

# THE IMMORTALITY OF SAINTS

A HANDBOOK ON THE HEREAFTER  
FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS

BY

DR. HERBERT LOCKYER

AUTHOR OF

The Sins of Saints," "The Heritage of Saints," etc.



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TO  
D. L. MOODY

THE MAN GOD USED TO LEAD  
COUNTLESS THOUSANDS TO SHARE  
THE ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST.

## Preface

PERHAPS a better title for this volume would be that of "Death and Destiny." In keeping, however, with the series being planned, two of which have appeared, namely, "The Sins of Saints," "The Heritage of Saints," it has been thought best to adhere to the caption given.

And surely there is fitness in "The Immortality of Saints." While it is true that all men are immortal, whether saints or sinners, yet it is only the saints who truly live beyond the grave. Says Professor James Denny in his study on IMMORTALITY: "Faith in immortality, which is moral and spiritual through and through, rests upon a supreme revelation of what God has done for man and involves present life in fellowship with the risen Saviour and is neither worldly nor other-worldly, but eternal, and has propagated itself through the ages and in all nations, and is the living, governing faith of believing men and women in proportion as they realize their union with the Saviour,—a faith infinite in its power to console and inspire . . . Faith in immortality has in point of fact entered the world and affected human life along the line of faith in God and in Jesus Christ His Son. Only ONE life has ever won the victory over death; only one kind of life ever can win it,—that kind which was in Him, which is in Him, which He shares with all whom faith makes one with Him."

Written, then, for those who already have that Eternal Life to be found in Christ, and which is Christ, this simple treatise is prayerfully sent forth with the hope that many a saint will be confirmed in the faith that,—

"There is no death!

What seems so is transition."

Thanks are due to Dr. Albert Johnson and Miss B. Wilson of the Hinson Memorial Church, Portland, Oregon, for their kindness in preparing these pages for the press.

HERBERT LOCKYER

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## Introduction

FOLLOWING upon the unfeeling and unscriptural pronouncement of one of Britain's leading scientists, Sir Arthur Keith, that with the death of the body there is the death of the spirit, thus affirming that death ends all, a remarkable letter from a reader of *The Daily News* inspired the series of articles which appeared in that newspaper a year or two ago under the headline: "Where are the Dead?" One or two striking passages from the letter in question might be quoted:

"Sir Arthur Keith's blunt statement that the death of the body is the death of the individual spirit has spread dismay among those who are comfortable believers in personal immortality, and provoked painful controversies in town and village to a degree not in the least adequately reflected in the Daily Press . . . .

"Where are the mighty hosts of the dead? Is it a foolish question? To me, as a member of a Christian community it appears to be one of supreme importance and supreme difficulty.

". . . . Man has walked the earth for at least half a million years . . . .

"At least 30 million persons die every year . . . .

"Where and in what manner is the eternal army assembled?"

Whether the entrance of our secular newspapers into the realm of religion is a symptom of the spiritual emptiness and inward unrest so characteristic of the present generation one cannot say with any measure of certainty.

This fact, however, is clearly evident that newspaper articles, produced as they are by

different minds, only tend to confuse the minds of the majority of people, more especially as some of the writers have not the Bible viewpoint of death and destiny.

For example, in his contribution to the subject as propounded in *The Daily News*, Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT, who believes that the Bible is decreasing in its circulation in spite of the statistics of Bible Societies (whose business it is to print the Scriptures) to the effect that they were never so widely bought and scattered as to-day, made this dogmatic statement :

“I am as convinced as I am of anything that we shall never know what death signifies and involves.”

But a greater than ARNOLD BENNETT said, “We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. 5 : 1).

BENNETT says : “We shall *never know*.” Paul says : “*We know . . . we have*.” And so it comes to this,—the Bible or Bennett—Which? And as such a solemn theme as the “Hereafter” can only be discussed to profit in the light of a Divine revelation, *the Bible must be our guide*.

One fears that several of the articles have the tendency to think of man as a self-evolved, self-sustaining being, a highly-evolved animal, who when he dies moulders into dust.

HOMER set this view in his pathetic figure of the leaves which fade and fall in the Autumn

and are swept away by the Winter winds. Such despair has found vent in songs of unbelief :

“There is one steady star : and, dim from afar,  
Comes the solace that lies in its gleam ;  
There’s the coffin nail’s rust ; the brain in white dust ;  
And the sleeping that knows no dream.”

Poor “solace” this for those with a heart-hunger and a sleepless longing for life beyond the seeming catastrophe of the grave ! Here is another agnostic cry :

“To thy dark chamber, Mother Earth, I come :  
Prepare my dreamless bed for my last home ;  
Shut down the marble door,  
And leave me ; let me sleep ;  
But deep, deep ;  
Never to waken more.”

God pity us if the grave is our last home ! If “Mother Earth” is our “last home,” then we are of all men most miserable.

How different is that luminous ray of spiritual life from the brain and heart of such a man as EMERSON. In one of his sunny-hearted letters to Carlyle, he said : “What have we to do with old age? Our existence looks to me, more than ever, initial. We have come to see the ground and look at our materials and tools.”

What a noble thought ! And how likely to be true. In fact, it will be our endeavour to prove that such a noble thought is true ; that we can know, and that with all deference to Mr. BENNETT’S affirmation, what “death signifies and involves.”

# THE IMMORTALITY OF SAINTS

## CHAPTER I

### The Hope of Savage and Saint

**H**ISTORY, archæology and language affirm that belief in some sort of existence after death is found to be a catholic belief of humanity. "A belief in the persistence of life after death," says M. RENOUFF, "and the observation of religious practices founded upon the belief, may be discovered in every part of the world, in every age, and among men representing every degree and variety of culture."

Professor ORR in his "Christian View of God and the World" tells us "that nearly every tribe and people on the face of the earth, savage and civilized, has held in some form this belief in a future state of existence."

While no two nations may agree as to the exact nature of immortality, nevertheless, the light is there and we can believe—

"That in even savage bosoms  
There are longings, yearnings, strivings  
For the good they comprehend not;  
That the feeble hands and helpless,  
Groping blindly in the darkness,  
Touch God's right hand in that darkness,  
And are lifted up and strengthened."

And so, as we shall find, "Christ was not the 'first' to stamp the ideas of immortality on the minds of men under the forms of Heaven and Hell." He nowhere asserts, neither is it asserted for Him by those whom He commissioned to speak in His name, that the truth which He inculcated was something wholly novel and without antecedents. What is claimed for Him is, that He "brought life and immortality *to light* through the Gospel" (2 Tim. 1: 10); and this He did by giving lucidity to what was obscure; completeness to what was fragmentary; certainty to what was but probable.

### The Witness of Heathendom.

Fascinating as this "ethnic preparation" is, (as Professor SALMOND calls it) one must be content with a rapid review of this incontrovertible proof of immortality. Briefly stated, there are three things attesting this universal belief in man's survival beyond the tomb.

#### (1) The Monuments.

The Pyramids of Egypt have always been regarded as being among the marvels of the world. For ages, men have been astounded at the human skill and labour involved in the erection of such. But why were these strange and enduring constructions built? Because the Egyptians, as we shall presently see, believed that the souls of the departed were in

some way still connected with the bodies they had left behind, and that they periodically returned to them. Hence, these huge mounds of the Pyramids proclaimed to the whole world the Egyptian belief in the survival of the soul.

Other monuments erected by other nations and known as "House Tombs," are to be found in almost every part. These were built in the form of houses with chambers, because it was believed that the dead still lived and re-visited their tombs, which were thus made pleasant for their return.

#### (2) Rites and Incantations.

In many heathen lands sacrifices, incantations and prayers were and still are offered at the tombs. For example, in certain parts of Africa, as we find in MARY SLESSOR's book, when a chief died, his wives and slaves were put to death at the same time in the belief that the great chief was still alive and would need his wives and slaves in the life beyond.

Or take the case of the Indian mother who, when her child died, repaired each morning to his grave and placed a saucer of milk thereon, believing that as her child was still alive he would need refreshment.

And then, wherever an Indian warrior was buried, his friends buried with him his bow and arrow, believing that he would use them for hunting purposes in the life beyond.



(3) **Doctrines.**

In his *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, Professor SALMOND tells us that "the Egyptians wrote not only in books, but on tombs, palaces, temples, and every kind of monument. So we have reliable records which let us into the secret of Egyptian thought and Egyptian practice three or four thousand years ago." The oldest piece of literature in the world is the Egyptian "Book of the Dead," which is an extraordinary collection of prayers and formulæ for the guidance and protection of the deceased in the after-world. Other nations, as Professor SALMOND points out, have their written codes, hymns and doctrines, all bearing upon a future life.

Here are some of the outstanding beliefs of different nations :

(a) **Indian.**

As far back as records can carry us, the Hindu is seen to be a believer in an after-existence. In the Vedic hymns, reference is made to dwelling in "the highest heavens" and grants of "long life among the gods." There is a life of happiness, a realm of light, in their presence for the good ; and there is an "abyss," a nethermost darkness for the evil. For the Brahmans, sacrifice commands the other world. "He who sacrifices with a burnt-offering arrives by Agni as the door to Brahma, and having so arrived, he attains to a union with Brahma and abides in the same

sphere with him." In the institution of the suttee, as the widow ascends the funeral pyre, she unbinds her hair and makes her last invocation to Brahma : "Oh ! that I might enjoy with my husband as many joyful years in the better world as there are hairs in these flowing braids !"

Buddhism has its four-and-twenty heavens on the heights of Maha Meru, and its great hells beneath the earth ; and for the wicked, there was the constant dread of these hells.

Transmigration is also an Indian dogma. The souls of men, after death, pass into one or other of a multitude of modes and spheres of being,—into one of the many heavens and the conditions of a god ; into one of the hells and the condition of a demon ; or back to earth and into the condition of animal, plant, material object, or ghost. Thus, the Indian believes that death is *not man's end*, but that he has a future somewhere and somehow.

(b) **Egyptian.**

Says Professor SALMOND, "The belief in a future life was so associated in ancient times with the Nile Valley, that the Egyptians had the repute of being the first people who taught the immortality of the soul." The Egyptians believed from first to last with an intense belief in the continuance of life. "It is only evil spirits," affirmed M. RENOUFF, "who are spoken of in the sacred writings of the Egyptians as 'the dead.'"

The title given to the coffin in one of their oldest inscriptions is the "chest of the living." They also believed that the re-animation of the body was essential to perfected existence, hence the practice of embalming and the placing of statuettes of the deceased in the tomb.

Seeds of grain were also enclosed with the body as if, with prophetic ear they had heard the words of Paul: "That which thou sowest is not quickened," etc. (1 Cor. 15: 36-38). The people also filled the hands of their dead children with trinkets and toys and inscribed upon the Cryssus bands the hope of eternity.

Believing that means were necessary for the survival of man in all his parts, food and drink had to be provided, lest he should suffer from hunger and thirst in the world beyond.

The idea of a future judgment for all men was a cardinal point in the Egyptian conception of a future life. They taught that the dead descended to an under-world where they were judged by Osiris and his forty-two assessors. At death, all souls were weighed in the scales of justice,—the good going to the god of light; the bad going to the god of darkness. None were exterminated; all passed onward to a future life.

