires, angers, and fears, as if itself of a different nature.[11] Until an organ is seen to blow its own bellows, mend its shattered keys, move its pedals, and play, with no foreign aid, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," or a violin tunes up its discordant strings and wields its bow in a spontaneous performance of the Carnival, showing us every Cremona as its own Paganini, we may, despite the conceits of speculative disbelief, hold that the mind is a dynamic personal entity. That thought is the very "latch-string of a new world's wicket."

Thirdly, we have the fanciful Argument from Analogy. The keen champions of disbelief, with their athletic agility of dialectics, have made terrible havoc among the troops of poetic arguments from resemblance, drawn up to sustain the doctrine of immortality. They have exposed the feebleness of the argument for our immortality from the wonderful

[11] Plato, Phædo, 93.

workmanship and costliness of human nature, on the ground that what requires the most pains and displays the most skill and genius in its production is the most lovingly preserved. For God organizes the mind of a man just as easily as he constructs the geometry of a diamond. His omnipotent attributes are no more enlisted in the creation of the intelligence of an elephant or the gratitude of a soul than they are in the fabrication of the wing of a gnat or the fragrance of a flower. Infinite wisdom and power are equally implied in each and in all. They have shown the gross defectiveness of the comparison of the butterfly and psyche. The butterfly, lying in the caterpillar neatly folded up like a flower in the bud, in due time comes forth. It is a material development, open to the senses,—a common demonstration to sensible experience. The disengagement of a spirit from a fleshly encasement, on the other hand, is a pure hypothesis wholly removed from sensible apprehension. There is no parallel in the cases. So the ridiculousness has been made evident of Plato's famous analogical argument that by a general law of nature all things are produced contraries from contraries; warmth dies into the life of cold, and lives out of the death of cold; night is born from the death of day, and day is born from the death of night; and thus everywhere death springs from life, and life from death.[12] The whole comparison, considered as evidence of human immortality, is baseless and full of astonishing sophistry. When one hemisphere of the earth is turned away from the sun, it is night there; when it is turned towards the sun, it is day again. To this state of facts—this revolving succession—there is obviously no parallelism whatever in the two phenomenal phases of man, life and death, whereof one finishes its course and then the other seems fixed forever. In like manner, when Jeremy Taylor,[13] after the example of many others, especially of old Licetus, argues soberly, as he does in a letter to Evelyn, for the immortality of the soul from the analogy of lamps burning in tombs for centuries with no waste of matter, there is no apposite and valid similarity, even if the instances were not a childish fable. An equally baseless argument for the existence of an independent spiritual body within the material body, to be extricated from the flesh at death and to survive in the same form and dimensions, we recollect having seen in a work by a Swedenborgian author.[14] He reasons that when a person who has suffered amputation feels the lost limb as vividly as ever before, the phenomenon is palpable proof of a spirit-limb remaining while the fleshly one is gone! Of course, the simple physiological explanation is that the mind instinctively refers the sensations brought in by the severed nerves to the points where, by inveterate custom, it has hitherto learned to trace their origination. The report being the same, it is naturally attributed to the same source.

[12] Crawford, On the Phædon of Plato.

[13] Heber's Life and Works of Jeremy Taylor, vol. i. p. 69.

[14] Des Guays, True System of Religious Philosophy, Letter V.

But those skeptics who have mercilessly exposed these fallacious arguments from analogy have themselves reasoned in the same way as fallaciously and as often. When individual life leaves the physical man, say they, cosmical life immediately enters the corpse and restores it to the general stock of nature; so when personal consciousness deserts the psychical man, the universal spirit resumes the dissolving soul. When certain conditions meet, a human soul is formed,—a gyrating current of thought, or a vortex of force: soon some accident or a spent impulse breaks the eddy, and the individual subsides like a whirl in the air or a water-spout in the sea. When the spirit-fuel of life is exhausted, man goes out as an extinguished candle. He ceases like a tone from a broken harp-string. All these analogies are vitiated by radical unlikeness between the things compared. As arguments they are perfectly worthless, being spoiled by essential differences in the cases. Wherein there is a similarity it falls short of the vital point. There is no justice in the conception of man as a momentary gyre of individual consciousness drawn from the universal sea by a sun-burst of the Spirit. He is a self-ruling intelligence, using a dependent organism for his own ends, comprehending his own destiny, successively developing its conditions and acquiring the materials for occupying and improving them, with a prevision of eternity. A flower may just as well perish as live, a musical sound cease as continue, a lamp be put out as burn on: they know not the difference. Not so with the soul of man. We here overpass a discrete degree and enter upon a subject within another circle of categories. Let the rash reasoner who madly tries conclusions on a matter of such infinite pith and moment, with data so inapt and poor, pause in sacred horror before, having first

"Put out the light, he then—puts out THE LIGHT!"

There are peculiarities in the soul removing it out of the range of physical combinations and making a distinct destiny fairly predicable of it. When we reflect on the nature of a self-contained will, intelligent of immaterial verities and perhaps transcendent of space and time, how burlesque is the terror of the ancient corpuscular theorists lest the feebly-cohering soul, on leaving the body, especially if death happened during a storm, would be blown in pieces all abroad! Socrates, in the Phædo, has a hearty laugh over this; but Lucretius seriously urges it.[15] The answer to the skeptical reasoning from analogy is double First, the lines of partial correspondence which visibly terminate within our tangible reach can teach nothing as to the termination of other lines which lead out of sight and disappear in a spiritual region. An organized material form—for instance, a tree—is fatally limited: else it would finally fill and exhaust the earth. But no such limiting necessity can be predicated of mind. Secondly, as far as there is genuine analogy, its implications are much stronger in favor of immortality than against it. Matter, whose essence

[15] Lib. iii. ll. 503–506.

is materiality, survives all apprehensible changes; spirit, whose essence is spirituality, should do the same.

Another attack on the doctrine of a future life is masked in the negative Argument from Ignorance. We do not know how we shall live again; we are unable to construct the conditions and explain the details of a spiritual state of existence; and therefore, it is said, we should of right conclude that there is no such thing. The proposition is not usually stated so blankly; but it really amounts to that. The Epicureans say, as a tree cannot exist in the sky, nor clouds in the ocean, nor fishes in the meadow, nor water in stone, thus the mind cannot exist apart from the nerves and the blood. This style of reasoning is a bold begging of the question. Our present experience is vacant of any specific knowledge of the conditions, methods, and contents of a life it has not yet experienced: therefore there is no such life. Innumerable millions of facts beyond our present knowledge unquestionably exist. It is not in any way difficult to conceive that innumerable millions of experiences and problems now defying and eluding our utmost powers may hereafter fall within our comprehension and be easily solved. Will you accept the horizon of your mind as the limit of the universe? In the present, experience must be confined within its own boundaries by the necessity of the case. If an embryo were endowed with a developed reasoning consciousness, it could not construct any intelligible theory of the world and life into which it was destined soon to emerge. But it would surely be bad logic to infer, because the embryo could not, from want of materials within its experience, ascertain the how, the when, the where, and the what, of the life awaiting it, that there was no other life reserved for it. An acorn buried and sprouting in the dark mould, if endowed with intelligent consciousness, could not know any definite particulars of its maturer life yet to be in the upper light and air, with cattle in its shade and singing-birds in its branches. Ignorance is not a ground of argument, only of modest suspense. We can only reason from what we know. And the wondrous mysteries or natural miracles with which science abounds, myriads of truths transcending all fictions, melt and remove from the path of faith every supposed difficulty. Any quantity of facts have been scientifically established as real which are intrinsically far more strange and baffling to belief than the assertion of our immortality is. Indeed, "there is no more mystery in the mind living forever in the future than in its having been kept out of life through a past eternity. The authentic wonder is the fact of the transition having been made from the one to the other; and it is far more incredible that, from not having been, we are, than that, from actual being, we shall continue to be."[16]

The unbounded possibilities of life suggested by science and open to imagination furnish sufficient reply to the objection that we cannot con-

[16] Martineau, Sermons on Immortality, in Endeavors after the Christian Life.

ceive the precise causes and modes of a future state. Had one little particular been different in the structure of the eye, or in the radiation and media of light, we should never have seen the stars! We should have supposed this globe the whole of creation. So some slightest integument or hindering condition may now be hiding from us the sublime reality and arrangements of immortality which in death's disenveloping hour are to burst into our vision as the stellar hemisphere through the night. Shut up now to one form of being and one method of experience, how can we expect an exhaustive knowledge of other and future forms and methods of being and experience? It is a contradiction to ask it. But the soul is warranted in having faith, like a buried mustard-seed which shall yet mount into its future life. A sevenfold denser mystery and a seven-times narrower ignorance would bring no real argument against the survival of the soul. For in an omnipotent infinitude of possibilities one line of ignorance cannot exhaust the avenues and capacities of being. Escaping the flesh, we may soar into heaven

> "Upon ethereal wings, whose way
> Lies through an element so fraught
> With living Mind that, as they play,
> Their every movement is a thought."

Ignorance of the scientific method avails nothing against moral proofs of the fact. The physiologist studying the coats of the stomach, the anatomist dissecting the convolutions of the brain, could never tell that man is capable of sentiment, faith, and logic. No stethoscope can discern the sound of an expectation, and no scalpel can lay bare a dream; yet there *are* expectations and dreams. No metaphysical glass can detect, no prognosis foresee, the death of the soul with the dissolution of its organs: on empirical grounds, the assertion of it is therefore unwarranted. But though no amount of obscurity enveloping the subject, no extent of ignorance disabling us now to grasp the secret, is a legitimate basis of disbelief, yet actually, there can be no doubt, in multitudes of instances, the effectual cause of disbelief in immortality is the impossibility of vividly conceiving its conditions and scenery; "for," as one of the subtlest of thinkers has remarked, "however far faith may go beyond experience, it must always be chained down by it at a distance." But if there are good grounds for anticipating another life, then man should confide in it, no matter how incompetent he is to construct its theatre and foresee its career. A hundred years ago, one might have scouted the statement that the most fearful surgical operations would be performed without inflicting pain, because it was impossible to see how it could be done. Or if a person had been informed that two men, one in Europe and one in America, should converse in lightning athwart the bed of the Atlantic, he might have rejected it as an absurdity, because he could not conceive the mode. If destined to a future life, all we could reasonably expect to know of it now would be through hinting germs and mystic presentiments

of it. And these we do experience to the fullest extent: their ceaseless prophecies are everywhere with us,—

> "Blank misgivings of a creature
> Moving about in worlds not realized."

The last weapon of disbelief in a future life is the Scientific Argument from Materialism. Lucretius says, "There is nothing in the universe but bodies and the properties of bodies." This is a characteristic example of the method of the materialists: to assume, as an unquestionable postulate, the very point in debate, and that, too, in defiance of the intelligent instincts of consciousness which compel every unsophisticated person to acknowledge the simultaneous existence of mind and matter as two correlated yet distinct realities. The better statement would be, There is nothing in the universe but forces and the relations of forces. For, while we know ourselves in immediate self-consciousness, as personal intelligences perceiving, willing, and acting, all we know of an outward world is the effects produced on us by its forces. Certainly the powers of the universe can never be lost from the universe. Therefore if our souls are, as consciousness declares, causes, and not mere phenomena, they are immortal. To ignore either factor in the problem of life, the material substratum or the dynamic agent, is mere narrowness and blindness.

But the unbelieving naturalist argues that the total man is a product of organization, and therefore that with the dissolution of the living combination of organs all is over. Matter is the marriage-bed and grave of soul. Priestley says, "The principle of thought no more belongs to substance distinct from body than the principle of sound belongs to substance distinct from bell." There is no relevancy in the comparison, because the things are wholly unlike. Thought is not, as Hartley's theory avowed it was, a vibration of a cerebral nerve, as sound is a vibration of a sonorous body; for how could these vibrations be accumulated in memory as our mental experiences are? When a material vibration ends, it has gone forever; but thoughts are stored up and preserved. A hypothetical simile, like that just cited from Priestley, is not a cogent argument. It is false science thus to limit the modes of being to what lies within our present empirical knowledge. Is it not pure presumptuousness to affirm that the creative power of Almighty God is shut up so that intelligent creatures can only exist in forms of flesh? When a recent materialist makes the assertion, "The thinking man is the sum of his senses," it is manifest that he goes beyond the data, assuming what should be proved, and confounding the instruments and material with the workman. It is as if one should say, "A working cotton-manufactory is the sum of its machines," excluding the persons by whose guiding oversight all is done. Plainly, it may be granted that all which man *knows* is brought in through the door of the senses, without allowing the same of all that man *is*. We have no warrant for pronouncing the identical

coextensiveness of what man learns to know and what he is created to be. The very proposition, man knows something, presupposes three things, a subject, an act, and an object. Whether the three exist and perish together or not is matter for discussion, and not fairly to be settled by forcibly lumping the heterogeneous three into homogeneous unity.