Egypt also taught the migration of souls. It was held that when the body died the soul passed into one animal, and then into another, until it had circled through all forms of animal creation, after which it entered again into a

human form. The whole period of transmigration lasted about three thousand years. In the "Book of the Dead" there are chapters about performing all these desirable transformations.

### (c) Babylonian.

Like the Egyptians, the Babylonians were a religious nation and had their thoughts of something beyond the grave. When the dead were buried, jars containing food and drink, dates and other fruits, wine and other liquors, were buried with them. The dead man had his spear, his javelin, his token of office at his hand, in his last resting-place; the dead woman had her combs and cosmetics.

But to the Babylonian, the world of the dead was the world of ghosts. It was called by a variety of names,—the lower earth, the great city, the pit, the house of darkness, the land of no return. Both the Babylonians and the Assyrians conceived of the abode of the dead as a great city, having seven encircling walls, and a river flowing around or through it.

They also believed in the fact of resurrection. One of their hymns to Merodach celebrates him as the

"Merciful one among the gods,  
Merciful one, who restores the dead to life."

The dead had to appear naked before the god of the under-world; and he, as judge, determined their lot, there sending the

condemned to a place of imprisonment and pain. There was a resting-place for heroes, who, by the power of the gods, might be saved from death and transported to happy fields. There was no distinct doctrine, however, of rewards. The most that a Babylonian hoped for was that he might enter "the land of the silver sky."

#### (d) Persian.

Professor SALMOND gives it as the opinion of many inquirers that Persian modes of thought and Persian beliefs have made their way into both the Old Testament and the New, and have given form and colour to important sections of Christian doctrine. Theirs was a faith with a singularly clear and decisive doctrine of *future retribution*, and with a profound conception of good and of guilt. They had rigid and peculiar ideas on the subject of the disposal of their dead, such as exposure of the naked body, "clothed only with the light of Heaven."

When a man died, his body was thus exposed to become the food of bird or beast. His soul crossed the Bridge of Chinvat, the Bridge of the Gatherer or Accountant. For three days, good spirits and evil, paradise and hell, struggled for possession of his soul. The reckoning of this life was then taken. The good life of the man of truth appeared in the form of a fair maiden of glorious race; and for the man of falsehood there was a corresponding

apparition of the evil things of his earthly life. If good, the man passed into the abode of song; if evil, he went down into the abyss tenanted by the spirits of evil, "down into the darkness of the earth-spirit, down into the World of Woe, the dismal realm, down into the house of Hell."

#### (e) Grecian.

The Greek people have left their mark, as perhaps no other people have done, upon the wide world of thought. To the quick, sensitive Greek, life is joy, and the world is its genuine scene and proper minister. To be on earth, is to live; and death is the sorest of ills, because it takes man away from earth and life.

Yet he knew that death was *not the end of man*. *Something survived*, even although it was only the image or shade of what man was on earth. The mass of men pass into Hades, the evil with the good, the slave with the prince; and from Hades there is no deliverance. Rewards and punishments are distributed by the gods, but it is in the form of good fortune or evil on this side of death. Greek thought never rose clearly and continuously above this, although a few of the Grecian poets sought to add something to their belief.

FINDAS taught that souls go down to Hades and atone for past offences, return to earth and become great men wise men, heroes.

PLATO, the Greek prophet of the Ideal and the Eternal, carried to a loftier height the doctrine of the persistence of the soul in right-doing, seeing that there was a judgment after death for all souls according to their deeds on earth; a heaven for the pure, and a hell for the impure.

SOCRATES, the great Athenian preacher, believed in immortality. At the moment when the sun touched the horizon, he was condemned to drain the cup of hemlock and then lie down to die. With the poisoned cup at his lips he exclaimed: "If the common expression be true that death conveys us to the place of departed men, with delight I drink this hemlock, for it sends my spirit to commune with Ajax and Palamedes."

His disciples gathered round him for a final conversation. They asked him where he wished to be buried, to which he made answer in words that have become immortal: "Bury me, if you can catch me."

#### (f) Roman.

The faith of pagan Greece became the faith of pagan Rome. Whether we remember the "doleful gloom" of HOMER or the spiritualised desires of the PHOEDO, or CICERO'S holy hope, or holy despair in contemplating the position, after death, of one "loved and lost," we have still man haunted by thoughts of immortality. The hero of the Aeneid, going

out into the unseen world, was greeted by his former companions:

"The gladsome ghosts in circling troop attend  
And with unwearied eyes behold their friend."

#### (g) African.

A. M. MACKAY, the pioneer missionary of the C.M.S. in Uganda, tells us that the custom of laying the dead in a uniform direction, east and west, in their graves, was carefully observed by the African tribes. It is supposed to have originated in the belief that at death the soul went to a new abode, which was imagined to be in the west, in the way of the setting sun. Doubtless it is from this custom that that most solemn phrase, so often upon our lips during the late war, arose,—*Gone West!*

Mr. MACKAY also tells us how the wives of the deceased took up their residence near the house-tomb in order to be there "all their days to watch the departed spirit." These women were supposed to hold converse with, and also to be possessed of, the spirit of their late husband.

#### (h) American-Indian.

In similar ways, these barbarians of the North expressed their belief in an after life. In their funeral customs, they were akin to the Egyptians, for they buried their dead with bow

and arrow, in hope of a happy hunting ground beyond.

Thus the whole race, even the lowest tribes, confirm the belief that *the dead do not wholly die*, but live elsewhere. "Looking at the religion of the lower races as a whole," says Dr. TAYLOR in his *Primitive Culture*, "we shall at least not be ill-advised in taking as one of its general and principal elements the doctrine of the soul's future life."

It is of course impossible to prove that every human being who ever lived had a conscious sense of immortality, but truly it is equally impossible to deny that, speaking broadly, mankind has had a conviction,—mysterious, startling, usually more vivid as moral forces were more active in the life—that he, so wonderful and gifted a being, *does not find his ending in the grave*.

Atheists and agnostics there may be, but the singularities of individuals never weigh against the universal instincts of the race, and it is *the belief of humanity at large in a world beyond* we have sought to prove. We thus affirm that the Saints, Seers, Poets and people of all Nations and Ages have held to the fact of immortality.

In closing this section of our study, it is imperative to face the question,—*How did this wide-spread idea of a future life originate?* Some suggest that their refusal to believe in the finality of death originated in men's belief in ghosts; in the practice of ancestor worship;

or in the universal belief in dreams. We must, however, abandon these puerile explanations, for such beliefs and practices as we have outlined either represent the natural, ineradicable interest of the soul, or a colossal and universal error.

Without hesitation, we affirm that the belief in a future state was derived from a revelation made to our first parents by their Creator, and that it travelled down the ages, becoming broken up, perverted, corrupted in some races, while in others it has retained its comparative purity in spite of transmission.

SOLOMON declared that, "God hath set eternity in their heart" (Eccles. 3 : 11, R.V.M.). Here, then, is the answer to our question. *The Hope of Immortality, resident within the breast of both savages and saints, was planted there by Him who has no beginning or end.*

## CHAPTER II.

## The Key of the Grave.

WE borrow the suggestive title of W. ROBERTSON NICOLL's beautiful little book, written directly for those who discover by actual experience what death and bereavement really are, as the headline of this section of our meditation, as it fittingly describes the "key" we hope to give "of the grave."

Now, such a study as our present one is imperative, seeing that the ideals of life have become more secular and that men are liable to focus their thoughts upon the world that now is.

GOETHE has said somewhere, "We may well leave the next world to reveal itself to us in due time, since we shall soon enough be there and know all about it." "Leave the next world to reveal itself in due time!" It sounds eminently sensible and wise, but it entirely fails to reckon with the human heart. When all goes well and prosperity smiles upon us, it may be easy to dismiss the thought of eternity from our minds; but when our homes are emptied, or the golden gate into Paradise

begins to open for our own entrance, it is useless to tell us not to trouble about death and destiny.

And so, because of the practical secularism of our day, producing as it does the danger of a "steady ebb from the shores of another life," and the fading away of what JOHN RUSKIN called the "Heaven light" out of the life of the average man through the limiting of his vision to the cares and duties and pleasures of this passing day, we feel it necessary to remind our hearts that our existence here is but initial.

### I. The Grave Itself.

The Jews have a saying to the effect, "In this life, death never suffers a man to be glad." And this is so, for death is always a tragedy to somebody. Never a day passes without death breaking some heart. Never a corner is safe from the dripping rain of death's tears. Death is the skeleton at every feast; the bitterness in every cup; the discord in our music; the nameless dread that has haunted man from the time when grief had its first birthplace in a mother's broken heart, as she knelt by the side of her boy who had been murdered through the passionate violence of his own brother. And death has not lost its fearful countenance. It is still a tremendous and terrible fact all of us have to meet, and ignore it we cannot, seeing it is continually intruding into the circle of our loved ones and acquaintances.

The fear of death and of the life beyond

found in HAMLET's great soliloquy still overwhelms many :

" To die, to sleep ;  
To sleep ; perchance to dream ; ay, there's the rub :  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause . . . . .  
. . . . . The dread of something after death,  
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of."

### (1) Death is Inevitable.

The fact of death, or physical dissolution, is the inevitable lot of all mankind. One writer has a terse way of stating this truth, "Certain things may be done by proxy; other things may be bought off and evaded; but we cannot evade death. Each man and woman, saint and scoundrel alike, passes through the portal of the tomb. Life, in some respects, is like a game of chess. Upon the board, during the progress of the game, the pieces occupy different positions and possess different values; but when the game is over, all alike, bishops, kings, knights, and pawns, go into the common box. In life here below, one man is a king, another a bishop, another the master of a great business, another a menial,—a mere pawn. But when death comes—the great leveller—all men are equal in the solemn stillness of the sepulchre."

**(2) Death is Uncertain.**

Although the fact of death is certain, yet the day or the hour of its coming no man knoweth. At times, sickness or natural decay gives notice of its approach, but the exact moment of the "lifting of the curtain upon the unseen" is hidden. Because it is the one experience overtaking the human race, it behoves us to "set our house in order" and to pray:

"Teach me to live that I may dread  
The grave as little as my bed;  
Teach me to die, that so I may  
Rise glorious at the awful day."

**(3) Death is Termination.**

Of course it is not the termination of our existence. It is not a *state*, it is an *act*; not an abode in which we dwell, but a gate we pass through into a richer, fuller life. Because "the substance of the soul is indissoluble, and therefore indestructible," as Bishop MOULE points out in "Outlines of Christian Doctrine," the mysterious "I" can never terminate. "Moral personality is mysteriously permanent, as God has constituted things." But death is the end of many things we cherish, such as:

- (a) Our physical beauty, for the fairest form is made revolting by the power of death.
- (b) Our material riches, for no matter what possessions we may accumulate, we must leave the world as naked as we entered it.

Alexander was buried with his open hands outside his coffin, indicating that he left the world as empty as he came into it. When one dies, we hear it said, "How much did he leave?" How much? Why, he left it all, for nothing can be carried on but one's character.

- (c) Our earthly honours, whether religious, social, scholastic, or national, will vanish like faded leaves, when death removes us from both the praise and blame of man. The only honour we carry with us is that of a life lived nobly and well in Christ's great cause.

**(4) Death is Necessary.**

We ought not to look upon death with horror, as if it were altogether a monster or a robber, snatching from us all that we may cling to in life. Death is a necessary law of Nature to which we must submit. It is an event, not a catastrophe; a stopping-place on our journey; a slowing down into the station, and not a terminus. Why, if people never died, the world would not be habitable, for according to the natural law of increase, the number would be absolutely appalling.

As F. C. SPURR states in "Death and the Hereafter," "People speak of death as if it were something horrible and to be afraid of. But life should be regarded socially as a banquet to which many guests are invited, and where there are many sittings. The first take their place, and, having finished, make way for other relays, until all are served. If we were



here forever, the first-comers to the banquet would gain all; the last-comers, nothing."

### (5) Death is Unmagical.

Death works no magic, produces no change, nor works any miracle for the dying-one. Yet many seem to feel that all they have to do when they come to die is to solicit the ministrations of parson or priest, as if he had power to make them die and wake up saints. The mere act of removing from one house to another, in no way changes the person removing. And so we continue on the other side as we depart from this side,—for good or bad. *This* life determines *that*.

The solemn thing, then, is to live well, and thus solve in advance the mystery of death. We must lift from death the power to betray us. If we can say, "To me to live is Christ," then when we come to pull up the tent-pegs and roll up the canvas, dying grace will be ours to say with supreme confidence, "*To die is gain.*"

Beloved, the date is fixed on which we must look death in the face, and a spot marked where our dust must return to its natural abode, and where the world's ambitions, the strife of tongues and conflicts of passions shall float past but as night-winds sighing over a deserted shrine.

"All my possessions for a moment of time!"  
QUEEN ELIZABETH is said to have cried at the last, but there was no one to barter with her.

But if our lives are lived in the light of eternity, when we hear the Divine Voice saying, "Come up higher" we shall not crave for a further moment of time, for death will be a birth. As the eyes of the babe open upon the sunlight of earth as the tiny mass of humanity leaves the darkness of the womb, so when we close our eyes in the darkness of death we shall open them on a "light that never was on sea or land."

## II. The Key of Moral Intuition.

"Toss our Nature with a pitch-fork," says the Latin poet, "yet she will always run back"; and sophisticate the instinct of immortality as we may, it always re-asserts itself. It is an ineradicable instinct implanted within the human breast. We have seen how the instinct expresses itself in the funeral customs of those who walk in the darkness of heathenism.

Let us now examine those evidences of the self-same instinct within our own breasts. The belief in the immortality of man rests upon a sure foundation. There is what we may call a *moral intuition*, and then an intuition reinforced and rendered definite by a direct revelation. That it is an endowment of the human soul can be proved by—

### (1) The Voice of Reason.

Now, reason is more than mere sentiment. It receives any doctrine that awards itself to

our judgment. What is the intellectual consensus? Why, that man must be different from animals and birds which, when they die, are done with. "The ties which bind animals to each other are slender and are easily severed. Parent and offspring part, never to know each other as such again. It is otherwise with man. We cannot forget our loved ones to whom we were bound by spiritual affinities, and who have gone from us, and with whom we desire re-union. Are these bonds to be ruthlessly torn asunder? If there is no life beyond, the present life is artificial and untruthful. If there is no immortality, then there is no God, or we are the sport of a spiteful Providence." And so Reason answers, Yes! *there must be a hereafter where the sacred unions of earth are perfected.*

Again, life is full of inequalities, disproportions and mysteries. Villains abound,—men who corrupt the public life and who sometimes escape the punishment their sins deserve. "Society receives the wealthy seducer and allows the poor victim to go to the devil. Money can triumph over human justice . . . . If death ends all, what a godsend to the villain! What a desolation to the oppressed! If death ends all, God receives a triple wound:

His *wisdom* is wounded: He has no proportion between means and ends.

His *goodness* is wounded: He has no answer to the soul's cry.

His *justice* is wounded: He allows evil to finally triumph.

Humanity also receives a triple wound:

Our nature is mutilated; our desires are mocked; our programme is arrested." Death cannot be the end. Placed under the light of science and under the light of reason, there is but one answer to the question, "Does death end all?" It is an emphatic, "NO!"

## (2) The Voice of Desire.

Give a man all of the world he asks for, and he is yet unsatisfied. He feels that his nature is too large for his present scene of existence.

"I cannot chain my soul; it will not rest  
In its clay prison, this most narrow sphere.  
It has strange powers, and feelings, and desires  
Which I cannot account for nor explain,  
But which I stifle not, being bound to trust  
All feelings equally, to hear all sides.  
Yet I cannot indulge them, and they live,  
Referring to some state of life unknown."

*Browning in "Pauline."*

In the ascent of the mountain of knowledge, or of pleasure, is man ever satisfied? No, he is ever possessed of the sense of incompleteness. It is always the "beyond" to which he aspires. And in this, man differs from the animal world, for contentment is one of the great marks of the dumb creation. But, give a man the possession of material things,—money, pleasure, honours, knowledge, and he is still tormented with desires. Where and when,

then, will he be satisfied? The Psalmist gives us the key: "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness."

### (3) The Voice of Instinct.

Instinct, the strong feeling within our hearts we cannot smother, leads us to the definite conclusion that life is continued elsewhere. As the growing chicken longs to break its shell-environment, thus finding itself in a large air-space, so man has a deep-rooted instinct that all his God-given powers must find expression and perfection elsewhere.

As Autumn dawns, the swallows gather together from every quarter. There is one night when the air is thick with birds, chirping as if in conference or flying round and round in great circles. On the following morning, there is not a swallow left. During the night, the winged host has crossed the sea to spend the winter in Africa, the south of Europe, and other warm countries. Probably one half of the swallows had never been that way before. They were hatched out in the early summer, but a mysterious instinct called them away. They had never seen winter, but a secret instinct warned them that cold and snow and frost were coming, while a secret voice called them to the warm land. Never yet did Nature betray even a swallow. The essential needs, the instincts of animals and birds are all met. Are we less endowed than they? Are our instincts after a fuller life and a fairer clime

to be mocked? No! Ten thousand times No! We have a homing instinct planted within our breasts by Him who is on High preparing our eternal abode.

Instinct tells the desolate widow that her husband who from ruddy youth had been her shield, and into whose heart was poured all the outflow of her affections, is meanwhile separated only for a little.

Instinct consoles the lonely husband with the thought that the wife, whose smile and love made home for him, and whose absence has robbed him of its chief attraction, has only crossed the Bridge a little beforehand.

Instinct cheers the empty heart of the mother with the hope that her little flower, the babe she laid away with tears, is blossoming in another world, and that as love never dies, she will once more clasp it to her breast.

Yes, we instinctively seek for re-union beyond the grave, and the God who planted this heaven-ward longing in every breast will not mock its expectations. "God is not ashamed to be called their God. For He hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. 11: 14-16). And ashamed He is not, for He hath prepared that which can satisfy such an instinct—  
IMMORTALITY.

### (4) The Voice of Nature.

The world around bears witness to the fact that Death does not end all.

After the strange, mysterious decay and sleep

of winter, God causes the joy and life of *summer* to follow. The cold, dark earth yields up her dead. Thus will it be with man according to the Resurrection-message of 1 Cor. 15, and, not only so, but as the result, as Paul shows, of the Resurrection of Jesus, the Plant of renown.

### (5) The Voice of Logic.

Logic, which is akin to reason, gives us one of the strongest arguments, outside of the Bible, for immortality. Who can watch a death scene and think of extinction, especially when the passing one is enabled to cross the dark waters of death by visions and voices of the other world?

Transition to another world is overwhelmingly borne in upon our minds as we see the old house vacated and the tenant departing to another abode. As we stand at a death-bed, we are forced to the logical conclusion that because personality is indestructible, it is journeying beyond our ken.

Logically, we must believe in the essential continuity of things. We know that we cannot squeeze the perfect programmes of the Almighty and Eternal God into the band-box of one generation or many. In "The Key of the Grave," W. ROBERTSON NICOLL tells the following story of a factory girl:

"I think if this should be the end of all; and if all I have been poor for is just to work my heart and life away in this dull place, with these mill-stones in my ears forever, until I

could scream out for them to stop and let me have a little quiet; with my mother gone, and I never able to tell her again how I loved her, and of all my troubles,—I think if this life is the end and there is no God to wipe away all tears from all eyes, *I would go mad.*"

And we all feel the same as we think not only of the cramped circumstances of our earthly lot, but of those beyond our vision. And so, even stern, cold logic whispers Hope within our hearts. Let us learn, then, to obey the inner voices as they bid us think of and prepare for a better world.

Although we have the witness of all races; and the intuitions of our own hearts as to the existence of another world, satisfying and unassailable as such evidences are, God has condescended to reveal all that we need to know regarding the future. And as there is a demand for light and a dry thirst for certitude on the part of all men, it is imperative for the Christian teacher to bring the light of a Divine Revelation to bear upon the pressing problems both of this life and the next.

### III. The Voice of Revelation.

PRaise GOD! we have not been left as derelicts upon the ocean of uncertainty, for His Word has given us abundant proof of the truth that upon every pale bosom of those who walked with Him amid the shadows of this world we can lay the unwithering rose—*Absent from the body—Present with the Lord.*

There are two preliminary questions to face before discussing what the Bible teaches about our Destiny.

**(1) It contains an Original Conception of Immortality.**

Having briefly considered the evidence of immortality as found in non-Christian lands, as well as the proofs within our own nation regarding the continuity of existence, it becomes early apparent as one opens the pages of the Old Testament that its aloofness from the ways of thinking of a future life as portrayed in other literatures is one of its marked characteristics.

As Professor SALMOND states it, "It may be that the Old Testament has a dim and fragmentary conception of immortality. It may be that in it, for the most part, piety has its field in the world, and faith its satisfaction in present relations to God. It may be that it has little in the form of a doctrine of the future life. But what it has is something that was its own from the first, an independent doctrine, if doctrine it may be called, equally free from the gross and extraordinary ideas with which the hope of an after-existence was overlaid in some races, and from the refinements of philosophy by which it was misdirected in others."

In tracing this independence of the O.T. doctrine of immortality, the same writer proves conclusively that the ideas of extinction or

annihilation, transmigration of souls and other forms of belief in the hereafter common to ancient faiths and philosophies are rigidly excluded from its pages. In spite of the fact that its independence has been challenged, as its unique worth has been disputed, the Old Testament and also the New contain an original doctrine of the after-life. Dr. JAMES DENNY in his "Way Everlasting," gives ample proof of such a line of evidence.

**(2) It contains a Progressive Revelation of Immortality.**

As Biblical revelation is progressive, it is essential to mark the gradual unfolding of any doctrine it contains, and not to wrest isolated passages out of their context in support of our own theories. The fact of progressive revelation then accounts for the difference between the Old Testament conception of life after death and the outlook as portrayed in the New Testament. It is the great law of Scripture that revelation proceeds by stages from the simple to the complex; from the rudimentary to the final, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Thus, speaking broadly, the revelation to ancient Israel was a revelation in twilight. Its horizon was the grave. Life was not conditioned upon eternal rewards, but temporal. The Hebrew conception was somewhat gloomy. Death carried with it two results,—removal from the fellow-

ship of the living on earth and removal from the fellowship of God. Man passed into an underworld where all brightness ceased. Gradually light dawned upon the afterworld, but it was broken and dim. With the coming of Christ, the gloom disappeared and a new conception dawned upon the minds of men as He "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel" (2 Tim. 1, 10). Life and immortality were existent before Christ, but not clearly revealed. It was the work of Jesus to gently breathe upon the Old Testament bud, causing it to bloom with the fragrance of the New. Let us take a bird's-eye view of each section of Holy Writ.