In the present state of science it must be confessed that all kinds of physical force—whether mechanical, chemical, vital, or nervous—are drawn more or less directly from the sun, the material reservoir of power for our solar system. This must be admitted,—although some recent materialists have pushed the doctrine so far that they may be called the Parsees of the West. Whenever the proper conditions for an animate being are furnished, a force derived from the sun lifts matter from its stable equilibrium to the level of organic existence. In due season, from its wavering life-struggle there, it decays back to the deep rest of insensate earth.[17] This is a truth throughout the organic realm, from the bulb of a sea-weed to the brain of a Cæsar. So much cannot be denied. Every organism constantly receives from the universe food and force, and as constantly restores in other forms the material and dynamical equivalents of what it receives, and finally itself goes to the sources whence it came. But the affirmation of this for all within the physical realm is not the admission of it for what subsists in an immeasurably higher rank and totally different realm. Entering the psychical sphere, where we deal with a new, distinct order of realities,—not impenetrability, weight, extension, but thought, affection, will,—why may not this province contain eternities, even though the other holds only mortalities? It is a question to be examined on its own grounds, not to be put aside with a foregone conclusion. In nature the cause endures under all evanescent changes, and survives all phenomenal beginnings and endings: so in spirit the causal personality, if there be one, may outlast all the shifting currents of the outward phenomena in endless persistence. Of course, the manifestation of the mind through the senses must cease when the senses no longer remain. The essence of the controversy, then, is exactly this: Is the mind an entity? or is it a collection of functions? If the soul be a substantial force, it is immortal. If it be a phenomenal resultant, it ceases at death.

A *reductio ad absurdum* immediately occurs. If the psychical totality of man consists of states of feeling, modes of volition, and powers of thought, not necessitating any spiritual entity in which they inhere, then, by parity of reasoning, the physical totality of man consists of states of nutrition, modes of absorption, and powers of change, implying no body in which these processes are effectuated! Qualities cannot exist without a subject; and just as physical attributes involve a body, spiritual attributes involve a mind. And, if a mental entity be admitted, its death or cessation with that of its outer dress or case is not a fair inference, but needs appropriate evidence.

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[17] Moleschott, Licht und Leben.

The soul of a man has been defined as the sum of his ideas, an idea being a state of the consciousness. But the essence of mind must be the common ground and element of all different states of consciousness. What is that common ground and element but the presence of a percipient volitional force, whether manifested or unmanifested, still there? That is the germinal core of our mental being, integrating and holding in continuous identity all the phenomenal fluctuations of consciousness. It is clear that any other representation seems inconsistent with the most central and vivid facts of our knowledge. In illustration of this, let us see how every materialistic exposition omits utterly, or fails to account for, the most essential element, the solitary and crowning peculiarity, of the case. For example, it is said that thought or consciousness is a phenomenal process of changes sustained in the brain by a correlation of forces, just as the rainbow appears, but has no ontological subsistence of its own: the continuous spectrum hangs steady on the ceaselessly-renewed substratum of the moving mist-rack and the falling rain. But the comparison is absolutely inapplicable, because the deepest ground-principle of the mind is wanting in the rainbow,—namely, conscious and continuous identity holding in each present moment all the changes of the past moments. If the rainbow were gifted with consciousness, it could not preserve its personal identity, but merely its phenomenal identity, for any two successive moments, since its whole being would consist of an untied succession of states.

Traversing the body from its extreme tissues to the gray vesicular substance composing the spinal cord and covering the surface and convolutions of the brain, are two sets of white, fibrous nerves. One set, the afferents, bring in sensation, all kinds of tidings, from the out-world of matter. The other set, the efferents, carry out volition, all kinds of decrees, from the in-world of mind. Without an afferent nerve no influence of the world can reach the mind; and without an efferent nerve no conclusion of the mind can reach the world. As we are now constituted, this machinery is necessary for the intercommunication of the mind and the material universe. But if there be something in the case besides live machinery and crossing telegrams,—if there be a monarch-mind inaccessible to the vulgar crowd of things and only conversing with them through the internuncial nerves,—that spirit-entity may itself be capable of existing forever in an ideal universe and of communing there face to face with its own kingly lineage and brood. And we maintain that the account of the phenomena is grossly defective, and that the phenomena themselves are palpably inexplicable, except upon the supposition of such an entity, which uses the organism but is not the organism itself nor a function of it. "Ideas," one materialist teaches, "are transformed sensations." Yes; but that does not supersede a *transforming* mind. There must be a force to produce the transformations. "The phenomena of mind," says another, "consist in a succession of states of consciousness." Yes; but what is it that presides over, takes up, and

preserves this succession? The phenomena of the mind are not the mind itself. "The actions of the mind are the functions of the cerebrum," adds a third. Yes; but the inquiry is, what is the mind itself? not, what are its acts? The admission of the gray nerve-cells of the brain, as the material substratum through which sensations are received and volitions returned, does not exclude the necessity of a dynamical cause for the metamorphosing phenomenon. That cause must be free and intelligent, because the products of its action, as well as its accompanying consciousness, are marked by freedom and intelligence. For example, when a cylindrical and fibrous porter deposits his sensitive burden in the vesicular and cineritious substance, something examines it, tests its import, reflects on what shall be done, forms an intelligent resolution, and commands another porter to bear the dynamic load forth. The reflective and determining something that does this is the mind. Thus, by the fact of an indissoluble dynamic will, is the broad lineal experience of man grasped and kept from dissipating into crumbled psychical states, as when the dead kings of ancient India were burned their corpses were wrapped in asbestos shrouds to hold the ashes together.

The flame of a burnt-out candle twinkling in the socket is not numerically the same with that which appeared when it was first lighted; nor is a river at any two periods numerically the same. Different particles constantly feed an ever-renewed flame or stream, just like the former but never the same. A totally new element appears when we contemplate mind. Here, although the whole molecular substance of the visible organism is in perpetual flux, the same conscious personality persists through all, growing ever richer in an accumulating possession of past experiences still held in living command. The Arethusa of identity threads the blending states of consciousness, and, passing the ocean-bed of death, may emerge in some morning fount of immortality. A photographic image impressed on suitable paper and then obliterated is restored by exposure to the fumes of mercury. But if an indefinite number of impressions were superimposed on the same paper, could the fumes of mercury restore any one called for at random? Yet man's memory is a plate with a hundred millions of impressions all cleanly preserved, and he can at will select and evoke the one he wants. No conceivable relationship of materialistic forces can account for the facts of this miraculous daguerreotype-plate of experience, and the power of the mind to call out into solitary conspicuousness a desired picture which has forty-nine million nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine latent pictures lying above it, and fifty millions below it. It has been said that "the impressions on the brain, whether perceptions or intellections, are fixed and retained through the exactness of assimilation. As the mind took cognizance of the change made by the first impression of an object acting on the brain through the sense-organs, so afterwards it recognises the likeness of that change in the parts inserted

by the nutritive process."[18] This passage implies that the mind is an agent, not a phenomenon; and it describes some of the machinery with which the mind works, not the essence of the mind itself. Its doctrine does not destroy nor explain the presiding and elective power which interprets these assimilated and preserved changes, choosing out such of them as it pleases,—that unavoided and incomprehensible power, the hiding-place of volition and eternity, whose startling call has often been known, in some dread crisis, to effect an instantaneous restoration of the entire bygone life, making all past events troop through the memory, a swiftly awful cavalcade marching along the fibrous pavement of the brain, while each terrified thought rushes to its ashy window to behold. We here leave the material realm behind and enter a spiritual province where other predicates and laws hold, and where, "delivered over to a night of pure light, in which no unpurged sight is sharp enough to penetrate the mysterious essence that sprouteth into different persons," we kneel in most pious awe, and cry, with Sir Thomas Browne, "There is surely a piece of divinity in us,—something that was before the elements and owes no homage unto the sun!"

The fatal and invariable mistake of materialism is that it confounds means and steps with causes, processes with sources, organs with ends, predicates with subject.[19] Alexander Bain denies that there is any cerebral closet or receptacle of sensation and imagery where impressions are stored to be reproduced at pleasure. He says, the revival of a past impression, instead of being an evocation of it from an inner chamber, is a setting on anew of the current which originally produced it, now to produce it again.[20] But this theory does not alter the fact that all past impressions are remembered and can be revived at will by an internal efficiency. The miracle, and the necessity of an unchanging conscious entity to explain it, are implied just as they were on the old theory. "The organs of sense," Sir Isaac Newton writes, "are not for enabling the soul to perceive the species of things in its sensorium, but for conveying them there."[21] Now, as we cannot suppose that God has a brain or needs any material organs, but rather that all infinitude is his Sensorium, so spirits may perceive spiritual realities without any mediating organism. Our physical experience in the present is no limit to the spiritual possibilities of the future. The materialistic argument against immortality fails, because it excludes essential facts. As anterior to our experience in the present state there was a *power* to organize experiences and to become what we are, so none of the superficial reasonings of a mere earth-science can show that there is not now a power to organize experiences in a future state and to become what our faith anticipates we shall be. And this suggests to speculative curiosity the query, Shall we com-

[18] Paget, Surgical Pathology, Lecture II.

[19] Frauenstädt, Der Materialismus, seine Wahrheit und sein Irrthum, s. 169.

[20] The Senses and the Intellect, p. 61. [21] Brodie, Psychological Inquiries, p. 41, 3d edition.

mence our future life, a psychical cell, as we commenced our present life, a physical cell?

It will be well, perhaps, to reply next to some of the aggressive sophistries of disbelief. The following lines by Dr. Beddoes are striking, but, considered as a symbol of life, seem almost wilfully defective:—

> "The body is but an engine
> Which draws a mighty stream of spiritual power
> Out of the world's own soul, and makes it play
> A while in visible motion."

Man is that miraculous engine which includes not only all the needful machinery, but also fuel, fire, steam, and speed, and then, in climacteric addition to these, *an engineer!* Does the engineer die when the fire goes out and the locomotive stops? When the engine madly plunges off the embankment or bridge of life, does the engineer perish in the ruin, or nimbly leap off and immortally escape? The theory of despair has no greater plausibility than that of faith.

Feuerbach teaches that the memento mori of reason meets us everywhere in the spiritual God's-acre of literature. A book is a grave, which buries not the dead remains, but the quick man, not his corpse, but his soul. And so we live on the psychical deposits of our ancestry. Our souls consist of that material which once constituted other souls, as our bodies consist of the material which once constituted other bodies. A thought, it is to be replied, is never excreted from the mind and left behind. Only its existence is indicated by symbols, while itself is added to the eternal stock of the deathless mind. A thought is a spiritual product in the mind from an affection of the cerebral substance. A sentence is a symbol of a thought adapted to create in the contemplator just such a cerebral affection as that from which it sprang, and to deposit in his mind just such a spiritual product as that which it now denotes. Thus are we stimulated and instructed by the transmitted symbols of our ancestors' experiences, but not literally nourished by assimilation of their very psychical substance, as this remorseless prophet of death's ghastly idealism would have us believe. Still, in whatever aspect we regard it, one cannot but shudder before that terrible cineritious substance whose dynamic inhabitants are generated in the meeting of matter's messages with mind's forces, and sent forth in emblems to shake the souls of millions, revolutionize empires, and refashion the world.

Strauss employs an ingenious argument against the belief in a future life,—an argument as harmless in reality as it is novel and formidable in appearance. "Whether the nerve-spirit be considered as a dependent product, or as the producing principle of the organism, it ends at death: for, in the former case, it can no longer be produced when the organism perishes; in the latter case, that it ceases to sustain the organism is a proof that it has itself decayed."[22] In this specious bit of special plead-

[22] Charakteristiken und Kritiken, s. 394.

ing, unwarranted postulates are assumed and much confusion of thought is displayed. It is covertly taken for granted that every thing seen in a given phenomenon is either product or producer; but something may be an accompanying part, involved in the conditions of the phenomenon, yet not in any way essentially dependent on it, and in fact surviving it. What does Strauss mean by "the nerve-spirit"? Is there no mind behind it and above it, making use of it as a servant? Our present life is the result of an actual and regulated harmony of forces. Surely that harmony may end without implying the decay of any of its initial components, without implying the destruction of the central constituent of its intelligence. It is illegitimate logic, passing from pure ignorance to positive affirmation; a saltation of sophistry from a negative premise of blindness to all behind the organic life, to a dogmatic conclusion of denial that there is any thing behind the organic life.