#### A. The Twilight of Old Testament Teaching.

Of this we can be certain, that the writers of the Old Testament took the future life for granted. "That there is a *Beyond* of some form, is one of the things most obviously presupposed all through the Old Testament in the Pentateuch and the Book of Job not less than in the Prophets. But if they do not discuss the life after death in any detailed way, it is because the Kingdom Conception filled their minds. The continual though absorbing theme was not death and heaven and the life beyond. They were absorbed with a new condition of things coming on the earth. A King was coming and through him a Kingdom."

Still, although the revelation to ancient Israel was a twilight one, yet it was sufficiently clear to leave a solemn sense on pious minds, of another world, as the setting of the following passages proves.

#### (1) The Essence of God.

Gen. 1 : 1, "In the beginning God."

At the very commencement of the Bible we have a strong, unassailable evidence of immortality. "In the beginning God." The existence of God proves immortality. He is the King-Immortal. The saints of the Old Testament, who attained to the unhesitating hope of a Beyond, based that hope on what they knew of the character of God. They did not argue, "Because man is what he is, he must be immortal." Their argument was thus, "Because God is what He is, He will never allow man to perish."

#### (2) The Nature of Man.

Gen. 2 : 7, "The Breath of Life."

Exactly translated, the words are, "the breath of *lives*." Man has more than one: there is this, but there is also the next; man's creation was different from animals. God's own breath was breathed into man. Man is of the essence of God, creatively. Therefore, because God is immortal, man bears the image of his Creator. The bit that cannot be

holden of death is that bit of God He imparted when He graciously breathed into the nostrils of man.

### (3) The Escape of Death.

Gen. 5 : 24, " Enoch walked with God and he was not : for God took him."

Enoch did not die. Every other life in the record ends with the statement, " and he died," but Enoch's is given as an exception. He did not die, but God " took " him, *i.e.*, without death. He was not on earth but with God in another and invisible state of existence. (See also 2 Kings 2 : 11).

### (4) The Gathering of the Elect.

Gen. 25 : 8, " Abraham was gathered to his people."

The expression, often used, " gathered to his people," or " to his fathers," is another line of evidence. For example, in the case of Abraham, it could not mean that the patriarch was buried in some vault or sepulchre with his ancestors, for he was buried in the lonely grave in the Cave of Machpelah, a great distance from Ur of the Chaldees, where his people lay. When used as it is not only of Abraham, but of Isaac, Jacob and Moses (Gen. 35 : 29, 49 : 33, Deut. 32 : 50, 34 : 6), it is altogether misleading if it does not refer to the spirit of man rejoining at death the spirits of his kindred who had passed out before.

### (5) The Patriarchal Hope.

Gen. 50 : 26, " Carry up my bones from hence."  
See Ex. 13 : 19 and Heb. 11 : 22.

Not improbably it was some hope of resurrection that inspired (as with the Egyptians) the great care of the Israelites for their dead and prompted the injunction left by Jacob and Joseph regarding the interment of their bones in the land of promise.

It is also significant, as Professor ORR points out, that Heb. 11 : 17-19 connects Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac with his faith in a resurrection. " By faith Abraham . . . offered up Isaac . . . accounting that God was able to raise up even from the dead ; from whence also he did in a parable receive him back."

### (6) The Witch of Endor.

1 Sam. 28 : 3-19.

This narrative teaches that Samuel had been dead for some time ; that he came back for a brief moment, being recognized both by Saul and the witch. Here we are taught that Samuel was still living and that his identity was unmistakable. His concern in affairs of the earth was as keen as ever. His characteristics were the same, his mentality as vigorous, and his speech as clear and incisive as before his death.

**(7) The Translation of Elijah.**

2 Kings 2.

Along with Enoch, Elijah presents the true type of all immortality, for it was an immortality of the true personality in which the body has as real a share as the soul. In fact, the only immortality the Bible knows of is that of the whole person, body and soul together.

The translation of Elijah must be connected with the transfiguration of Christ as recorded in Matthew 17. Along with Moses, Elijah appeared upon the Mount, was recognized by Peter and conversed with our Lord about His death on the Cross. If such a passage does not teach the continuity of life, then language has no meaning.

**(8) The Testimony of David.**

2 Sam. 12 : 23.

When King David's child died, he said in answer to his servant's surprise and questions, "I will go to him but he will not return to me." The belief in the continued existence of his child after death, the expected reunion with one whom his intense, emotional nature loved dearly, with identity and recognition, are both directly implied in his beautiful expression.

David gives us the logic of the heart in this declaration of his belief in immortality. "Human affection," says Principal A. GARVIE,

"in the measure of its intensity, elevation and purity demands continuance, challenges death's right to end the loving fellowship of kindred souls." This is the same line of reason TENNYSON offers us in "In Memoriam." The poet feels that his deep love for another should not have been called into being only to be mocked by death. The great love binding Hallam and Tennyson together was prophetic of immortality. So Tennyson ends his poem with lines as expressive of his certainty that his friend still lived as David's word does regarding his much-loved child.

"Dear heavenly friend, that canst not die;  
Mine, mine, forever, ever mine . . . .  
Far off thou art, but ever nigh;  
I have thee still, and I rejoice;  
I prosper, circled with thy voice;  
I shall not lose thee tho' I die."

**(9) The Book of Job.**

In this sublime book, our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem, "man's destiny and God's ways with man here on earth," as CARLYLE puts it in his "Heroes and Hero Worship," we have some of the peaks of the mountain ranges of immortality. As it is thought that Job is the earliest of all our Old Testament books, its teaching on the world to come reflects the common belief of the early twilight of our race.



(a) **The Dead to Live.**

14: 7-17.

Job is deeply dejected by all the afflictions and trials laid upon him and mistakenly fears they are the works of the Lord's displeasure against him, and so longs to find refuge in the grave as he would desire to find shelter from a desert storm. His thought is that he might remain in Sheol until God's wrath be past, being called back again to God's fellowship, seeing that "He keepeth not His anger forever." This whole portion, breathing the atmosphere of resurrection, reaches its climax in verse 14, where Job asks of himself the boding question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" which, if taken in its connection, appears to be not a question of uncertainty, but rather an affirmation, a confession of his faith that he was confident that he would live again. A slight change in the order of the English would seem fairer to Job's thought: If a man die, he *shall* live, or live again.

(b) **The Distant Scene.**

19: 25-27.

Here Job speaks with the note of certainty, "Yet from (or out of) my flesh shall I see God," implies that he would be clothed with flesh, that is, with a new body unlike the old one with its natural weaknesses.

Listen to the patriarch's prophetic voice,

"I shall see God." Job stood in the dawn of revelation, and therefore there was much that was still dark to him, but so much was clear that after waiting for a time like a sentinel at his post he expected to hear and answer his Captain's call.

(10) **The Psalms.**

The teaching of the Psalms is as clear as that of Job in the matter of resurrection. The passages dealing with immortality are happily of an order that speak for themselves, and need no forcing to yield us their meaning.

(a) **Hope Springs Eternal.**

Ps. 16: 9-11.

This portion is cited in Acts 2: 24-31 as a prophecy of the Resurrection of Christ. There, David declares that the continuation of life after his body has been laid in the grave will be a life lived in the very presence of God, and a life of fullest pleasure and enjoyment.

(b) **The Consummation of Satisfaction.**

Ps. 17: 15.

Here we have the same high, exultant assurance. There is an after-life. For himself, it will be complete identification with his Lord. His declaration suggests the last words of CHARLES WESLEY, "I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness; satisfied, satisfied, SATISFIED."

(c) **The Sky is our Goal.**

Ps. 49 : 14-15 ; Ps. 73 : 24 ; Ps. 140 : 13.

These and a few other passages all follow in the same strain, being pregnant with the hope of resurrection. They bear witness to the fact that God's holy ones have their moments of rapt experiences when their converse with God, the living God, is felt to be incapable of being cancelled by death, and the presentiment rises of something better than Sheol. The pressure of the dark enigmas of existence, the terror of unlooked-for dangers threatening life, bring such moments with them; and faith has its forecasts.

(11) **Ecclesiastes.**

As with the early Prophets and Psalmist, Solomon presupposes the existence of a Beyond in some form or another. True, Ecclesiastes strikes the low level ideally or spiritually of Solomon's writings. "He writes as a jaded critic," says S. D. GORDON, "worn dull with his successive passionate indulgences. But even here is the incidental recognition after death."

(a) **The Homing Instinct.**

Chap. 3 : 11 ; "He hath set the world in their heart."

The R. V. M. gives us the word "eternity" for "world," and the use of the word in Ecclesiastes is too weighty an argument for the

rendering "eternity" to be readily set aside. Solomon may not know whether the spirit of the man goes upward, and the spirit of the beast downward (3 : 21), but "he knows that God has put into man's heart not only the consciousness of his limitations, but something that takes him beyond them and speaks of the eternal."

(b) **Beauty for Ashes.**

Chap. 12 : 7.

Here we have a most expressive description of Death and its issue. Dust, to dust must go, hence our funeral formula, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The phrase announces man's physical dissolution. "His body belongs to Nature; every particle of which it was composed had been drawn from her stores, and back to Nature every particle returns. It was borrowed only; it is repaid; no part is lost. Hence the euphemism by which we seek to soften the word 'death,' by saying such and such a one has 'paid the debt of Nature.' Once the spirit has departed, Nature and we are quits; we cannot defraud her; she will receive her own to the exacted tittle." As VON STOLBERG put it:

"Mother Earth, she gathers all  
Unto her bosom, great and small;  
O, could we look into her face,  
We should not shrink from her embrace."

Our spirits likewise return to their natural

element. Our bodies go to the dust of the earth to which they originally belonged, and our spirits to God who by His creative act imparted them.

### (12) A World Without Tears.

Isaiah 25 : 8.

In an exultant climax of victory over all Israel's enemies, Isaiah cries out, "He hath swallowed up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." This looks forward, in its face meaning, to the coming of Christ's grand victory and thus forms the basis of Paul's ringing cry of triumph over death in 1 Cor. 15 : 56-37 and of John's double statement about dry eyes in heaven. Rev. 7 : 21, 21 : 4.

In chapter 26 : 19, we have another striking evidence of the fact of immortality from the pen of the Prophet. Isaiah is talking to God : "The dead shall live. My dead bodies shall arise (speaking as the national leader). Awake and sing, ye that swell in the dust (of the grave); for the dew of God is a life-giving dew, and the earth shall cast forth her dead," as S. D. GORDON paraphrases it.

The power of Isaiah's God will perform the impossible. The same idea is found in the vision of the dry bones in Ezek. 37 : 1-10, where the subject is still that of resurrection, which is used as a figure of the national resurrection of Israel. And "that the power

of God *can*, against all human thought and hope, reanimate the dead is the general idea of the passage from which consequently the hope of a literal resurrection of the dead may naturally be inferred." (OEHLER, "Theology of the Old Testament.")

### (13) The Two Destinies.

Daniel 12 : 2.

Professor SALMOND affirms that this is the most definite, the most literal, the largest expression of the hope of a resurrection. "It is the resurrection of the just and the unjust. It is a resurrection with distinct moral issues, and a resurrection to an everlasting lot. The special feature of interest in this passage is that it contains the first mention of the resurrection of the wicked as of the just. And then we have that beautiful promise given to Daniel at the close of this chapter (12 : 13) : "Thou shalt die, but when these events occur thou shalt be living and be in thine allotted place."

One need not delay to cite other passages in the prophetic books, such as Hos. 6 : 2 ; 13 : 14, for the idea of resurrection is familiar to them all. Enough has been said to prove that no matter how dimly or obscurely the fact of immortality may have been expressed in the twilight of Israel's revelation, nothing was said or shown to forbid the hope and universal expectation of life being continued beyond the veil of death. An Old Testament believer

could have subscribed to "The Apostles' Creed,"—"I believe in the Immortality of the Human Soul."

### B. The Full Radiance of the New Testament Revelation.

In the New Testament, the proofs and promises of immortality glitter on almost every page. We now pass out of dawn into day. "But between the period when the last of the Old Testament prophets spoke and the Christian era opened, there had been a remarkable development of belief. . . . Along with this, some of the familiar Old Testament lives had undergone a change of meaning, and new modes of speech had been introduced."—SALMOND.

An indication of this can be found in the Talmud where the Jews were taught that it is the purpose of life here on earth to prepare ourselves for the life hereafter,—“This world is to be likened to the porch, the world to come unto the palace. Prepare thyself in the porch that thou mayest be worthy to enter the palace.”

It is thus with the New Testament, for it makes it everywhere plain that the object of the more radiant revelation of another life is not to satisfy curiosity, nor answer all the questions that might be put, whether by head or by heart, but to enforce the vast responsibilities of the life that now is. It brings the future and the

present into relation. And it is in this sense that we can call the Bible a book for both worlds. In fact, it is the most practical book in the world. Says F. C. SPURR, "The Bible teaches human life on its ideal and practical side; it teaches man has this below. It teaches the most perfect secularism, using that word in its true sense. It is a book for this world. If its precepts were followed, our world would become a paradise. . . . But the Bible is also a book of the other world, as well as of this."

#### (1) The Witness of Christ.

Our Lord gives us no proof of the certainty of a future existence. He presupposes that existence. What He did was to dispel the banks of clouds and let the future life shine forth. He did not create immortality by His words or resurrection; He brought it to light, just as the telescope brings to light the stars unseen by the naked, unaided eye. And His doctrine on the World Beyond is all His own. "It is too fresh and original," as Professor STALKER reminds us, "to have been obtained second-hand. He speaks as one who has been there, and the statement of the New Testament is literally true, that He brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel."

It would take volumes to set forth all that Jesus taught not only in Parable, Precept, Proclamation, Promise, but also in His Person

regarding the eternal world. Canon KNOX LITTLE says,—“Our Lord revealed it:—

BY HIS EXAMPLE, by the manner in which He subordinated the claims of this present world to the thought of a life beyond ;

BY THE WHOLE TENOR OF HIS TEACHING, the precepts of which require for their adequate fulfilment a life beyond the narrow boundary of time ;

BY DIRECT STATEMENT,—‘God, not the God of the dead but of the living’; the ‘many mansions’; ‘Abraham’s bosom’; the ‘Coming-Again’; the ‘shining forth of the righteous in their Father’s Kingdom’: He revealed it, and guaranteed the truth of His Godhead, and, therefore, His right to reveal, by the stupendous miracle of the resurrection. He carried on His revelation by His ascension into Glory and by the coming of the Holy Ghost.”

One would feign linger over the parables of the Virgins ; Dives and Lazarus ; over the Transfiguration ; over the raising of the Dead ; over all the teaching of the Eternal Word on His Second Coming, but as His Resurrection according to Paul’s resurrection-message is the pledge and pattern of ours, let us confine ourselves to a brief consideration of this miracle. “If a man die, shall he live again ?” And the empty grave of Jesus answers “Yes !” Because he lives, we shall live also. “If the spirit of Him that raised up,” etc. (Rom. 8 : 11)

Dr. J. D. JONES puts it beautifully when he

says, “Men argued for years about the possibility of there being a new world out yonder towards the west . . . Columbus sailed out towards the sunset until he discovered land. Then, coming back, he was able to say, ‘There is a land out yonder ; I have been there.’ Jesus is our Columbus . . . He has travelled beyond the sunset, and He has come back to say that beyond the grave and gate of death,

‘There is a land of pure delight,  
Where saints immortal reign ;  
Infinite day excludes the night,  
And pleasures banish pain.’”

It is not true any longer that the other side of death is an undiscovered country, a “bourne from which no traveller returns.” Jesus has come back. Then by the Resurrection we are taught to say :

“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.”

## (2) The Witness of the Apostles.

To quote Canon KNOX LITTLE again, “The Apostles one and all taught what Christ had revealed, and now the whole Church throughout the world, however externally divided through human frailties, still, as God’s family, proclaims with one living voice in the catholic creeds, “I believe in the resurrection of the

body, the life everlasting, the life of the world to come."

If space allowed, one would like to touch on every contribution made to this important doctrine by Peter, Paul, James, John, Jude, showing how each writer was inspired by the Holy Spirit to add his quota to the truth of our life beyond the grave.

Gen. 1 : 1 and Rev. 22 : 20 not only open and close the Divine Revelation, but form the two poles of the deathlessness of man. For as the existence and nature of God bespeak our immortality, so in the closing verse of the Bible the resurrection of the saint to blessedness, as well as the resurrection of the sinner to condemnation, are both wrapped up in the prayer for the Coming of Jesus. These two verses are the first and last pearls on the string of immortality. What a multitude of precious gems there are in between, especially in the Epistles and the Revelation!

Let us conclude this aspect of our meditation by noting four figures setting forth the new conception of death as given in the New Testament.

#### (a) Death is a Sleep.

"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," Jno. 11 ;  
 "Them that sleep in Jesus," 1 Thess. 4.

Sleep indicates the absence of terror and the presence of repose. Thus, the old Christians called their cemeteries "Cubicula,"—sleeping

places. Germans call their graveyards "God's Acre." MARTIN LUTHER says, "A man who lies asleep is much like one who is dead. Therefore, the ancient sages said, 'Sleep is the brother of death.'" So, also, death and life are pictured and signified in the revolutions and transformations of day and night, and of all creatures. Sleep is verily a death, and equally death is a sleep. Our death is nothing but a night's sleep. In sleep, all weariness passes away, and we rise again in the morning joyous, fresh and strong.

This term, however, must not be stressed to teach the unconscious theory some teachers declare. It is a word applied to the body and not the spirit. Our bodies sleep or rest in the grave until the Resurrection Morn. An old English author says, "Sleep is Death's youngest brother, and so like him, that I never dare trust him without my prayers." So far, however, as the image is expressive of consolation, it belongs to Christianity alone. It is true of both body and soul, although not in the same sense, that until the time of the Resurrection they "sleep."

Sleep brings rest to man's body, and so does death to the believer's body. Then the grave is his "long home" and a "quiet resting place." There is repose also for the soul. The rest of the spirit, however, does not take the form of unconsciousness; there is no sleep of the soul in this sense. The Bible asserts at once the clear consciousness and the con-

tinuous activity of the soul after death. "Absent from the body," says Paul, "present with the Lord."

### (b) Death is a Departure.

"The Time of my Departure is at hand."

This word "departure" literally means to pull up anchor and set sail. This is what death is as revealed by Jesus Christ: here we are anchored to material things; in death, the anchor is pulled up and we set sail for the golden port. At the funeral of Dr. John Neale of whom Archbishop FRENCH said, "He is the most profoundly learned hymnologist of our Church," his friends sang a special favourite with him for its music's sake, the first verse of which runs,—

"Safe home, safe home in port!  
Rent cordage, shatter'd deck,  
Torn sails, provisions short,  
And only not a wreck;  
But oh! the joy upon the shore  
To tell our voyage-perils o'er!"

Something of the same picture is drawn by TENNYSON in his lovely poem on "Crossing the Bar," where death is likened unto one putting out to sea.

### (c) Death is an Exodus.

"They spake of his decease."—Lk. 9: 31.

The word "decease" means "exodus" or "a going out." It is a term taking us back to the Book of Exodus, where the people of

Israel are seen going out of Egypt. It was "a going out" of bondage into liberty; out of a land of sorrow and affliction and want into a land "flowing with milk and honey." And so death is our "way out" from the partial to the perfect; from the old gloom into the full day.

That great Frenchman, VICTOR HUGO, wrote, "For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in history, prose, verse, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode and song. I have tried all, but I feel that I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to my grave, I can say, like so many others, 'I have finished my day's work'; but I cannot say I have finished my life. My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare; it closes in the twilight, to open with the dawn."

And so death means an exodus or going out from all those influences trammelling our powers and gifts, and an entrance into the Land of Promise, where it will be a joyful privilege to fully realize in our individual lives the divine plan.

### (d) Death is a Removal.

"If the earthly house of our tent be taken down."—  
2 Cor. 5: 1.

Here Paul likens death unto the exchange of a tent for a house. Life below is a pilgrimage, an abode like a fragile tent. It is not meant to

be a permanent residence. And so death is the pulling up of the tent pegs, the rolling up of the canvas, and removing into our permanent residence above; into the many mansions, or abiding-places, in the Father's home, where thieves can never break into and steal. This, then, is the Christian view of death. It is the passing out of an order whose purpose is probation, whose distinction is the opportunity of attaining a higher and nobler life. It is an exodus from the wilderness into a life of fuller energy, happier fellowship, pure joy, unflawed peace. It is, above all, the short, swift passage to a life with Christ for evermore. Death is thus a gate into a holy city; a falling asleep to awake to an endless life; a quick journey home to God. Such is the revelation that brings the chant to a believer's life,—“O death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?”

How different is all this to the ordinary conception of death!

Men talk about the Great Beyond, the Unknown, the Unexplored Land, the Unseen, a Leap in the Dark, but such is not the language of Scripture. Says Professor CLOW, “Every reader of the New Testament is disconcerted by the contrast between the expectancy and desire of the primitive church and the bewilderment and shrinking of Christian men to-day. Stephen sees Heaven opened; Paul longs to depart and to be with Christ; Peter exults in an ‘inheritance incorruptible, un-

defiled, and that fadeth not away.’ The early believers might be pictured as looking steadfastly up into Heaven. Even a generation or two ago, devout men and women died with a psalm of desire on their lips. We still read, beside the bier of our dead, the wondrous words which proclaim the blessed resurrection. But, for most men the veil of sense hangs very darkly between. They have passed into a silent agnosticism. ‘It doth not yet appear what we shall be,’ is the only sentence which receives the assent of many minds. But we have not so learned Christ! He has torn the mask away from the cruel face of death; has robbed it of its power to smite us with fear; has caused us to embrace death as our friend.” Truly, then, is our death “precious in the sight of the Lord”!