A subtle and vigorous disbeliever has said, "The belief in immortality is not a correct expression of human nature, but rests solely on a misunderstanding of it. The real opinion of human nature is expressed in the universal sorrow and wailing over death." It is obvious to answer that both these expressions are true utterances of human nature. It grieves over the sadness of parting, the appalling change and decay, the close-locked mystery of the unseen state. It rejoices in the solace and cheer of a sublime hope springing out of the manifold powerful promises within and without. Instead of contemning the idea of a heavenly futurity as an idle dream-image of human longing, it were both devouter and more reasonable, from that very causal basis of it, to revere it and confide in it as divinely pledged. All the thwarted powers and preparations and affections, too grand, too fine, too sacred, to meet their fit fulfilment here, are a claim for some holier and vaster sphere, a prophecy of a more exalted and serene existence, elsewhere. The unsatisfied and longing soul has created the doctrine of a future life, has it? Very good. If the soul has builded a house in heaven, flown up and made a nest in the breezy boughs of immortality, that house must have tenants, that nest must be occupied. The divinely-implanted instincts do not provide and build for naught.

Certain considerations based on the resemblances of men and beasts, their asserted community of origin and fundamental unity of nature, have had great influence in leading to the denial of the immortality of the human soul. It is taken for granted that animals are totally mortal; and then, from the apparent correspondences of phenomena and fate between them and us, the inference is drawn that the cases are parallel throughout, and that our destiny, too, is annihilation. The course of thought on this subject has been extremely curious, illustrating, on the one hand, that "where our egotism begins, there the laws of logic break," and, on the other hand, that often when fancy gets scent of a theory the voice and lash of reason are futile to restrain it until the theory is run into the ground. Des Cartes, and after him Malebranche and a few

other writers, gave no slight currency to the notion that brutes are mere machines, moved by prearranged influences and utterly destitute of intelligence, will, or consciousness. This scheme gave rise to many controversies, but has now passed into complete neglect.[23] Of late years the tendency has been to assimilate instead of separating man and beast. Touching the outer sphere, we have Oken's homologies of the cranial vertebræ. In regard to the inner sphere, we have a score of treatises, like Vogt's Pictures from Brute-Life, affirming that there is no qualitative, but merely a quantitative, distinction between the human soul and the brute soul.[24] Over this point the conflict is still thick and hot. But, however much of truth there may be in the doctrine of the ground-identity of the soul of a man and the soul of a dog, the conclusion that man therefore perishes is a pure piece of sophistry. Such a monstrous assassination of the souls of the human race with the jaw-bone of an ass may be legitimately avoided in either of two ways. It is as fair to argue the immortality of animals from their likeness to us, as our annihilation from our likeness to them. The psychological realm has been as much deepened in them by the researches of modern science as the physiological domain has been widened in us. As Agassiz says, we must not lose sight of the mental individuality of animals in an exclusive attention to the bodily side of their nature.[25] A multitude of able thinkers have held the faith that animals have immaterial and deathless souls. Rightly considered, there is nothing in such a doctrine which a keen reasoner may not credit and a person of the most refined feelings find pleasure in embracing. In their serene catholicity and divine sympathy, science and religion exclude pride and contempt.

But admitting that there is no surviving psychical entity in the brute, that is in no way a clear postulate for proving that the same fact holds of man. The lower endowments and provinces of man's nature and experience may correspond ever so closely with the being and life of brutes whose existence absolutely ceases at death, and yet he may be immortal. The higher range of his spiritual faculties may elevate him into a realm of universal and eternal principles, extricating his soul from the meshes of decay. He may come into contact with a sphere of truths, grasp and rise into a region of realities, conferring the prerogative of deathlessness, not to be reached by natures gifted in a much lower degree, although of the same kind. Such a distinction is made between men themselves by Spinoza.[26] His doctrine of immortality depicts the stupendous boon as contingent, to be acquired by observance of con-

[23] Darmanson, La bête transformée en machine. Ditton, Appendix to Discourse on Resurrection of Christ, showing that brutes are not mere machines, but have immortal souls. Orphal, Sind die Thiere blos sinnliche Geschöpfe? Thomasius, De Anima Brutorum, quo asseritur, eam non esse Materialem, contra Cartesianam Opinionem. Winkler, Philosophische Untersuchungen von dem Seyn und Wesen der Seelen der Thiere, von einzelnen Liebhabern der Weltweisheit.

[24] Büchner, Kraft und Stoff, kap. 19: Die Thierseele. [25] Essay on Classification, p. 64.

[26] Jouffroy, Introduction to Ethics: Channing's trans., vol. ii. pp. 189–191.

ditions. If the ideas of the soul represent perishable objects, it is itself mortal; if imperishable, it is immortal. Now, brutes, it is probable, never rise to the apprehension of pure and eternal truths; but men do. It was a mean prejudice, founded on selfish ignorance and pride, which first assumed the total destruction of brutes in death, and afterwards, by the grovelling range of considerations in which it fastened and the reaction it naturally provoked, involved man and all his imperial hopes in the same fate. A firm logical discrimination disentangles the human mind from this beastly snarl.[37] The difference in data warrants a difference in result. The argument for the immortality of brutes and that for the immortality of men are, in some respects, parallel lines, but they are not coextensive. Beginning together, the latter far outreaches the former. Man, like the animals, eats, drinks, sleeps, builds; unlike them, he adorns an ideal world of the eternal future, lays up treasures in its heavenly kingdom, and waits to migrate into it.

There are two distinct methods of escaping the fatal inference of disbelief usually drawn by materialists. First, by the denial of their philosophical postulates, by the predication of immaterial substance, affirming the soul to be a spaceless point, its life an indivisible moment. The reasonings in behalf of this conception have been manifold, and cogent enough to convince a multitude of accomplished and vigorous thinkers.[38] In Herbart's system the soul is an immaterial monad, or *real*, capable of the permanent formation of states in its interior. Its life consists of a quenchless series of self-preservations. These reals, with their relations and aggregations, constitute at once the varying phenomena and the causal substrata of the universe. Mamertius Claudianus, a philosophical priest of Southern Gaul in the fifth century, wrote a treatise "On the Nature of the Soul." He says, "When the soul wills, it is all will; when it recollects or feels, it is all recollection or feeling. Now, will, recollection, and feeling, are not bodies. Therefore the soul is incorporeal." This makes the conscious man an imperishable substantial activity. An old English writer, with quaint eloquence, declares, "There is a proportion between an atom and the universe, because both are quantitative. All this excesse vanisheth into nothing as soon as the lowest substance shineth out of that orbe where they reside that scorn divisibility."

From this brief statement of the position of the immaterialists, without arguing it, we pass to note, in the second place, that nearly all the postulates ordinarily claimed by the materialist may be granted without by any means proving the justice of their disbelief of a future life.[39] Admit that there can be no sensation without a nerve, no thought without a brain, no phenomenal manifestation without an organ. Such

[37] Schaller, Leib und Seele, kap. 13: Der Psychische Unterschied des Menschen vom Thiere.

[38] Crombie, Natural Theology, vol. ii.: Essay on the Immortality of the Soul. Brougham, Discourse of Nat. Theol., sect. 5.

[39] This has been ably shown by Spiers in his treatise, Ueber das körperliche Bedingtsein der Seelenthätigkeiten.

an admission legitimates the conclusion, on empirical grounds, that our present mode of life must cease with the dissolution of our organism. It does not even empirically prove that we may not survive in some other mode of being, passing perhaps to an inconceivably higher stage and more blessed kind of life. After the entire disintegration of our material organs, we may, by some now unknown means, possess in a refined form the equivalents of what those organs gave us. There may be, interfused throughout the gross mortal body, an immortal body of exquisitely delicate structure invisibly extricating itself from the carious ruins at death. Plattner develops and defends this hypothesis with plausible skill and power.[30] The Hindus conceived the soul to be concealed within several successive sheaths, the innermost of which accompanied it through all its transmigrations.[31] "The subtile person extends to a small distance over the skull, like the flame of a lamp above its wick."[32] The later Pythagoreans and Platonists seem to have believed that the same numerical ethereal body with which the soul was at first created adhered to it inseparably during all its descents into grosser bodies,—a lucid and wingy vehicle, which, purged by diet and catharms, ascends again, bearing the soul to its native seat.[33] The doctrine of Swedenborg asserts man to be interiorly an organized form pervading the physical body, an eternal receptacle of life from God. In his terminology, "constant influx of life" supersedes the popular idea of a self-contained spiritual existence. But this influx is conditioned by its receiving organ, the undecaying inner body.[34] However boldly it may be assailed and rejected as a baseless theory, no materialistic logic can *disprove* the existence of an ethereal form contained in, animating, and surviving, the visible organism. It is a possibility; although, even if it be a fact, science, by the very conditions of the case, can never unveil or demonstrate it.

When subjected to a certain mode of thought developed recently by Faraday, Drossbach, and others, materialism itself brightens and dissolves into a species of idealism, the universe becomes a glittering congeries of indestructible points of power, and the immortality of the soul is established as a mathematical certainty.[35] All bodies, all entities, are but forms of force.[36] Gravity, cohesion, bitterness, thought, love, recollection, are manifestations of force peculiarly conditioned. Our perceptions are a series of states of consciousness. An attribute or property of a thing is an exercise of force or mode of activity producing a certain state of consciousness in us. The sum of its attributes or properties constitutes the totality of the thing, and is not adventitiously laid upon the thing: you can separate the parts of a thing; but you cannot take

[30] Spes immortalitatis animorum per rationes physiologicas confirmata.
[31] Dabistan, vol. ii. p. 177. [32] Colebrooke, Essays, vol. i. p. 246.
[33] Cudworth, Int. Sys., vol. ii. pp. 218–230, Am. ed.
[34] On the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body, sect. 9.
[35] Lott, Herbarti de animi immortalitate doctrina.
[36] Hickok, Rational Cosmology, ch. ii. sect. 1: Matter is force.

away its forces from any part, because they are its essence. Matter is not a limitation or neutralization, but a state and expression, of force. Force itself is not multiplex, but one, all qualities and directions of it lying potentially in each entity, the kinds and amounts which shall be actually manifested depending in each case on the conditions environing it. All matter, all being, therefore, consists of ultimate atoms or monads, each one of which is an inseparable solidarity of activities. The universe is an eternal society of eternal force-individuals, all of which are capable of constant changes in groupings, aggregations, developments, relations, but absolutely incapable of annihilation. Every atom possesses potential reason, and comes to self-apprehension whenever the appropriate conditions meet. All differences originate from conditions and exist not in essentialities.

According to this theory, the eternity of the soul is sure, but that eternity must be an endless series of mutual transitions between consciousness and unconsciousness, life and death.[37] Since all cannot be men at once, they must take their turns. Carus says, a soul enclosing in itself an independent consciousness is inconceivable. When the organism by which consciousness is conditioned and revealed is destroyed in death, consciousness disappears as certainly as the gleaming height of a dome falls in when its foundation is removed. And Drossbach adds, death is the shade-side of life. Without shade, light would not be perceptible, nor life without death; for only contrast leads to knowledge. The consciousness of life is realized by interchange with the unconsciousness of death. Mortality is the inevitable attribute of a self-conscious being. The immortality of such a being can be nothing else than an everlasting mortality. In this restless alternation between the opposite states of life and death, being holds continuous endurance, but consciousness is successively extinguished and revived, while memory is each time hopelessly lost. Widenmann holds that the periods of death are momentary, the soul being at once born again, retaining no vestiges of its past.[38] Drossbach, on the contrary, believes that memory is an indefeasible quality of the soul-atom,—the reason why we do not remember previous lives being that the present is our first experiment. When all atoms destined to become men have once run the human career, the earliest ones will begin to reappear with full memory of their preceding course. It matters not how long it requires for one circuit of the whole series of souls; for the infinite future is before us, and, as we are unconscious in death, the lapse of ages is nothing. We lie down to sleep, and instantly rise up to a new life.

"Death gives to life all its relish, as hunger is the true sauce of food. Death first makes us precious and dear to ourselves. Since it lies in the

[37] Drossbach, Die persönliche Unsterblichkeit als Folge der atomistischen Verfassung der Natur, abschn. iv. kap. ii. sect. 5, 6.

[38] Gedanken über die Unsterblichkeit als Wiederholung des Erdenlebens.

nature of change that no condition is endless, but morning ever follows night, death cannot be endless. Be unconcerned; thy being shall as little be lost as the grain of dust at thy foot! Because in death thou dost not know that thou art, therefore fearest thou that thou shalt be no more? O pusillanimous! the great events of nature are too vast for thy weak heart. A whole eternity thou hast not been conscious that thou art, and yet thou hast become conscious of it. Every night thou losest thy consciousness, yet art thou conscious again, and shalt be. The loss of consciousness is not necessarily the loss of self. The knowledge of my being is not my being itself, but a peculiar force thereof, which, entering into reciprocal action with other forces, is subject to change. It is its essence to act, and thus to change, yet without surrendering its essence. Goethe's words may be applied to the soul:—

'It is; therefore eternally it is.'

Not in cold motionlessness consists eternal life, but in eternal movement, in eternal alteration, in incessant change. These are warranties that no state endures forever, not even the unconscious,—death."[39]

In this unfolding of the theory there are many arbitrary and fanciful conceptions which may easily be dispensed with. The interspersion of the bright life of the human monads with blank epochs of oblivious darkness, and the confinement of their destiny to an endless repetition of their life-course on this globe, are not necessary. In the will of God the free range of the boundless universe may lie open to them and an incessant career in forever novel circumstances await them. It is also conceivable that human souls, leading still recurrent lives on earth with total forgetfulness, may at last acquire sufficient power, in some happy concurrence or sublime exigency, to summon back and retain all their foregone states. But, leaving aside all such incidental speculations, the chief interest of the dynamic-atomistic or monad theory, as affording a solid basis for immortality, is in relation to the arrogance of a shallow and conceited materialism. Says the materialist, "Show me a spirit, and I will believe in your heaven." Replies the idealist, "Show me your matter, however small a piece, and I will yield to your argument." Spirit is no phenomenon to be shown, and matter is an inference from thought: thus the counter-statements of physical science and ideal philosophy fairly offset each other, and throw their respective advocates back upon the natural ground of unsophisticated faith and observation. Standing there unperverted, man has an invincible reliance on the veracity of his faculties and the normal reports of nature. Through immediate apprehension of his own conscious will and the posited experience of his senses, he has knowledge both of causal forms of being, or free productive force, and of resultant processes and phenomena. And surely sound logic teaches that the latter may alter or disappear without

[39] Drosbach, Die individuelle Unsterblichkeit vom monadistisch metaphysischen Standpunkte betrachtet.

implying the annihilation of the former. If all material substance, so called, were destroyed, not only would space remain as an infinite indivisible unity, but the *equivalents* of what had been destroyed must remain in some form or other. Who shall say that these equivalents would not be intelligent points of power, capable of organizing aggregate bodies and of reconstituting the universe in the will of God, or of forming from period to period, in endless succession, new kinds of universes, each abounding in hitherto unimagined modes of life and degrees of bliss? To our present faculties, with only our present opportunities and data, the final problem of being is insoluble. We resolve the properties of matter into methods of activity, manifestations of force. But there, covered with alluring awe, a wall of impenetrable mystery confronts us with its baffling "Thus far, and no farther, shall thine explicating gaze read the secrets of destiny." We cannot tell what force is. We can conceive neither its genesis nor its extinction. Over that obscure environment, into the immense empire of possibilities, we must bravely fling the treasures of our love and the colors of our hope, and with a divine impulse in the moment of death leap after, trusting not to sink as nothing into the abyss of nowhere, but, landing safe in some elysium better than we know, to find ourselves still in God.

In dealing with moral problems in the realm of the higher reason, intuitions, mysterious hints, prophetic feelings, instinctive apprehensions of fitness and harmony, may be of more convincing validity than all the formal arguments logic can build.[40] "Sentiment," Ancillon says, as quoted by Lewes, "goes further than knowledge: beyond demonstrative proofs there is natural evidence; beyond analysis, inspiration; beyond words, ideas; beyond ideas, emotions; and the sense of the infinite is a primitive fact of the soul." In transcendental mathematics, problems otherwise unapproachable are solved by operating with emblems of the relations of purely imaginary quantities to the facts of the problems. The process is sound and the result valid, notwithstanding the hypothetical and imaginary character of the aids in reaching it. When for mastering the dim momentous problems of our destiny the given quantities and relations of science are inadequate, the helpful suppositious conditions furnished by faith may equally lead over their airy ways to conclusions of eternal truth. The disbelievers of a future life have in their investigations applied methods not justly applicable to the subject, and demanded a species of proof impossible for the subject to yield: as if one should use his ear to listen to the symmetries of beauty, and his eye to gaze upon the undulations of music. It is therefore that the terribly logical onslaughts of Feuerbach are harmless upon most persons. The glittering scimetar of this Saracenic metaphysician flashes swift and sharp, but he fights the air with weapons of air. No blood flows from the severed emptiness of space; no clash of the blows is heard any more than bell-

[40] Abel, Disquisitio omnium tam pro immortalitate quam pro mortalitate argumentandi generum.

strokes would be heard in an exhausted receiver. One may justifiably accept propositions which strict science cannot establish and believe in the existence of a thing which science cannot reveal, as Jacobi has abundantly shown[41] and as Wagner has with less ability tried to illustrate.[42] The utmost possible achievement of a negative criticism is to show the invalidity of the physiological, analogical, and metaphysical arguments to furnish positive proof of a future life for us. But this negation fully admitted is no evidence of our total mortality. Science is impotent to give any proof reaching to such a conclusion. However badly the archery of the sharp-eyed and strong-armed critics of disbelief has riddled the outer works of ordinary argument, it has not slain the garrison. Scientific criticism therefore leaves us at this point: there *may* be an immortal soul in us. Then the question whether there actually *is* an immortal soul in us, rests entirely on *moral* facts and considerations. Allowing their native force to these moral facts and considerations, the healthy ethical thinker, recognising in himself an innermost self-conscious ego which knows itself persistent and identical amidst the multiplex vicissitude of transient conditions, lies down to die expecting immediately to continue his being's journey elsewhere, in some other guise. Leaving out of view these moral facts and considerations, the materialistic naturalist thinker, recognising his consciousness as only a phantom procession of states across the cerebral stage hung in ashy livery and afloat on blood, lies down to expire expecting immediately to be turned into nobody forever. Misinterpreting and undervaluing these moral facts and considerations, the anchorless speculative thinker, recognising his organism as an eye through which the World-Spirit beholds itself, or a momentary pulse in which the All feels itself, his consciousness as a part of the infinite Thought, lies down on his death-couch expecting immediately to be turned into everybody, eternity, instead of greeting him with an individual kiss, wrapping him in a monistic embrace. The broad drift of human conviction leads to the first conclusion,—a persistent personality. The greatest philosophers, from Plato to Pascal, deny the second view,—a blotting extinction of the soul,—declaring it false in science and incredible in presentation. The third theory—a pantheistic absorption—the irresistible common sense of mankind repudiates as a morbid dream. Man naturally believes himself immortal but not infinite. Monism is a doctrine utterly foreign to undiseased thinking. Although it be a Fichte, a Schelling, or a Hegel, who says that the soul is a circumscribed yet omnipotent ego, which first radiates the universe, and afterwards beholds it in the mirror of itself, and at length breaks into dead universality, the conception is, to the average apprehension of humanity, as overweening a piece of wild fancy as ever rose in a madman's reveries.[43]

[41] Von den göttlichen Dingen und ihrer Offenbarung.

[42] Wissen und Glauben mit besonderer Beziehung zur Zukunft der Seelen: Fortsetzung der Betrachtungen über Menschenschöpfung und Seelensubstanz.

[43] A full discussion of the pantheistic doctrine of immortality will be found in the following

The ordinary contemplator of the phenomena of the world and the sequel of human life from the materialistic point of view feels disgust and terror at the prospect. The scene seems to him degrading and the fate fearful. The loathing and dismay vulgarly experienced thus, it is true, arise from an exaggerated misapprehension of the basis and meaning of the facts: rightly appreciated, all is rulingly alive, aspirant, beautiful, and benignant. The ceaseless transformations filling the heights and depths of the creation are pervaded with joy and clothed with a noble poetry. There is no real death: what seems so is but a "return or falling home of the fundamental phenomenon to the phenomenal foundation,—a dissolution through which nature seeks her ground and strives to renew herself in her principles." Still, in spite of this more profound and genial interpretation of the shifting metamorphoses of nature, the fear of there being no conscious future life for man produces, when first entertained, a horrid constriction around the heart, felt like the ice-cold coils of a serpent. The thought of tumbling hopelessly into

"The blind cave of eternal night"

naturally oppresses the heart of man with sadness and with alarm. To escape the unhappiness thus inflicted, recourse has been had to expedients. Two artificial substitutes for immortality have been devised. Fondly fixing attention upon these, men have tried to find comfort and to absorb their thoughts from the dreaded spectre and the long oblivion. The first is the sentimental phantasm of posthumous fame. The Latin bard, ancient Ennius, sings,—

"Nemo me lacrymis decoret, nec funera fletu
Faxit. Cur? volito vivu' per ora virum."[44]

Shakspeare likewise often expresses the same thought:—

"When all the breathers of this world are dead,
You still shall live (such virtue hath my pen)
Where breath most breathes,—even in the mouths of men."

And again in similar strain:—

"My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,
Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes."

Napoleon is reported to have said, "My soul will pass into history and the deathless memories of mankind; and thus in glory shall I be immortal." This characteristically French notion forms the essence of

works. Richmann, Gemeinfassl. Darstellung und Würdigung aller gehaltreichen Beweisarten für Gott und für Unsterblichkeit der Seele. Unius, Unsterblichkeit. Blasche, Philosophische Unsterblichkeitlehre. Weisse, Die philosophische Geheimlehre von der Unsterblichkeit des menschlichen Individuums. Göschel, Von den Beweisen für die Unsterblichkeit der menschlichen Seele im Lichte der speculativen Philosophie. Morell, Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the 19th Century, part ii. ch. v. sect. 2: The German School of the 19th Century. Buchanan, Modern Atheism.

[44] Cicero, Tusc. Quæst., lib. i. cap. xv.

Comte's "positivist" doctrine of a future life. It is an aristocratic affair. Those deemed worthy after their death to be incorporated, by vote of the people or otherwise, in the Supreme Being,—the *Grand-Être*, a fictitious product of a poetic personification,—through the perpetual fame and influence thus secured have an immortal life in the thoughts and feelings of a grateful posterity. Comte says, "Positivism greatly improves immortality and places it on a firmer foundation, by changing it from objective to subjective." We should say it utterly destroys the whole reality, leaving only a simulative name. Great and eternal Humanity is God. The dead who are really meritorious are alone lovingly remembered, and, thus incorporated into the Divinity, they have merely a "subjective immortality in the brains of the living."[45] It is a poor shadow and ridiculous travesty of the sublime truth which the soul craves and foresees. Hapless Leopardi, in his Bruto Minore, expresses this "poor hope of being in the future's breath:"—

> "dell' atra morte ultima raggio,
> Conscia futura età."

That proud and gifted natures should have seriously stooped to such an illusive toy, to occupy, inspire, and solace themselves with it, is a fact strange and pathetic. With reverential tenderness of sympathy must we yearn towards those whose hopeless yet loving natures, baffled of any solid resource, turn appealingly, ere they fade away, to clasp this substanceless image of an image.

The other scheme is what may be called the "*lampada tradunt*"[46] theory of a future life. Generations succeed each other, and the course is always full. Eternal life takes up new subjects as fast as its exhausted receptacles perish. Men are the mortal cells of immortal humanity. The individual must comfort himself with the assurance and sympathetic reflection that his extinction really destroys nothing, since all the constituent elements of his being will be caught up and manipulated into the forms of his successors:—

> "It's for thyself to breed another thee,
> Then what could Death do, if thou shouldst depart,
> But leave thee living in posterity?"

Life is a constant renovation, and its sum is forever full and equal on the globe. The only genuine resurrection unto eternal life is an unending re-creation of organisms from the same materials to repeat the same physiological and psychological processes.[47] There is a gleam of cheer and of nobleness in this representation; but, upon the whole, it is perhaps as far-fetched and ineffectual as the former. It is a vapid consolation, after all, in view of our own personal annihilation, to think that others

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[45] Catechism of Positive Religion, Conversation III.

[46] Lucretius, De Nat. Rerum, lib. ii. l. 78.

[47] Schultz-Schultzenstein, Die Bildung des menschlichen Geistes durch Kultur der Verjüngung seines Lebens, ss. 834–847: Die Unsterblichkeitsbegriffe.

will then live and also be annihilated in their turn. It is very pleasant to believe that the dear old earth will forever be peopled with joyous throngs of men; but though such a belief might, in some moods, help to reconcile us to our fate if we knew we must depart from the scene and perish forever, it could not alter the intrinsic sadness of that fate. We naturally desire to live on elsewhere ourselves more than we desire to have the scene of life continued here after we are gone. Genuine solace and complete satisfaction are to be found in no substitute for immortality, but in the truth of immortality.

In regard to the eternal preservation of personal consciousness, it were bigoted blindness to deny that there is room for doubts and fears. While the monad soul—so to call it—lies here beneath the weak glimmer of suns so far off that they are forceless to develop it to a victorious assurance, we cannot but sometimes feel misgivings and be depressed by skeptical surmises. Accordingly, while belief has generally prevailed, disbelief has in every age had its representatives. The ancients had their Dicæarchus, Protagoras, Panætius, Lucan, Epicurus, Cæsar, Horace, and a long list besides. The moderns have had their Gassendi, Diderot, Condillac, Hobbes, Hume, Paine, Leopardi, Shelley, and now have their Feuerbach, Vogt, Moleschott, and scores of others needless to be named. And although in any argument from authority the company of the great believers would incomparably outshine and a thousand times outweigh the array of deniers, this does not alter the obvious fact that there are certain phenomena which are natural provocatives of doubt and whose troubling influence scarcely any one can always escape. Homer, in giving expression to Hector's confidence of victory over the Greeks, makes him wish that he were but as sure of entering the state of the immortal gods.[48] When some one asked Dr. Johnson, "Have we not proof enough of the immortality of the soul?" he replied, "I want more." Davenant—of whom Southey says, "I know no other author who has so often expressed his doubts respecting a future state and how burdensome he felt them"—writes,—

> "But ask not bodies doom'd to die,
> To what abode they go:
> *Since knowledge is but sorrow's spy,*
> It is not safe to know."