### (3) The Witness of the Saints.

If it were possible to gather together all the testimonies left by the saints of God, “even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” Their death-bed utterances form a strong argument for the immortality of the soul. Here are a few of these precious legacies drawn together at random. When Sir WILLIAM RUSSELL was on the way to the scaffold, he took his watch out of his pocket and handed it to the physician who waited upon him as he said, “Will you kindly take my timepiece and keep it? I have



no more use for it; I am now dealing with Eternity."

And such is the spirit actuating the saints of God as they pass out beyond Time; *e.g.*, the stanza given below was written by Mrs. BARBAULD in extreme old age. The poet Rogers regarded it as one of the finest things in English literature. Henry Crabbe Robinson says that he repeated it to Wordsworth twice, and then heard him say, "I am not in the habit of grudging people their good things, but I wish that I had written those lines." It is stated that in his last moments, Dr. FULLER said to his nephew, Dr. CUTHBERT, on taking leave of him: "Good-night, James,—but it will soon be morning!" Perhaps the echo of this stanza was in the ear of the dying preacher:

"Life! we have been long together,  
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;  
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,  
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;  
Then steal away; give little warning;  
Choose thine own time.  
Say not, Good-Night! but in some brighter clime,  
Bid me, Good-Morning!"

The dying words of EARL SHAFTESBURY were, "I am touching the hem of His garment." When JOHN NEWTON was nearing his end, he said, "I am still in the land of the dying; I shall be in the land of the living soon."

Said one to FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE, as he came to die, "You have preached your

last sermon." "Aye," he replied, "but only my last sermon in *this* life."

Archbishop LAUD, as he died upon the scaffold, said, "Lord, I am coming as fast as I can. I know I must pass through the shadow of death before I come to see Thee. But that is only *umbra mortis*, a shadow of death, a little darkness upon nature, since Thou, Lord, by Thy goodness, hast broken the jaws and the power of death."

## CHAPTER III

**The Vast Forever.**

WHEN Solomon comes to describe the passing out of man to "his long home" through the loosing of "the silver cord" and the breaking of the "golden bowl," he realized the necessity of choosing "acceptable words" (Eccles. 12 : 10). And any one discoursing upon the tremendous magnitude of eternity, with all that it holds for both saint and sinner, feels how imperative it is to set forth the truth in words "which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Cor. 2 : 13).

Owing to our finite minds we cannot grasp the thought of eternity. Eternity! It is a word that awakens within us the profoundest emotions. It falls upon us like the solemn tolling of some great bell, the vibrations of which possess the strange power of subduing our spirits and of making us pensive and serious. The very word "eternity" imposes awe upon the most frivolous spirit. And yet, while it thus subdues our spirits, the idea of eternity offers to the mind a great perplexity. It bewilders, stuns, and staggers us, the idea of a horizon without limit; an abyss without bottom,—this immense, immeasurable, unthinkable eternity. It is impossible to

describe "the vast forever," seeing that there is no rising or setting sun whither our friends have gone; it is eternity, and one might as well try to measure music by a foot-rule or weigh poetry in the balance; the things have no relation to each other.

There are those, of course, who appear to be perfectly content with the life that now is. The future is so mysterious, but the present they can understand. Therefore, with high and holy conceptions of what the present life should be they give themselves to the realization of their ideals, leaving the future life as something beyond human ken. But while it is true that—

"There is a heritage of joy  
That yet I must not see,  
The hand that bled to make it mine  
Is keeping it for me,"

yet it is distinctly declared that many "things to come" beyond the comprehension of the natural man have been revealed by the Holy Ghost, and that it is our privilege to rejoice in these forecasts of faith. "He who has no vision of eternity will never get a true hold of time," said THOMAS CARLYLE.

In this saying there is a great truth. The men who have lived in the right spirit of "other worldliness," and who realized that "their citizenship" was in heaven have been those who "seeing the invisible" have gone forth doing mighty deeds, striving, as ARNOLD has said, to make earth like heaven and every

man like God, whom they owned as Lord of Heaven and Earth.

And so, as one after another passes out of this world and loved ones sweep through the gates of death and we wonder how it fares with them beyond the veil, it is blessed to know that God has not left us merely to speculate about their condition. Parents lose their much-loved child; a husband his wife, and *vice versa*; a lover his or her friend, and instinctively thought darts out beyond the little while of time to the wider realm into which the dear one has passed. And, praise God! we have the comfort of the Scriptures.

Of course, it must be freely confessed that there are questions about eternity which even the wisest and holiest cannot answer. It is surprising how much we know about the eternal state, and equally surprising how little we know. We know enough to give perfect certainty of blessedness to the saved, and of unspeakable woe to the lost; but not enough to permit of much detail. Details can be left until we, too, pass within the veil, exchanging faith for sight.

"There's a deep, below the deep,  
And a height beyond the height,  
And our hearing is not hearing,  
And our seeing is not sight."

### I. Theories Regarding the Future.

As the world is listening to many contradictory voices and to men who seem to be

guessing at the truth, we feel it imperative to consider in a brief fashion the various theories of protest against the orthodox Heaven and Hell.

### (1) The Agnostic Position.

An agnostic is one who does not know. He will not discredit nor disbelieve things, both present and future. He maintains a neutral position. And so in matters pertaining to the whereabouts of our beloved he frankly admits that we do not know where and what they are doing. Huxley expressed this view, in words written by his wife over his grave:

“Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep,  
For God still giveth His beloved sleep,  
And if an endless sleep, He wills, so best.”

But Jesus said in respect to all that we need to know about eternity: “If it were not so I would have told you.” And a single study of His revelation about the future, as well as a perusal of the certitudes of Paul as found in 2 Cor. 5: 1-4, for example, soon cures a man of agnosticism.

### (2) Universal Restoration.

The theory of Universalism most widely believed holds that all men shall at length be saved. It does not deny that evil is evil and that it merits and shall receive due punishment. But it is affirmed by the Universalist that through discipline and purgation all souls shall

at last turn to God, and then Christ's love and redemption shall achieve a complete victory in the end of ends. Universalism believes that the power of God has infinite resources, and that the love of God has unwearied persistence and that no soul can ultimately resist such resources and love. A great arsenal of tests are quoted in support of this theory, such as 1 Tim. 2: 4; 2 Pet. 3: 9; Heb. 6: 7; John 12: 31-32; Lk. 3: 6; Tit. 2: 11; 1 Tim. 4: 10; 1 John 2: 2, 3: 8; Acts 3: 21; 1 Cor. 15: 22-29; Eph. 1: 10-12; Rom. 8: 20-21, etc.

But the advocates of Universal Salvation ignore or explain away much of the sterner side of the Bible. For amid all its seeming hopefulness there is a steady, persistent note in Scripture, stern, awful, sorrowful, which is impossible to reconcile with Universalism. There are clear assertions that some men will not be saved. Matt. 26: 24; 2 Thess. 1: 9; Phil. 3: 19.

The Universalist forgets that if man be a free agent there must be the possibility of his continuing in a state of alienation until the end. God cannot do contradictory things. He cannot make a door to open and shut at the same time. And so, as one states it, “Can God make a man's will free to choose good or evil, and yet secure that he shall certainly choose good at last?” No! of course He cannot.

All forms of ‘The Larger Hope’ theory,

then, are to be rejected even though they may be expressed with the poet's vagueness :

“ At last I heard a voice upon the slope,  
Cry to the summit, ‘ Is there any hope ? ’  
To which an answer pealed from the high land,  
But in a tongue no man could understand.  
And on the glimmering summit far withdrawn  
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.”

But Jesus spoke in a tongue all men can understand when He spoke about the great gulf between those who pass out bad and good.

### (3) Conditional Immortality.

This theory holds that the evil-doer must receive the reward of the deeds done in the body. After death he goes to judgment and he will be justly condemned. But he will not pass into a hell of torment. The sinner and his sin will both be annihilated, thereby losing God and Heaven for ever and ever.

But this doctrine of Conditional Immortality is involved in even greater difficulties than Universalism. The assumption that the soul is immortal enough to live after death but not immortal enough to live forever, is condemned both by reason and conscience. Science speaks of a great law which it terms, “ The Law of the Conservation of Energy.” No energy or force, it declares, is ever destroyed. It may change its form, but it is never lost. And it is with personality as it is with Nature's forces.

Personality is persistent, continuous, indestructible. In “ Man and the Universe,” Sir OLIVER LODGE, the eminent scientist, says, “ I want to make the distinct assertion that a really existing thing never perishes, but only changes its form.” The theory of conditional immortality, however, contradicts this belief in the immortality of personality and cannot, therefore, claim authority as a theory of future punishment. And not only so, but the idea that God will finally extinguish any soul which has not yielded to Him is more repellent to the conception of God's wisdom and justice than even that of a life and state of unalterable defiance.

### (4) The Intermediate State.

The best-known form of this position is the doctrine of Purgatory as taught by the Romish Church. In Purgatory, which can only be entered by those whose final destiny is Heaven, men are made fit to be with the saints through purification by suffering. But as Article XXII of “ the Church of England ” says: “ The Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory is a fond thing vainly invented and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.” Doubtless this system is a source of much wealth to a corrupt Church, seeing that the Prayers along with the pounds (or dollars), of course, of the living can hasten the exit

of the suffering from their purgatorial flames. Thus Tetzels cry: "When money clinks at the bottom of my box a soul is released from Purgatory." The Romish Church, however, accepts the stern doctrine of Hell. It remains a state of burning torture, for all those who have been disobedient, unless they have had their penalty remitted on the ground of "invincible ignorance."

But a modern theory of the intermediate state which we deem to be a false hope is finding acceptance. Many have lived and died in error and darkness. There are those who through an evil inheritance or a hindering environment have had no adequate opportunity. When we think of the grossly ignorant heathen man, or the gutter child of a profligate, surely it is not just to say that they are beyond the pale of God's mercy, but that there must be some condition of life and being, where they shall abide, and in which they shall be judged and purified.

Exponents of this theory affirm that the Holy Spirit operates in such a state doing a work of conviction and conversion. Much is made of that passage in 1 Peter about our Lord preaching to the spirits in prison. Consequently, there are men who fervently believe in this state of "the spirits in prison," and are assured that after a long time of tears and pain, they shall pass to Christ.

But as Professor CLOW points out, "The theory of the intermediate state contradicts

every conception of good as good, and evil as evil, and is entirely without support in the New Testament. Jesus is entirely silent upon the matter. Were it not for our shrinking from the teaching of the awful penalties of the changeless state of the evil doers, these theories would never have been fashioned."

Says Professor SALMOND, "The recorded sayings of Christ bring two events,—death and judgment into relation, and give no disclosure of an intermediate state with untold potentialities of divine love and human surrender. They never traverse the principal that this life is the scene of opportunity, and this world the theatre of human fates. Such is the testimony which an unprejudiced exegesis has to offer."

## II. Alternatives of Scripture.

After death there is destiny. And this destiny has been set down as one of two alternatives known as Heaven and Hell. There is a state of unbroken peace and unflawed joy in the presence of God for the redeemed; or, there is a sentence of banishment from God's presence to a state of misery and dread.