Charles Lamb writes, "If men would honestly confess their misgivings, (which few men will,) there are times when the strongest Christian of us has reeled under questionings of such staggering obscurity." Many a man, seeing nature hang her veil of shifting glories above the silent tombs of vanished generations, voiceless now forever, entertaining innumerable contradictory queries amidst feelings of decay and sights of corruption, before the darkness of unknown futurity might piteously exclaim, without deserving blame,—

[48] Iliad, lib. viii. ll. 538–540.

"I run the gauntlet of a file of doubts,
Each one of which down hurls me to the ground."

Who that has reached maturity of reflection cannot appreciate and sympathize somewhat with these lines of Byron, when he stands before a lifeless form of humanity?—

"I gazed, as oft I have gazed the same,
To try if I could wrench aught out of death
Which should confirm, or shake, or make, a faith;
But it was all a mystery. Here we are,
And there we go: but where? Five bits of lead,
Or three, or two, or one, send very far!
And is this blood, then, form'd but to be shed?
Can every element our elements mar?
Can air, earth, water, fire, live,—and we dead?
We, whose minds comprehend all things? No more."

Doubt is not sin, but rather a misfortune; for it is—to adopt a suggestion from Schaller—a cleft in the soul through which thought steals away what the heart desires. The guilt or innocence of doubting depends on the spirit in which it is done. There are two attitudes of mind and moods of feeling before propositions and evidence. One is, "I will not believe unless I see the prints of the nails and lay my finger in the marks of the wounds." The other is, "Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief." In abstract logic or rigid science the former may be appropriate and right. The latter alone can be justifiable in moral and religious things. If a man sorrowfully and humbly doubts, because he cannot help it, he shall not be condemned. When he is proud of his doubts, complacently swells with fancied superiority, plays the fanfaron with his pretentious arguments, and sets up as a propagandist of disbelief, being all the while in reality

"Most ignorant of what he is most assured,—
His glassy essence,"—

his conduct is offensive to every good man, and his spirit must receive the condemnation of God. A missionary of atheism and death, horridly eager to destroy those lofty thoughts which so much help to make us men, is a shocking spectacle. Yet a few such there are, who seem delighted as by their dismal theory they bury mankind in an iron tomb of materialism and inscribe on the irrevocable door the solitary words, Fate and Silence.

The more attentively one dwells on the perishable physical side of life, the more prone he will be to believe in an absolute death; the more prevailingly he ponders the incorruptible psychical side, the more prepared he will be to credit immortality. The chemist who confines his studies exclusively within his own province, when he reflects on the probable sequence of life, will speculatively see himself vanish in his blowpipes and retorts. Whoso devotedly dabbles in organisms, nerves, and bloods may easily become skeptical of spirit; for it everywhere balks his analysis and eludes his search. The objects he deals with are things.

They belong to change and dissolution. Mind and its proper home belong to a different category of being. Because no heaven appears at the end of the telescope, and no soul is seen on the edge of the dissecting-knife, and no mind is found at the bottom of the crucible, to infer that therefore there is neither heaven, nor soul, nor mind, is as monstrous a *non sequitur* as it would be to infer the non-existence of gravity because it cannot be distilled in any alembic nor discerned with any glass. The man who goes into the dark crimson-dripping halls of physiology seeking proofs of immortality, and, failing to find them, abandons his faith in it, is like that hapless traveller who, groping in the catacombs under Rome, was buried by the caving-in of the sepulchral roof, and thus lost his life, while all the time, above, the great vault of heaven was stretching, blue and breezy, filled with sunshine and sentient joy!

When we contemplate men in a mass, like a swarm of bees or a hive of ants, we find ourselves doubting their immortality. They melt away, in swiftly confused heaps and generations, into the bosom of nature. On the other hand, when we think of individuals, an almost unavoidable thought of personal identity makes us spontaneously conclude them immortal. It rather requires the effort then to think them otherwise. But obviously the real problem is never of the multitudinous throng, but always of the solitary person. In reference to this question it is sophistry to fix our thoughts on a Chinese city as crowded with nameless and indistinguishable human inhabitants as a decayed cheese is with vermin. Fairness requires that our imaginations and reasonings upon the subject fasten upon an individual, set apart and uplifted, like a king, in the incommunicable distinctness and grandeur of selfhood and responsibility.

From looking about this grave-paved star, from painful and degrading contemplations of dead bodies, "the snuff and loathéd part of nature which burns itself out," let a man turn away, and send his interior kingly glance aloft into ideal realms, let him summon up the glorious sentiments of freedom, duty, admiration, the noble experiences of self-sacrifice, love, and joy,—and his soul will extricate itself from the filthy net of material decay, and feel the divine exemption of its own clean prerogatives, dazzling types of eternity, and fragments of blessedness that

> "Promise, on our Maker's truth,
> Long morrow to this mortal youth."

Martyrdom is demonstration of immortality; for self-preservation is the innermost, indestructible instinct of every conscious being. When the soul, in a sacred cause, enthusiastically rushes upon death, or in calm composure awaits death, it is irresistibly convinced that it cannot be hurt, but will be blessed, by the crisis. It knows that in an inexpressibly profound sense whosoever would ignobly save his life loses it, but whosoever would nobly lose his life saves it. Martyrdom demonstrates immortality.

> "Life-embark'd, out at sea, 'mid the wave-tumbling roar,
> The poor ship of my body went down to the floor;
> But I broke, at the bottom of death, through a door,
> And, from sinking, began forever to soar."

The most lamentable and pertinacious doubts of immortality sometimes arise from the survey of instances of gross wickedness, sluggishness, and imbecility forced on our attention. But, as these undeniably are palpable violations of the creative intention, it is not just to reason from them. In fairness the argument demands that we select the noblest, healthiest specimens of completed humanity to reason from. Should we not take a case in which God's will is so far plainly fulfilled, in order to trace that will farther and even to its finality? And regarding on his death-bed a Newton, a Fénélon, a Washington, is it difficult to conceive him surviving the climax and catastrophe of his somatic cell-basis and soaring to a more august range of existence? Remembering that such as these have lived and died, ay, and even the godlike Nazarene, can we believe that man is merely a white interrogation-point lifted on the black margin of matter to ask the answerless secret of the universe and be erased?

Such a conclusion charges God with the transcendent crime of infanticide perpetrated in the most deliberate manner and on the most gigantic scale. Who can bear, by thus quenching the hope of another life, to add death to death, and overcast, to every thoughtful eye, the whole sunny field of life with the melancholy shadow of a bier? There is a noble strength and confidence, cheering to the reader, in these words of one of the wisest and boldest of thinkers:—"I should be the very last man to be willing to dispense with the faith in a future life: nay, I would say, with Lorenzo de' Medici, that all those are dead, even for the present life, who do not hope for another. I have the firm conviction that our soul is an existence of indestructible nature, whose working is from eternity to eternity. It is like the sun, that seems indeed to set, but really never sets, shining on in unchangeable splendor."[49] Such a view of our destiny incomparably inspires and ennobles us. Man, discovering under all the poor, wretched accidents of earth and sense and hard fortune the immortality of his soul, feels as that king's son who, lost in infancy, and growing up under the care of a forest hind, supposed himself to belong to the rude class among whom he lived; but one day, learning his true parentage, he knew beneath his mean disguise that he was a prince, and immediately claimed his kingdom. These facts of experience show clearly how much it behooves us to cultivate by every honest method this cardinal tenet of religion,—how much wiser faith is in listening to the lucid echoes of the sky than despair in listening to the muffled reverberations of the grave. All noble and sweet beliefs grow with the growing nobleness and tenderness of characters sensitive to those fine revealings which pachydermatous souls can never know. In the upper hall of reason, before the high shrine of faith, burn the base doubts begotten in the cellars of sense; and they may serve as tapers to light your tentative way to conviction. If the floating al Sirat between physiology and psychology, earth and heaven, is too slippery and perilous for your footing, where heavy-

[49] Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe.

limbed science cannot tread, nerve the wings of faith for a free flight. Or, if every effort to fasten a definite theory on some solid support on the other side of the gulf fails, venture forth on the naked line of limitless desire, as the spider escapes from an unwelcome position by flinging out an exceedingly long and fine thread and going forth upon it sustained by the air.[50] Whoever preserves the full intensity of the affections is little likely to lose his trust in God and a future life, even when exposed to lowering and chilling influences from material science and speculative philosophy: the glowing of the heart, as Jean Paul says, relights the extinguished torch in the night of the intellect, as a beast stunned by an electric shock in the head is restored by an electric shock in the breast. Daniel Webster says, in an expression of his faith in Christianity written shortly before his death, "Philosophical argument, especially that drawn from the vastness of the universe in comparison with the apparent insignificance of this globe, has sometimes shaken my reason for the faith which is in me; but my heart has always assured and reassured me."[51] Contemplating the stable permanence of nature as it swallows our fleet generations, we may feel that we vanish like sparks in the night; but when we think of the persistent identity of the soul, and of its immeasurable superiority to the brute mass of matter, the aspect of the case changes and the moral inference is reversed. Does not the simple truth of love conquer and trample the world's aggregated lie? The man who, with assiduous toil and earnest faith, develops his forces, and disciplines his faculties, and cherishes his aspirations, and accumulates virtue and wisdom, is thus preparing the auspicious stores and conditions of another existence. As he slowly journeys over the mountains of life, aware that there can be no returning, he gathers and carries with him materials to build a ship when he reaches the strand of death. Upon the mist-veiled ocean launching then, he will sail—where? Whither God orders. Must not that be to the right port?

We remember an old Brahmanic poem—brought from the East by Rückert and sweetly resung in the speech of the West—full of encouragement to those who shall die.[52] A man wrapped in slumber calmly reclines on the deck of a ship stranded and parting in the breakers. The plank on which he sleeps is borne by a huge wave upon a bank of roses, and he awakes amidst a jubilee of music and a chorus of friendly voices bidding him welcome. So, perhaps, when the body is shattered on the death-ledge, the soul will be tossed into the fragrant lap of eternal life on the self-identified and dynamic plank of personality.

[50] Greenough, An Artist's Creed.

[51] Memorial of Daniel Webster from the City of Boston, p. 16.

[52] Brahmanische Erzählungen, s. 5.

CHAPTER IX.

MORALITY OF THE DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

In discussing the ethics of the doctrine of a future life—a subject here amazingly neglected, there more amazingly maltreated, and nowhere, within our knowledge, truly analyzed and exhibited[1]—it is important that the theme be precisely defined and the debate kept strictly to the lines. Let it be distinctly understood, therefore, that the question to be handled is not, "Whether there ought to be a future life or not," nor, "Whether there is a future life or not." The question is, "What difference should it make to us whether we admit or deny the fact of a future life?" If we believe that we are to pass through death into an immortal existence, what inferences pertaining to the present are rightfully to be drawn from the supposition? If, on the other hand, we think there is nothing for us after the present, what are the logical consequences of that faith in regard to our aims and rules of conduct in this world?

Suppose a man who has always imagined that death is utter annihilation should in some way suddenly acquire knowledge that an endless existence immediately succeeds the termination of this: what would be the legitimate instructions of his new information? Before we can fairly answer this inquiry, we need to know what relations connect the two states of existence. A knowledge of the law and method and means of man's destiny is more important for his guidance than the mere ascertainment of its duration. With reference to the query before us, four hypotheses are conceivable. If, in the first place, there be no connection whatever—except that of temporal sequence—between the present life and the future, then, so far as duty is concerned, the expectation of a world to come yields not the slightest practical application for the experience that now is. It can only be a source of comfort or of terror; and that will be accordingly as it is conceived under the aspect of benignity or of vengeance. If, secondly, the character of the future life depend on conditions to be fulfilled here, but those conditions be not within our control, then, again, no inferences of immediate duty can be drawn from the apprehended hereafter. Being quasi actors in a scene prearranged and with a plot predetermined, we can no more

[1] The only direct treatise on the subject known to us is Tiemann's Kritik der Unsterblichkeitslehre in Ansehung des Sittengesetzes, published in 1789. And this we have not seen.

be capable of any obligation or choice, in regard to the end, than puppets which some unseen Harlequin moves by the terrible wires of primitive decree or transmitted depravity towards the genial or the tragic crisis. If the soul's fate *there* is to be heaven or hell according to the part enacted *here*, it must have free will and a fair opportunity to work the unmarred problem safely out. Otherwise the future life is reduced, as far as it affects us here, to a mere source of complacency or of horror as it respectively touches the elect and the reprobate.

Thirdly, it may be conceived that the future life is a state of everlasting reward and punishment unchangeably decided by the way in which the probationary period allotted on earth is passed through. Here are men, for a brief time, free to act thus or otherwise. Do thus, and the endless bliss of heaven is won. Do otherwise, and the endless agony of hell is incurred. The plain rule of action yielded by this doctrine is, Sacrifice all other things to the one thing needful. The present life is in itself a worthless instant. The future life is an inexhaustible eternity. And yet this infinite wealth of glory or woe depends on how you act during that poor moment. Therefore you have *nothing to do while on earth but to seek the salvation of your soul.* To waste a single pulse-beat on any thing else is the very madness of folly. To find out how to escape hell and secure heaven, and then to improve the means, this should absolutely absorb every energy and every thought and every desire of every moment. This world is a bridge of straw over the roaring gulf of eternal fire. Is there leisure for sport and business, or room for science and literature, or mood for pleasures and amenities? No: to get ourselves and our friends into the magic car of salvation, which will waft us up from the ravenous crests of the brimstone lake packed with visages of anguish,—to bind around our souls the floating cord of redemption, which will draw us up to heaven,—this should intensely engage every faculty. Nothing else can be admitted save by oversight of the awful facts. For is it not one flexible instant of opportunity, and then an adamantine immortality of doom? That doctrine of a future life which makes eternal unalterable happiness or misery depend on the fleeting probation allowed here yields but one practical moral; and that it pronounces with imminent urgency and perfect distinctness. The only true duty, the only real use, of this life is to secure the forensic salvation of the soul by improvement of the appointed means. Suspended by such a hair of frailty, for one breathless moment, on such a razor-edged contingence, an entrancing sea of blessedness above, a horrible abyss of torture beneath, such should be the all-concentrating anxiety to secure safety that there would be neither time nor taste for any thing else. Every object should seem an altar drenched with sacrificial blood, every sound a knell laden with dolorous omen, every look a propitiatory confession, every breath a pleading prayer. From so single and preternatural a tension of the believer's faculties nothing could allow an instant's cessation except a temporary forgetting

or blinking of the awful scene and the immeasurable hazard. Such would be a logical application to life of the genuine morals of the doctrine under consideration. But the doctrine itself is to be rejected as false on many grounds. It is deduced from Scripture by a technical and unsound interpretation. It is unjust and cruel, irreconcilable with the righteousness or the goodness of God. It is unreasonable, opposed to the analogies of nature and to the experience of man. It is wholly impossible to carry it out consistently in the practice of life. If it were thoroughly credited and acted upon, all the business of the world would cease, and the human race would soon die out.

There remains one other view of the relationship of a future life with the present. And it seems to be the true view. The same Creator presiding, the same laws prevailing, over infinitude and eternity that now rule over time and earth, our immortality cannot reasonably be imagined either a moment of free action and an eternity of fixed consequences, or a series of separate fragments patched into a parti-colored experience with blanks of death between the patterns of life. It must be conceived as one endless existence in linear connection of cause and effect developing in progressive phases under varying conditions of motive and scenery. With what we are at death we live on into the next life. In every epoch and world of our destiny our happiness depends on the possession of a harmoniously working soul harmoniously related with its environment. Each stage and state of our eternal existence has its peculiarities of duty and privilege. In this one our proper work is to improve the opportunities, discharge the tasks, enjoy the blessings, belonging here. We are to do the same in the next one when we arrive in that. All the wealth of wisdom, virtue, strength, and harmony we acquire in our present life is the vantage-ground and capital wherewith we start in the succeeding life. Therefore the true preparation for the future is to fit ourselves to enter it under the most favorable auspices, by accumulating in our souls all the spiritual treasures afforded by the present. In other words, the truest aim we can set before ourselves during our existence on earth is to make it yield the greatest possible results of the noblest experience. The life hereafter is the elevated and complementary continuation of the life here; and certainly the directest way to ameliorate the continuation is to improve the commencement.

But, it may be said, according to this representation, the fact of a future life makes no difference in regard to our duty now; for if the grave swallows all, still, it is our duty and our interest to make the best and the most of our life in the world while it lasts. True; and really that very consideration is a strong proof of the correctness of the view in question. It corresponds with the other arrangements of God. He makes every thing its own end, complete in itself, at the same time that it subserves some further end and enters into some higher unity. He is no mere Teleologist, hobbling towards his conclusions on a pair of de-

cayed logic-crutches,[2] but an infinite Artist, whose means and ends are consentaneous in the timeless and spaceless spontaneity and perfection of his play. If the tomb is our total goal, our genuine aim in this existence is to win during its course an experience the largest in quantity and the best in quality. On the other hand, if another life follows this, our wisdom is just the same; because that experience alone, with the favor of God, can constitute our fitness and stock to enter on the future. And yet between the two cases there is this immense difference,—not indeed in duty, but in endowment,—that in the latter instance we work out our allotted destiny here, in a broader illumination, with grander incentives, and with vaster consolations. A future life, then, really imposes no new duty upon the present, alters no fundamental ingredient in the present, takes away none of the charms and claims of the present, but merely sheds an additional *radiance* upon the shaded lights already shining here, infuses an additional *motive* into the stimulants already animating our purposes, distils an additional *balm* into the comforts which already assuage our sorrows amidst an evanescent scene. The belief that we are to live hereafter in a compensating world explains to us many a sad mystery, strengthens us for many an oppressive burden, consoles us in many a sharp grief. Else we should oftener go mad in the baffling whirl of problems, oftener obey the baser voice, oftener yield to despair. These three are the moral uses, in the present life, of the doctrine of a future life. Outside of these three considerations the doctrine has no ethical meaning for human observance here.

It will be seen, according to the foregoing representation, that the expectation of a future life, instead of being harmful to the interests and attractions of the present, simply casts a cheering and magnifying light upon them. It does not depreciate the realities or nullify the obligations now upon us, but emphasizes them, flinging their lights and shades forward through a mightier vista. Consequently there is no reason for assailing the idea of another life in behalf of the interests of this. Such an opposition between the two states is entirely sophistical, resulting from a profound misinterpretation of the true moral relations connecting them.

The belief in immortality has been mistakenly attacked, not merely as hostile to our welfare on earth, but likewise as immoral in itself, springing from essential selfishness, and in turn nourishing selfishness and fatally tainting every thing with that central vice. To desire to live everlastingly as an identical individual, it has been said, is the ecstasy and culmination of avaricious conceitedness. Man, the vain egotist, dives out of sight in God to fish up the pearl of his darling self. He makes his poor individuality the measure of all things, his selfish desire

[2] "Seht, an der morschen Syllogismenkrücke
Hinkt Gott in Seine Welt."
Lenau's Satire auf einen Professor philosophiæ.

the law of endless being. Such a rampant proclamation of self-will and enthronement of pure egotism, flying in the face of the solemn and all-submerging order of the universe, is the very essence and climax of immorality and irreligiousness. To this assault on the morality of the belief in a future life, whether made in the devout tones of magnanimous sincerity, as by the sublime Schleiermacher, or with the dishonest trickiness of a vulgar declaimer for the rehabilitation of the senses, as by some who might be named, several fair replies may be made. In the first place, the objection begs the question, by assuming that the doctrine is a falsehood, and that its disciples wilfully set up their private wishes against the public truth. Such tremendous postulates cannot be granted. It is seizing the victory before the battle, grasping the conclusion without establishing the premises. For, if there be a future life provided by the Creator, it cannot be sinful or selfish in us to trust in it, to accept it with humble gratitude, and to prepare our souls for it. That, instead of being rebellious arrogance or overweening selfishness, would simply be conforming our thoughts and plans, our desires and labors, to the Divine arrangements. That would be both morality and piety. When one clings by will to a doctrine known to be a falsehood, obstinately suppressing reason to affirm it as a truth, and, in obedience to his personal whims, trying to force all things into conformity with it, he does act as a selfish egotist in full violation of the moral law and the spirit of religion. But a future life we believe to be a fact; and therefore we are, in every respect, justified in gladly expecting it and consecratedly living with reference to it.

Furthermore, admitting it to be an open question, neither proved nor disproved, but poised in equal uncertainty, still, it is not immoral nor undevout deeply to desire and fondly to hope a personal immortality. "The aim of religion," it has been said, "is the annihilation of one's own individuality, the living in the All, the becoming one with the universe." But in such a definition altogether too much is assumed. The aim of religion is only the annihilation of the self-will of the individual as opposed to the Will of the Whole, not the losing of one's self in the unconscious wastes of the universe, but the harmonizing of one's self with the Supreme Law of the universe. An humble, loving, and joyous conformity to the truth constitutes morality and religion. This is not necessarily inconsistent with a personal immortality. Besides, the charge may be retorted. To be identified with the universe is a prouder thought than to be subordinated to it as an infinitesimal individual. It is a far haughtier conceit to fancy one's self an integral part of God's substance than to believe one's self a worshipping pensioner of God's will. The conception, too, is less native to the mind, has been more curiously sought out, and is incomparably more pampering to speculative luxury. If accusations of selfishness and wilfulness are to be hurled upon any modes of preferred faith as to our destiny, this self-styled disinterested

surrender of our personality to the pantheistic Soul is as obnoxious to them as the common belief.

If a desire for personal immortality be a normal experience in the development of our nature, it cannot be indictable as an offence, but must be recognised as an indication of God's design. Whether the desire is a cold and degraded piece of egotism deserving rebuke and contempt, or a lofty and sympathetic affection worthy of reverence and approval, depends on no intrinsic ingredient of the desire itself, but on the character in which it has its being. One person will be a heartless tyrant, another a loving saint, in his hope of a future life. Shall our love of the dead, our prayers to meet them again, our unfathomed yearnings to know that they still live and are happy, be stigmatized as mean and evil? Regard for others as much as for ourselves prompts the eternal sigh. Nor will Divinity ever condemn the feeling himself has awakened. It is said that Xerxes, gazing once upon his gorgeous army of a million men spread out below him, sheathed in golden armor, white plumes nodding, purple standards waving, martial horns blowing, wept as he thought that in thirty years the entire host composing that magnificent spectacle would be dead. To have gazed thoughtfully upon such a sight with unmoved sensibilities would imply a much more selfish and hard-hearted egotist. So when a lonely philanthropist from some meditative eminence looks down on the human race, if, as the contemplation of their pathetic fading and decay wounds his saddened heart, he heals and cheers it with the faith of a glorious immortality for them all, who shall call him selfish and sinful? To rest contented with the speedy night and the infinite oblivion, wiping off all the unsolved sums from the slate of existence with annihilation's remorseless sponge,—that would be the selfishness and the cruelty.

When that sweet asp, death, fastens on our vein of earthly life, we all feel, like the dying queen of Egypt, that we have "immortal longings" in us. Since the soul thus holds by a pertinacious instinct to the eternity of her own existence, it is more rational to conclude that this is a pledge of her indestructible personality, God's impregnable defence reared around the citadel of her being, than to consider it the artificial rampart flung up by an insurgent egotism. In like manner, it is a misrepresentation of the facts to assert the culpable selfishness of the faith in a future life as a demanded reward for fidelity and merit here. No one demands immortality as pay for acquired desert. It is modestly looked for as a free boon from the God who freely gave the present and who has by a thousand symbolic prophecies promised it. Richter says, with great insight, "We desire immortality not as the reward of virtue, but as its continuance. Virtue can no more be rewarded than joy can: it is its own reward." Kant says, "Immortality has been left so uncertain in order that pure freedom of choice, and no selfish views, shall prompt our aspirations." "But," Jean Paul keenly replies, "as we have now discovered this intention, its object is defeated. Besides, if the *belief* in

immortality makes virtue selfish, the *experience* of it in the next world would make it more so." The anticipation of heaven can hardly make man a selfish calculator of profit; because heaven is no reward for crafty reckoning, but the home of pure and holy souls. Virtue which resists temptation and perseveres in rectitude because it has a sharp eye to an ulterior result is not virtue. No credible doctrine of a future life offers a prize except to those who are just and devout and strenuous in sacred service from free loyalty to the right and the good, spontaneously obeying and loving the higher and better call because it divinely commands their obedience and love. The law of duty is the superior claim of truth and goodness. Virtue, yielding itself filially to this, finds in heaven not remuneration, but a sublimer theatre and an immortal career. Egotistic greed, all mere prudential considerations as determining conditions or forces in the award, are excluded as unclean and inadmissible by the very terms; and the doctrine stands justified on every ground as pure and wholesome before the holiest tribunal of ethics. Surely it is right that goodness should be blessed; but when it continues good only for the sake of being blessed it ceases to be goodness. It is not the belief in immortality, but only the belief in a corrupt doctrine of immortality which can poison the springs of disinterested virtue.