And, moreover, these two states of being are declared to be absolute, fixed, eternal.

At death the soul, after life's probation, passes into a destiny absolutely fixed and final. The broad proofs on which we rely for these affirmations are three-fold.

## (1) The Teaching of Christ.

We have the clear and authoritative teaching of our Lord Himself regarding the two-fold destiny. Yet the reticence of Christ is a great marvel. Details are omitted. The certainties are set down so that no man can miss them. The details are treated with a divine reserve.

Take, first of all, the explicit parables of judgment:

The great gulf fixed so that no one can pass  
from one state to the other;

The door shut which cannot be opened;

The outer darkness where there is weeping and  
gnashing of teeth—

these set forth the one destiny, namely that of unspeakable anguish and woe.

The other destiny declared to be a state of close fellowship with Christ can be gleaned from the following:

“Where I am, there shall also My servant be.”—  
Jno. 12: 26;

It is described as the entry into a life with the  
angels of God;

It is affirmed that reward is to be consummated  
and that we shall be forever with the Lord.—  
1 Thess. 4: 17.

Jesus spoke of “Abraham’s bosom” with its close  
and tender fellowship; of “My Father’s  
House” with its many rooms of shelter and  
rest; of “Paradise” in whose garden men  
may walk with God in the cool of the day.

These clear pronouncements are reinforced by the two-fold classification in all Christ’s messages. There is a sharp, emphatic division in His teaching somewhat repugnant to the modern mind. He speaks not only of Heaven where “ancient dreams as substance are,” but of Hell, that dreary abode, where “the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.” There are wheat and tares; good fish and bad fish; sheep and goats; loyal and disloyal; saved and lost; those who do His will and those who do it not; children of God and children of the Devil. Each soul goes to its own place.

“It has sometimes been said that a wise discernment does not see all men to be either black or white, but observes many to be grey. As an earlier writer put it, there are not only sheep and goats but alpacas, which are in some regards like sheep, in other regards like goats. But the highest authorities both in natural science and in religious distinctions have only a two-fold classification. Jesus distributes the grey either among the black or among the white.” For Me . . . Against Me! So, we have truth and falsehood, Heaven and Hell. They are with us now, and they are ahead of us; and some people as they look over the world find it easier to believe in Hell than in Heaven. As BROWNING says in “Time’s Revenges”:

“There may be Heaven;  
There must be Hell.”

## (2) The Inevitable Contrast.

Another reason for the two alternatives of Heaven and Hell lies in the contrast between those who are holy and those who are sinful. Our sins are set in the awful light of his countenance, not in the partial discernment of man. Evil cannot stand in His presence, so we have those awful sentences: "I never knew you; depart from me"; "The wrath of the Lord." And not only so, but as the result of sin God has, through the propitiation of Christ, come into a new relationship with a guilty and sin-smitten humanity. And now the ultimate question both in time and in eternity is man's relationship to that Father who has redeemed him by the sacrifice of His Son. Man's works, attainments in character, amends in some intermediate state, can never pass the bar of divine judgment. Every man's destiny is shaped by his attitude and disposition toward Christ, as can be found in all His parables, *e.g.*, Matt. 25: 12, 24, 40; John 3: 16. Everywhere, apart from works which may be mentioned with approval or denounced with moral indignation, the count in the indictment at the last judgment, the count in the indictment now, is a man's relationship to God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## (3) The Facts of Life.

Beyond the explicit teaching of Jesus and the irreconcilable nature of good and of evil, there

is the conclusion to be drawn from the facts of life. Habit makes character, and character fixes destiny.

"Sow a thought, you reap an act," etc.

The young are impressionable and plastic. The old find it almost impossible to change. The repentance of an old man is one of the rarest spiritual experiences, as any evangelist will tell you. Then it is not difficult to realise that when a soul passes out into Eternity it continues to be what it was in time, only more fixed in an inevitable destiny. (Rev. 22: 11). Let us have a closer view of these two destinations.

## III. The Realms of the Blest.

That seraphic soul, SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, exclaimed: "Love Heaven. Let your heart be in it. Up, up and visit the new land and view the fair city, and the white throne of the Lamb—run fast for it is late." Have we these sighings for the homeland? How often do we visit and view the fair city of which we are citizens? Why! the Bible pictures all true believers in the attitude of groaning after Heaven, on a stretch for and living for Heaven. To them it is the only life, indeed—to live for Heaven, and to live in Heaven.

Well, where and what is Heaven? Various answers have been given. "By Heaven we understand a state of happiness infinite in degree and endless in duration," says Franklin.



“The joys of Heaven are without example, above experience, and beyond imagination; for which the whole creation wants a comparison, we an apprehension, and even the Word of God a revelation,” affirms Norris. “Perfect purity, fullness of joy, everlasting freedom, health and fruition, complete security, substantial and eternal good,” wrote Hannah More. “My idea of Heaven,” said Wilberforce, “is perfect love”; “And mine,” said Robert Hall, in reply, “is perfect rest.”

“Heaven is the day of which grace is the dawn; the rich, ripe fruit of which grace is the lovely flower; the inner shrine of that most glorious temple to which grace forms the approach and outer court,” is how Guthrie expresses it.

Again, WATSON says, “If one could but look a while through the chinks of Heaven’s door and see the beauty and bliss of paradise; if he could but lay his ear to Heaven and hear the ravishing music of those seraphic spirits and the anthems of praise which they sing, how would his soul be exhilarated and transported with joy!” Perhaps the sweetest description of Heaven are the lines founded upon our Lord’s own words in John 17, “Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me,” etc.

“Where Jesus is ’tis Heaven there.”

Of this we are certain that when we reach the realm of eternal bliss we shall discover that its glories far out-strip the most magnificent

description ever given by man below. Like the Queen of Sheba, who had no more spirit in her after she beheld the glory of Solomon, we shall confess,—“Behold, the half was not told me.” Yes, and looking into the Face of Him who is the chief attraction of Heaven we shall say,—“Thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.” And not only so, but through grace we shall be the happy men, and happy servants to stand continually before Him.

Beloved, let our hearts be in Heaven. In the deepening twilight of a summer evening, a pastor called at the residence of one of his parishioners and found, seated in the doorway, a little boy with both hands extending upward, holding a line. “What are you doing here, my little friend?” inquired the minister. “Flying my kite, sir,” was the prompt reply. “Flying your kite!” exclaimed the pastor; “I can see no kite; you can see none.” “I know it, sir,” replied the lad, “I cannot see it, but I know it is there, for I feel it tug.” And if our affections are set upon things above, we shall ever feel the tug. Aye, and the more our earthly circles are depleted the stronger this tug becomes.

### (1) Heaven as a Practical Thought.

To prove that the constant contemplation of Heaven does not make us other-worldly, one writer calls attention to the significant fact that

everywhere in the New Testament Heaven is treated from a practical point of view, and never theoretically. It is presented to us as a thought which provides a moral force for our practical life upon this earth plane. Take, first of all the attitude of Jesus :

(a) *The Thought of Heaven Becomes an Element in the Formation of Character.*

“Do not lay up treasures upon earth,—lay up treasures in Heaven.”

We cannot send our gold on before, nor carry it with us. Character is all we can take.

(b) *The Thought of Heaven Raises our Estimate of the Value of Others.*

“See that you stumble not one of the least of these little ones, for their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven.”

We are to treat people here below the more tenderly and humanly because of their relationship in the world beyond.

(c) *The Thought of Heaven is Associated with a Perfect Social Order upon Earth.*

“Thy will be done on earth.” How?  
“As it is done in Heaven.”

If life is to be true, harmonious, and beautiful, then it must be fashioned according to the pattern of the Mount; just as our Lord came from Heaven to do His Father’s will below.

Turning from Christ to His Apostles, we

find them regarding Heaven as related to Earth in a three-fold way :

(a) *In Heaven there is the Inspiring Presence of Christ.*

He is there to direct and to inspire His people below. Heaven to the Apostles was not a distant star, but a realm quite close to them from which Jesus Christ energised, inspired them—“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

(b) *In Heaven there are Divine Principles Governing our Human Life.*

“Our citizenship is in Heaven” (Phil. 3 : 20). Our word “politics” is derived from the original behind this word “citizenship.” So we may read,—“Our politics are in Heaven.”

The Apostle means that the real principles which should govern human life are found, not in the midst of humanity as it is with its differing shades of political thought, but in the higher sphere known as Heaven.

(c) *In Heaven we are shown God’s Programme for Human Society.*

In Rev. 21, a new social order is set forth : “I saw a new heaven and a new earth.” Falsehood is utterly abolished; truth completely enthroned. These practical representations of Heaven, then, should dispose of the sneer that “reflections upon Heaven are a waste of time.” Rather do they form a practical force for our life here and now.

## (2) Heaven as a Place.

Heaven in the Bible is represented as a place in contrast with earth. The earth is a place, but unstable, insecure, fleeting. Heaven is stable, secure, eternal. It is referred to as a City; a House; a Home; as being Above, Upward. Where is Heaven? For answer, both Scripture and instinct point us upward. Stephen looked up into Heaven; Jesus, we are told, ascended into Heaven; while John saw the Holy City coming down.—Acts 7: 55; Rev. 21: 2; Eph. 4: 10.

The Bible makes use of the word Heaven in several ways:

- (a) *It is the name of the Firmament*; "The windows of Heaven were opened."—Gen. 7: 11.

Here it represents the atmosphere on which the clouds float. It is a poetic form describing in a most picturesque way the effect of a storm.

- (b) *It is the name of the High Firmament of the Starry Worlds.*

"When I consider the Heavens . . . the moon, and the stars."—Ps. 8: 3.

- (c) *It is the General Name of the Spirit World, the Abode of God, of Christ, of the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect.* This is the place Paul refers to when he speaks of being caught up to the third heaven.—2 Cor. 12: 2.

And it is this abode our Lord speaks of in John 14: 1-3; 17: 24. Thus, Heaven is not an ethereal state, but an abode known to men from the beginning of time as God's

immediate presence, the centre of this government.—Matt. 18: 10; Rev. 21: 22-23.

Concerning the exact location of Heaven, Scripture is silent. Some have pointed to a star in the universe around which all other stars seem to revolve, and suppose Heaven to be there; others think it not so far from the present world. Perhaps death will reveal to us that after all there is only a veil between.

## (3) Heaven is a Place the Saints Enter at Death.

We deem it necessary to emphasise this point seeing that it is generally taught that when we die we all depart to Hades there to await a general resurrection, when the good will be separated from the bad, receiving then their eternal deserts. Here is how one writer expresses the popular idea of a waiting period: "Men exist in three states:—

1. On earth with body and soul united.
2. After death with the body in the grave and the soul in Hades.
3. After the resurrection with body and soul united in the final abode.

The immediate abode of the soul at death is neither Heaven nor Hell. JOHN WESLEY in his 112th sermon says: "It is plain that paradise is not Heaven. It is, indeed, if we may be allowed the expression, the

ante-chamber of Heaven." ORIGEN plainly stated that "not even the Apostles have received their perfect bliss, for the saints at their departure out of this life do not attain the full reward of their labours, but are awaiting us, who still remain on earth, loitering though we be and slack."