The morality of the doctrine of a future life having thus been defended from the attacks of those who have sought to destroy it in the fancied interests either of the enjoyments of the earth or of the purity of virtue and religion, it now remains to free it from the still more fatal supports which false or superficial religionists have sought to give it by wrenching out of it meanings it never held, by various perverse abuses of it, by monstrous exaggerations of its moral importance to the present. We have seen that the supposition of another life, correctly interpreted, lays no new duty upon man, takes away from him no old duty or privilege, but simply gives to the previously-existing facts of the case the intensifying glory and strength of fresh light, motive, and consolation. But many public teachers, not content to treat the subject with this sobriety of reason, instead of presenting the careful conclusions of a conscientious analysis, have sought to strengthen their argument to the feelings by help of prodigious assumptions, assumptions hastily adopted, highly colored, and authoritatively urged. Upon the hypothesis that annihilation is the fate of man, they are not satisfied merely to take away from the present all the additional light, incentive, and comfort imparted by the faith in a future existence, but they arbitrarily remove all the alleviations and glories intrinsically belonging to the scene, and paint it in the most horrible hues, and set it in a frame of midnight. Thus, instead of calmly seeking to elicit and recommend truth, they strive, by terrifying the fancy and shocking the prejudices, to make people accept their dogma because frightened at the seeming consequences of rejecting it. It is necessary to expose the fearful fallacies which have been employed in this way, and which are yet extensively used for the same purpose.

Even a Christian writer usually so judicious as Andrews Norton has said, "Without the belief in personal immortality there can be no religion; for what can any truths of religion concern the feelings and the conduct of beings whose existence is limited to a few years in this world?"[3] Such a statement from such a quarter is astonishing. Surely the sentiments natural to a person or incumbent upon him do not depend on the *duration* of his being, but on the character, endowments, and relations of his being. The hypothetical fact that man perishes with his body does not destroy God, does not destroy man's dependence on God for all his privileges, does not annihilate the overwhelming magnificence of the universe, does not alter the native sovereignty of holiness, does not quench our living reason, imagination, or sensibility, while they last. The soul's gratitude, wonder, love, and worship are just as right and instinctive as before. If our experience on earth, before the phenomena of the visible creation and in conscious communion with the emblemed attributes of God, does not cause us to kneel in humility and to adore in awe, then it may be doubted if heaven or hell will ever persuade us to any sincerity in such acts. The simple prolongation of our being does not add to its qualitative contents, cannot increase the kinds of our capacity or the number of our duties. Chalmers utters an injurious error in saying, as he does, "If there be no future life, the moral constitution of man is stripped of its significancy, and the Author of that constitution is stripped of his wisdom and authority and honor."[4] The creative Sovereign of fifty million firmaments of worlds "stripped of his wisdom and authority and honor" because a few insects on a little speck are not eternal! Can egotistic folly any further go? The affirmation or denial of immortality neither adds to nor diminishes the numerical relations and ingredients of our nature and experience. If religion is fitted for us on the former supposition, it is also on the latter. To any dependent intelligence blessed with our human susceptibilities, reverential love and submission are as obligatory, natural, and becoming on the brink of annihilation as on the verge of immortality. Rebellious egotism makes all the difference. Truth is truth, whatever it be. Religion is the meek submission of self-will to God's will. That is a duty not to be escaped, no matter what the future reserves or excludes for us.

Another sophism almost universally accepted needs to be shown. Man, it is said, has no interest in a future life if not conscious in it of the past. If, on exchange of worlds, man loses his memory, he virtually ceases to exist, and might just as well be annihilated. A future life with perfect oblivion of the present is no life at all for us. Is not this style of thought the most provincial egotism, the utter absence of all generous thought and sympathy unselfishly grasping the absolute boons of being? It is a shallow error, too, even on the grounds of selfishness itself. In any point of view the difference is diametric and immense between a happy being

[3] Tracts concerning Christianity, p. 307.

[4] Bridgewater Treatise, part ii. ch. 10, sect. 15.

in an eternal present, unconscious of the past, and no being at all. Suppose a man thirty years of age were offered his choice to die this moment, or to live fifty years longer of unalloyed success and happiness, only with a complete forgetfulness of all that has happened up to this moment. He would not hesitate to grasp the gift, however much he regretted the condition.

It has often been argued that with the denial of a retributive life beyond the grave all restraints are taken off from the passions, free course given to every impulse. Chateaubriand says, bluntly, "There can be no morality if there be no future state."[5] With displeasing coarseness, and with most reprehensible recklessness of reasoning, Luther says, in contradiction to the essential nobleness of his loving, heroic nature, "If you believe in no future life, I would not give a mushroom for your God. Do, then, as you like. For if no God, so no devil, no hell: as with a fallen tree, all is over when you die. Then plunge into lechery, rascality, robbery, and murder." What bible of Moloch had he been studying to form, for the time, so horrid a theory of the happiest life, and to put so degrading an estimate upon human nature? Is man's will a starved wolf only held back by the triple chain of fear of death, Satan, and hell, from tearing forth with ravenous bounds to flesh the fangs of his desires in bleeding virtue and innocence? Does the greatest satisfaction man is capable of here, the highest blessedness he can attain to, consist in drunkenness, gluttony, dishonesty, violence, and impiety? If he had the appetite of a tiger or a vulture,—then, thus to wallow in the offal of vice, dive into the carrion of sensuality, abandon himself to revelling in carnivorous crime, might be his instinct and his happiness. But by virtue of his humanity man loves his fellows, enjoys the scenery of nature, takes delight in thought and art, dilates with grand presentiments of glory and eternity, mysteriously yearns after the hidden God. To a reasonable man—and no other is to be reasoned with on matters of truth and interest—the assumption of this brief season as all, will be a double motive not to hasten and embitter its brevity by folly, excess, and sin. If you are to be dead to-morrow, for that very reason, in God's name, do not, by gormandizing and guzzling, anticipate death to-day! The true restraint from wrong and degradation is not a crouching conscience of superstition and selfishness, fancying a chasm of fire, but a high-toned conscience of reason and honor, perceiving that they *are* wrong and degradation, and spontaneously loathing them.

Still worse, many esteemed authors have not hesitated to assert that unless there be a future life there is not only no check on passion within, but no moral law without; every man is free to do what he pleases, without blame or fault. Sir Kenelm Digby says, in his "Treatise on Man's Soule," that "to predicate mortality in the soule taketh away all morality, and changeth men into beastes, by removing the ground of all difference

[5] Génie du Christianisme, partie ii. livre vi. chap. 3.

in those thinges which are to governe our actions."[6] This style of teaching is a very mischievous absurdity. Admit, for a moment, that Jocko in the woods of Brazil, and Schiller in the brilliant circles of Weimar, will at last meet the same fate in the dusty grasp of death; yet, while they live, one is an ape, the other is a man. And the differences of capacity and of duty are numberless and immense. The statement is enough: argument would be ridiculous. The words of an audacious French preacher are yet more shocking than those of the English nobleman. It is hard to believe they could be uttered in good faith. Says Massillon, in his famous declamation on immortality, "If we wholly perish with the body, the maxims of charity, patience, justice, honor, gratitude, and friendship, are but empty words. Our own passions shall decide our duty. If retribution terminate with the grave, morality is a mere chimera, a bugbear of human invention."[7] What debauched unbeliever ever inculcated a viler or a more fatal doctrine? Its utter baselessness, as a single illustration may show, is obvious at a glance. As the sciences of algebra and geometry, the relations of numbers and bodies, are true for the material world although they may be lost sight of when time and space are transcended in some higher state, so the science of ethics, the relations of nobler and baser, of right and wrong, the manifold grades and qualities of actions and motives, are true for human nature and experience in this life even if men perish in the grave. However soon certain facts are to end, while they endure they are as they are. In a moment of carelessness, by some strange slip of the mind,—showing, perhaps, how tenaciously rooted are the common prejudice and falsehood on this subject,—even so bold and fresh a thinker as Theodore Parker has contradicted his own philosophy by declaring, "If to-morrow I perish utterly, then my fathers will be to me only as the ground out of which my bread-corn is grown. I shall care nothing for the generations of mankind. I shall know no higher law than passion. Morality will vanish."[8] Ah, man reveres his fathers and loves to act nobly, not because he is to live forever, but because he is a man. And, though all the summer hopes of escaping the grave were taken from human life, choicest and tenderest virtues might still flourish, as it is said the German crossbill pairs and broods in the dead of winter. The martyr's sacrifice and the voluptuary's indulgence are very different things to-day, if they do both cease to-morrow. No speed of advancing destruction can equalize Agamemnon and Thersites, Mansfield and Jeffries, or hustle together justice and fraud, cowardice and valor, purity and corruption, so that they will interchange qualities. There is an eternal and immutable morality, as whiteness is white, and blackness is black, and triangularity is triangular. And no severance of temporal ties or compression of spatial limits can ever cut the condign bonds of duty and annihilate the

[6] Ch. ix. sect. 10. [7] Œuvres Complètes, tome xiii.: Immortalité de l'Âme.
[8] Sermons of Theism, Sermon VII.

essential distinctions of good and evil, magnanimity and meanness, faithfulness and treachery.

Reducing our destiny from endless to definite cannot alter the inherent rightfulness and superiority of the claims of virtue. The most it can do is to lessen the strength of the motive, to give the great motor-nerve of our moral life a perceptible stroke of palsy. In reference to the question, Can ephemera have a moral law? Richter reasons as follows:—"Suppose a statue besouled for two days. If on the first day you should shatter it, and thus rob it of one day's life, would you be guilty of murder? One can injure only an immortal."[9] The sophistry appears when we rectify the conclusion thus:—one can inflict an *immortal* injury only on an immortal being. In fact, it would appear to be a greater wrong and injury, for the time, to destroy one day's life of a man whose entire existence was confined to two days, than it would be to take away the same period from the bodily existence of one who immediately thereupon passes into a more exalted and eternal life. To the sufferer, the former would seem an immitigable calamity, the latter a benign furtherance; while, in the agent, the overt act is the same. This general moral problem has been more accurately answered by Isaac Taylor, whose lucid statement is as follows:—"The creatures of a summer's day might be imagined, when they stand upon the threshold of their term of existence, to make inquiry concerning the attributes of the Creator and the rules of his government; for these are to be the law of their season of life and the measure of their enjoyments. The sons of immortality would put the same questions with an intensity the greater from the greater stake."

Practically, the acknowledged authority of the moral law in human society cannot be destroyed. Its influence may be unlimitedly weakened, its basis variously altered, but as a confessed sovereign principle it cannot be expelled. The denial of the freedom of the will theoretically explodes it; but social custom, law, and opinion will enforce it still. Make man a mere dissoluble mixture of carbon and magnetism, yet so long as he can distinguish right and wrong, good and evil, love and hate, and, unsophisticated by dialectics, can follow either of opposite courses of action, the moral law exists and exerts its sway. It has been asked, "If the incendiary be, like the fire he kindles, a result of material combinations, shall he not be treated in the same way?"[10] We should reply thus:—No matter what man springs from or consists of, if he has moral ideas, performs moral actions, and is susceptible of moral motives, then he is morally responsible: for all practical and disciplinary purposes he is wholly removed from the categories of physical science.

Another pernicious misrepresentation of the fair consequences of

[9] Werke, band xxxiii. s. 240.

[10] Some discussion of this general subject is to be found in Schaller, Leib und Seele, kap. 5: Die Consequentzen des Materialismus. And in Schopenhauer, Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik.

the denial of a life hereafter is shown in the frequent declaration that then there would be no motive to any thing good and great. The incentives which animate men to strenuous services, perilous virtues, disinterested enterprises, spiritual culture, would cease to operate. The essential life of all moral motives would be killed. This view is to be met by a broad and indignant denial based on an appeal to human consciousness and to the reason of the thing. Every man knows by experience that there are a multitude of powerful motives, entirely disconnected with future reward or punishment, causing him to resist evil and to do good even with self-sacrificing toil and danger. When the fireman risks his life to save a child from the flames of a tumbling house, is the hope of heaven his motive? When the soldier spurns an offered bribe and will not betray his comrades nor desert his post, is the fear of hell all that animates him? A million such decisive specifications might be made. The renowned sentence of Cicero, "*Nemo unquam sine magna spe immortalitatis se pro patria offerret ad mortem*,"[11] is effective eloquence; but it is a baseless libel against humanity and the truth. In every moment of supreme nobleness and sacrifice personality vanishes. Thousands of patriots, philosophers, saints, have been glad to die for the freedom of native land, the cause of truth, the welfare of fellow-men, without a taint of selfish reward touching their wills. Are there not souls

> "To whom dishonor's shadow is a substance
> More terrible than death here and hereafter"?

He must be the basest of men who would decline to do any sublime act of virtue because he did not expect to enjoy the consequences of it eternally. Is there no motive for the preservation of health because it cannot be an everlasting possession? Since we cannot eat sweet and wholesome food forever, shall we therefore at once saturate our stomachs with nauseating poisons?

If all experienced good and evil wholly terminate for us when we die, still, every intrinsic reason which, on the supposition of immortality, makes wisdom better than folly, industry better than sloth, righteousness better than iniquity, benevolence and purity better than hatred and corruption, also makes them equally preferable while they last. Even if the philosopher and the idiot, the religious philanthropist and the brutal pirate, did die alike, who would not rather live like the sage and the saint than like the fool and the felon? Shall heaven be held before man simply as a piece of meat before a hungry dog to make him jump well? It is a shocking perversion of the grandest doctrine of faith. Let the theory of annihilation assume its direst phase, still, our perception of principles, our consciousness of sentiments, our sense of moral loyalty, are not dissolved, but will hold us firmly to every noble duty until we ourselves flow into the dissolving abyss. But some one may say, "If I

[11] Tuscul. Quæst. lib. i. cap. 15.

have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not?" It advantageth you every thing *until you are dead*, although there be nothing afterwards. As long as you live, is it not glory and reward enough *to have conquered* the beasts at Ephesus? This is sufficient reply to the unbelieving flouters at the moral law. And, as an unanswerable refutation of the feeble whine of sentimentality that without immortal endurance nothing is worth our affection, let great Shakspeare advance, with his matchless depth of bold insight reversing the conclusion, and pronouncing, in tones of cordial solidity,—

> "This, thou perceivest, will make thy love more strong,
> To love that well which thou must leave ere long."

What though Decay's shapeless hand extinguish us? Its foreflung and enervating shadow shall neither transform us into devils nor degrade us into beasts. That shadow indeed only falls in the valleys of ignoble fear and selfishness, leaving all the clear road-lines of moral truth and practical virtue and heroic consecration still high and bright on the table-land of a worthy life; and every honorable soul, calmly confronting its fate, will cry, despite the worst,—

> "The pathway of my duty lies in sunlight;
> And I would tread it with as firm a step,
> Though it should terminate in cold oblivion,
> As if Elysian pleasures at its close
> Gleam'd palpable to sight as things of earth."

If a captain knew that his ship would never reach her port, would he therefore neglect his functions, be slovenly and careless, permit insubordination and drunkenness among the crew, let the broad pennon draggle in filthy rents, the cordage become tangled and stiff, the planks be covered with dirt, and the guns be grimed with rust? No: all generous hearts would condemn that. He would keep every inch of the deck scoured, every piece of metal polished like a mirror, the sails set full and clean, and, with shining muzzles out, ropes hauled taut in their blocks, and every man at his post, he would sweep towards the reef, and go down into the sea firing a farewell salute of honor to the sun, his flag flying above him as he sunk.

The dogmatic assertors of a future life, in a partisan spirit set upon making out the most impressive case in its behalf, have been guilty of painting frightful caricatures of the true nature and significance of the opposite conclusion. Instead of saying, "If such a thing be fated, why, then, it must be right, God's will be done," they frantically rebel against any such admission, and declare that it would make God a liar and a fiend, man a "magnetic mockery," and life a hellish taunt. This, however unconscious it may be to its authors, is blasphemous egotism. One of the tenderest, devoutest, richest, writers of the century has unflinchingly affirmed that if man—who trusted that love was the final law of creation, although nature, her claws and teeth red with raven, shrieked

against his creed—be left to be blown about the desert dust or sealed within the iron hills,—

> "No more! a monster, then, a dream,
> A discord: dragons of the prime,
> That tare each other in their slime,
> Were mellow music match'd with Him!"

Epictetus says, "When death overtakes me, it is enough if I can stretch out my hands to God, and say, 'The opportunities which thou hast given me of comprehending and following thy government, I have not neglected. I thank thee that thou hast brought me into being. I am satisfied with the time I have enjoyed the things thou hast given me. Receive them again, and assign them to whatever place thou wilt.'"[13] Surely the pious heathen here speaks more worthily than the presumptuous Christian! How much fitter would it be, granting that death is the end-all, to revise our interpretation, look at the subject from the stand-point of universal order, not from this opinionative narrowness, and see if it be not susceptible of a benignant meaning, worthy of grateful acceptance by the humble mind of piety and the dispassionate spirit of science! Yea, let God and his providence stand justified, though man prove to have been egregiously mistaken. "Though He smite me, yet will I praise Him; though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

To return into the state we were in before we were created is not to suffer any evil: it is to be absolutely free from all evil. It is but the more perfect playing of that part, of which every sound sleep is a rehearsal. The thought of it is mournful to the enjoying soul, but not terrific; and even the mournfulness ceases in the realization. He uttered a piece of cruel madness who said, "Hell is more bearable than nothingness." Is it worse to have nothing than it is to have infinite torture? Milton asks,—

> "For who would lose,
> Though full of pain, this intellectual being?"

Every creature that exists, *if full of pain*, would snatch at the boon of ceasing to be. To be blessed is a good; to be wretched is an evil; not to be is neither a good nor an evil, but simply nothing. If such be our necessary fate, let us accept it with a harmonized mind, not entertaining fear nor yielding to sadness. Why should we shudder or grieve? Every time we slumber, we try on the dress which, when we die, we shall wear easily forever.

Not satisfied to let the result rest in this somewhat sad but peaceful aspect, it is quite customary to give it a turn and hue of ghastly horribleness, by casting over it the dyspeptic dreams, injecting it with the lurid lights and shades, of a morbid and wilful fancy. The most loathsome and inexcusable instance in point is the "Vision of Annihilation" depicted by the vermicular, infested imagination of the great Teutonic

[13] Dissert., lib. iv. cap. x. sect. 2.

phantasist while yet writhing under the sanguinary fumes of some horrid attack of nightmare. Stepping across the earth, which is but a broad executioner's block for pale, stooping humanity, he enters the larva-world of blotted-out men. The rotten chain of beings reaches down into this slaughter-field of souls. Here the dead are pictured as eternally horripilating at death! "As annihilation, the white shapelessness of revolting terror, passes by each unsouled mask of a man, a tear gushes from the crumbled eye, as a corpse bleeds when its murderer approaches." Pah! Out upon this execrable retching of a nauseated fancy! What good is there in the baseless conceit and gratuitous disgust of saying, "The next world is in the grave, betwixt the teeth of the worm"? In the case supposed, the truth is merely that there is no next world anywhere; not that all the horrors of hell are scooped together into the grave, and there multiplied by others direr yet and unknown before. Man's blended duty and interest, in such a case, are to try to see the interior beauty and essential kindness of his fate, to adorn it and embrace it, fomenting his resignation with the sweet lotions of faith and peace, not exasperating his wounds with the angry pungents of suspicion, alarm, and complaint. At the worst, amidst all our personal disappointments, losses, and decay, "the view of the great universal whole of nature," as Humboldt says, "is reassuring and consolatory." If the boon of a future immortality be not ours, therefore to scorn the gift of the present life, is to act not like a wise man, who with grateful piety makes the best of what is given, but like a spoiled child, who, if he cannot have both his orange and his gingerbread, pettishly flings his gingerbread in the mud.

The future life, outside of the realm of faith, to an earnest and independent inquirer, and considered as a scientific question, lies in a painted mist of uncertainty. There is room for hope, and there is room for doubt. The wavering evidences in some moods preponderate on that side, in other moods on this side. Meanwhile it is clear that, while he lives here, the best thing he can do is to cherish a devout spirit, cultivate a noble character, lead a pure and useful life in the service of wisdom, humanity, and God, and finally, when the appointed time arrives, meet the issue with reverential and affectionate conformity, without dictating terms. Let the vanishing man say, like Rückert's dying flower, "Thanks to-day for all the favors I have received from sun and stream and earth and sky,—for all the gifts from men and God which have made my little life an ornament and a bliss. Heaven, stretch out thine azure tent while my faded one is sinking here. Joyous spring-tide, roll on through ages yet to come, in which fresh generations shall rise and be glad. Farewell all! Content to have had my turn, I now fall asleep, without a murmur or a sigh." Surely the mournful nobility of such a strain of sentiment is preferable by much to the selfish terror of that unquestioning belief which in the Middle Age depicted the chase of the soul by Satan, on the columns and doors of the churches, under the symbol of a deer pursued by a hunter and hounds; and which has in later times produced in

thousands the feeling thus terribly expressed by Bunyan, "I blessed the condition of the dog and toad because they had no soul to perish under the everlasting weight of hell!"

Sight of truth, with devout and loving submission to it, is an achievement whose nobleness outweighs its sorrow, even if the gazer foresee his own destruction.

It is not our intention in these words to cast doubt on the immortality of the soul, or to depreciate the value of a belief in it. We desire to vindicate morality and religion from the unwitting attacks made on them by many self-styled Christian writers in their exaggeration of the practical importance of such a faith. The qualitative contents of human nature have nothing to do with its quantitative contents: our duties rest not on the length, but on the faculties and relations, of our existence. Make the life of a dog endless, he has only the capacity of a dog; make the life of a man finite, still, within its limits, he has the psychological functions of humanity. Faith in immortality may enlarge and intensify the motives to prudent and noble conduct; it does not create new ones. The denial of immortality may pale and contract those motives; it does not take them away.

Knowing the burden and sorrow of earth, brooding in dim solicitude over the far times and men yet to be, we cannot recklessly utter a word calculated to lessen the hopes of man, pathetic creature, who weeps into the world and faints out of it. It is our faith—not knowledge—that the spirit is without terminus or rest. The faithful truth-hunter, in dying, finds not a covert, but a better trail. Yet the saintliness of the intellect is to be purged from prejudice and self-will. With God we are not to prescribe conditions. The thought that all high virtue and piety must die with the abandonment of belief in immortality is as pernicious and dangerous as it is shallow, vulgar, and unchristian. The view is obviously gaining prevalence among scientific and philosophical thinkers, that life is the specialization of the universal in the individual, death the restoration of the individual to the whole. This doubt as to a personal future life will unquestionably increase. Let traditional teachers beware how they venture to shift the moral law from its immutable basis in the will of God to a precarious poise on the selfish hope and fear of man. The sole safety, the ultimate desideratum, is perception of law with disinterested conformity.

The influence of the doctrine of reward and punishment in a future state, as a working motive for the observance of the moral law, is enormously overestimated. The influence, as such a motive, of the public opinion of mankind, with the legal and social sanctions, is enormously underestimated. And the authority of a personal perception of right is also most unbecomingly depreciated. UNIVERSAL ORDER is the expression of the purposes of God, not as arbitrarily chosen by his will and capriciously revealed in a book, but as necessitated by his nature and embodied in his works. The true *basis* of morality is universal order.

The true *end* of morality is life, the sum of moral laws being identical with the sum of the conditions in accordance with which the fruition of the functions of life can be secured with nearest approach to perfectness, perpetuity, and universality. The true *sanctions* of morality are the manifold forms in which consciousness of life is heightened by harmony with universal order or lowered by discord with it. The true law of moral sacrifice or resistance to temptation is misrepresented by the common doctrine of heaven and hell,—which makes it consist in the renunciation of a present good for the clutching of a future good, the voluntary suffering of a small present evil to avoid the involuntary suffering of an immense future evil. The true law of moral sacrifice is deeper, purer, more comprehensive, than that. It expresses our duty, in accordance with the requirements of universal order, to subordinate the gratification of any part of our being to that of the whole of our being, to forego the good of any portion of our life in deference to that of all our life, to renounce any happiness of the individual which conflicts with the welfare of the race, to hold the spiritual atom in absolute abeyance to the spiritual universe, to sink self in God. If a man believe in no future life, is he thereby absolved from the moral law? The kind and number of his duties remain as before: only the apparent grandeur of their scale and motives is diminished. The two halves of morality are the co-ordination of separate interests in universal order, and the loyalty of the parts to the wholes. The desire to remove the obligations and sanctions of the moral law from their intrinsic supports, and posit them on the fictitious pedestals of a forensic heaven and hell, reveals incompetency of thought and vulgarity of sentiment in him who does it, and is a procedure not less perilous than unwarranted. If the creation be conceived as a machine, it is a machine self-regulating in all its parts by the immanent presence of its Maker.

When we die, may the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter of Christ, be our confessor; the last inhaled breath our cup of absolution; the tears of some dear friend our extreme unction; no complaint for past trials, but a grateful acknowledgment for all blessings, our parting word. And then, resigning ourselves to the universal Father, assured that whatever ought to be, and is best to be, will be, either absolute oblivion shall be welcome, or we will go forward to new destinies, whether with preserved identity or with transformed consciousness and powers being indifferent to us, since the will of God is done. In the mean time, until that critical pass and all-decisive hour, as Milnes says:—

> "We all must patient stand,
> Like statues on appointed pedestals:
> Yet we may choose—since choice is given—to shun
> Servile contentment or ignoble fear
> In the expression of our attitude;
> And with far-straining eyes, and hands upcast,
> And feet half raised, declare our painful state,
> Yearning for wings to reach the fields of truth,
> Mourning for wisdom, panting to be free."