The truth, however, of the New Testament indicates that all the departed saints have a pre-resurrection state, and that they are at home with the Lord. They are portrayed as being before the Throne, praising the Lamb. We might state it thus:—

(a) *Before the Resurrection of Christ, Sheol or Hades was composed of two parts:—*

The place of the wicked, called the pit, and Tartarus.—Rev. 9 : 1, 2, 11 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 4 Revised Version.

The place of the righteous to which the saved thief went, called Paradise.—Lk. 23 : 43, or Abraham's Bosom.

(b) *After the Resurrection one compartment of Hades was emptied.*

Christ visited Paradise in Sheol. Matt. 12 : 40 ; Lk. 23 : 42, 43 ; came up from Paradise in order to ascend to Heaven.—Acts 2 : 30-32 ; Eph. 4 : 10.

The saints were delivered from lower Paradise and ascended with Christ to the Father's presence.—Eph. 4 : 9-10. "Absent—body ; present—Lord."

The wicked and fallen angels are still in their part of Hades, known as Hell, and

will be there until the Great White Throne, when along with earth and Hell they will be cast into the Lake of Fire,—the eternal depository of all contrary to the mind of God.—Rev. 20 : 12-15 ; 21 : 8 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 6 ; Jude 6.

Says Professor CLOW : "When Jesus, in the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, says, 'The rich man also died, and was buried, and in Hell he lift up his eyes' (Lk. 16 : 22-23), as though these were three instantly succeeding events, he seems to bar the mind against any theory of after-salvation. The great saying, 'To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise,' and His own simple statement : 'I go to My Father,' all imply that for Jesus the soul passed at death either into the presence of God or into that limbus where God's mercy was not proclaimed."

#### (4) Heaven is a Place of Mutual Recognition.

We come to the consideration of a few vexing problems wrapped up within the bosoms of all. We want to know : Shall we meet our departed again ? Shall we know them ? Will they know us ? Are they cognizant of what goes on below ? Can they visit us here even when we know it not ? Questions of this kind will force themselves on all in prospect of a life beyond and may He who controls things "visible and invisible"

(Col. 1: 16-20), thus joining in one the whole family on earth and heaven, seen and unseen, guide our thoughts aright.

### (a) Recognition of the Dead.

What does the Bible have to say about the question. Shall we know each other in Heaven? Why, it affirms that each individual, being still *himself* hereafter, is possessed of a recognizable personality and of faculties of comprehension vastly enlarged and superior to those exercised down here. Some one asked George Macdonald the question, "Shall we know one another in that life?" His pertinent reply was, "Shall we be greater fools in Paradise than we are here?"

JOHN EVANS, the old Welsh Minister, is credited with a similar reply. "Do you think we shall be known to each other in Heaven?" his wife one asked him. "To be sure we shall," said he. "Do you think we shall be greater fools there than we are here?"

And this feeling after recognition is a perfectly legitimate one. People know that Heaven will not be Heaven at all if they cannot meet their loved ones there; if they cannot resume the beautiful but broken relationships of earth. "All love is of God," says John, and these earthly loves of ours were never meant to die. They have the quality of eternity about them. In fact, love is eternal and is never, therefore, buried in a coffin. And not only so, but the question of recognition is

forever settled by the thought that consciousness, personal identity, character, love, memory, intercourse go on in the life beyond.

"We shall know each other better  
When the mists have rolled away."

### (b) Relationship of the Dead.

With joyful deliverance from sin, the hindrances to perfect love disappear, and we take up the old love-life without break or want. Here we have manly might and courage and reason; womanly tenderness and sympathy and wisdom; childly lowliness and trust and lightsomeness. And when such graces are perfected, they will make human ties existing here still exist on the other side of the veil.

Well, first of all, in that life all conventional relationships disappear. There will be no marriages as now. "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage." The only marriages, there, are the marriages of the soul. Spiritual affinities alone will bind people together. If the ties are spiritual here, they will remain unsevered. If they are simply animal and fleshly, they will die with our animal-nature. What is earthly and sensual in our love will be purged away. And further, although glorified, we shall not cease to be human in Heaven. As we are personal beings down here, we shall be personal there. And so when we think of the affections as between husband and wife, and between brother and

sister, and between mother and son, or father and daughter, we see that these are the personal endearments of spirit to spirit and do outlast all change of body.

As MOSES and ELIJAH were recognized on the Mount; and Stephen knew his Lord as he was being stoned; and Dives in Hell recognized Lazarus and Abraham, so in Heaven we "shall know even as also we are known." Our identities will not be lost, nor will our memories cease to function, and our instincts and powers be swept away. Heaven is not a place of ethereal, mystical, cold, unsocial, formless spirits, but a Home with the interchange of love and affection.

After the death of his wife, ROBERT BROWNING wrote the following saying from "Dante" in her Testament: "Thus I believe, thus I affirm, thus I am certain it is, that from this life I shall pass to another better, there, where that lady lives, of whom my soul is enamoured."

There are graven on the tombstone which marks the place where CHARLES KINGSLEY and his wife both lie buried, three Latin words: "*Amavimus, Amamus, Amabimus,*" which being interpreted mean, "We have loved; we love; we shall love." Such was Kingsley's faith! And such is ours! "We shall love," only our love will be redeemed from all narrowness and grossness.

"And with the morn those angel faces smile  
Which I have loved long since and lost awhile."

There is one other thought we might touch on under this section, namely, the question of children in Heaven. Do they grow after their spirit has passed forth? Some writer suggests that those who pass away in childhood have their purpose in Heaven—as children. That without them much would be missed in Heaven by all motherly and fatherly hearts. That where matter is not, growth, increase, in our sense of the word, cannot be. Child, youth, or patriarch; as the spirit departs, so it abides. While others may have grown sons or daughters there, a mother will have her child as a *child* for ever. There is no growth in the grave. Hence, when Christ comes to raise our bodies, He will raise them just as when they were first put into the ground, without growth, without having aged, in any way. Thus, children of one year will still be, in size and appearance, children of one year; the children of ten years will still look like children of ten.

When BISHOP SIMPSON of America was preaching upon this very theme of Recognition in Heaven, he broke out in the midst of his sermon with the cry: "What would Heaven be to me without my Willie?" Willie being a dear son whom he had lost a few months before.

Other writers, however, affirm that as Progress is characteristic of Heaven our children will not remain so. The mother crossing the threshold of the life beyond will

instantly realize that her child has grown with the growth of all spirit and mental and individual traits. The vast majority of those who die are babies, and under the touch of God's creative power, under the tutelage of their angel-teachers, steadily grow into a perfect character. For Heaven is a school as well as a Home.

"He is not dead, the child of your affection,  
But gone into that school  
Where he no longer needs your poor protection  
And Christ Himself doth rule."

F. C. SPURR tells of a friend of his who had lost a child, and who sent him a card printed in silver, bearing the words: "In memory of our little Donald, lent to us for two years; the sunshine of our home, recalled by the Father, now at school with the angels for his tutors."

Now, both of these views are beautiful, but one cannot dogmatise. This we know, that our dead ones are not lost to us, and that no matter what change may be wrought upon their forms, they will still be ours. RICHARD BAXTER, in his fine hymn on the Confidence and Covenant of Faith says:

"My knowledge of that life is small,  
The eye of faith is dim;  
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,  
And I shall be with Him."

And what sufficed this most saintly soul should also be our assurance.

### (c) Prayers for the Dead.

Another matter troubling the minds of some is that of praying for the dead. Having passed beyond our personal care and the reach of our influence, are the dead beyond the pale of our prayers?

Professor CLOW says that there are those who have the hope that when the naked soul realizes what it means to be without the gate and to wander in the darkness afar from God, faith and repentance may be exercised, and the place of the banished become the place of hope. Under the sway of such conceptions, tender hearts offer prayers for their dead.

LUTHER said: "Since Scripture does not say anything about prayers for the dead, I do not concede it a sin if a man in his private devotions prays in terms like this: "Dear Lord, if it is the case that this soul \_\_\_\_\_ can be helped, then do Thou graciously, etc., and when this has been done once or twice let that suffice." In his "Gospel of the Hereafter," J. PATERSON SMYTH tells us that this beautiful old custom, the custom of the Jews, the custom of the whole Christian Church till the Reformation, had grown at that time into great corruption, and that we turned and still turn from its observance because of the sordid traffic in masses for the dead. Mr. Smyth then relates the following story: "A friend said to me lately: 'I was a little child when the news came of my father's death, far away.

That night, as usual, I prayed for him. But my aunt stopped me. 'Darling,' she said, 'you must not pray for Father now; it is wrong.' And I can remember still, how I shrank back, feeling as if some one had slammed the door and shut Father outside."

"How can I cease to pray for thee? Somewhere  
In God's wide universe thou art to-day.  
Can He not reach thee with His tender care?  
Can He not hear me, when for thee I pray?  
Somewhere thou livest and hast need of Him,  
Somewhere thy soul sees higher heights to climb,  
And somewhere, too, there may be valleys dim  
Which thou must pass to reach the heights sublime.  
Then all the more because thou canst not hear  
Poor human words of blessing, will I pray.  
O true, brave heart, God bless thee, whereso'er  
In God's wide universe thou art to-day!"

But concerning such prayers and any effect they may produce, Holy Scripture is silent. It gives no sanction to such a custom. Prayer for the living is enjoined, but concerning prayer for the departed, neither prophet nor apostle has spoken. To quote Professor CLOW again: "Beyond the fact that there is no record of prayer for the dead, there is the more conclusive fact that everywhere death is regarded as a change so decisive that the opportunities of life are closed finally and forever. . . . We cannot build a doctrine upon the feelings and desires of men. We cannot pray without knowledge, and any knowledge of the state of our dead is beyond our power." This we know, that our loved ones have fallen into the

hands of God, and that we can safely leave them to His care and keeping. Whether our happy dead pray and intercede for us, is another matter altogether, and one not beyond the bounds of possibility, as we shall see.

#### (d) Knowledge of the Dead.

The persistent claims of Spiritualism force us to give a brief consideration to the knowledge our beloved dead may have both of us and of the world they have left. The question is sometimes asked, "Do our loved ones see us? Do they know what is happening to us? Do they pray for us, taking interest in our lives? Well, a passage like Heb. 12: 1-2 appears to suggest that Heaven is not closed to earth and that our welfare is still the concern of our beloved above. This we know, the world to come is the very atmosphere of prayer. John in his vision saw "the offering of the golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of the saints." Rev. 5: 8. And in the eighth chapter, the angel stood to offer the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar. And thus, as distance cannot interrupt fellowship, it may be that a mother does not cease to pray for the child she bore. If even the selfish Dives, after death, let his thoughts go out to his brothers behind, interceding for their salvation, surely it is not too much to believe that among the most precious prayers before the altar are those of a mother for the boy who is left behind on earth. Of



this we are certain, that there is joy in Heaven over the conversion of sinners below. Lk. 15.

Communication with the dead, such as Spiritualism professes, we cannot have. Human spirits do not return to talk with us. The so-called messages received through mediums come, if not through the deliberate, skilful deception of spiritualistic experts, then from the demons who impersonate our dead. But while the dead cannot converse with us, one writer says that, "there is no reason why our Lord may not properly be asked, in submission of course to His will, to convey messages to our holy dead."

And so the conclusion of the whole matter is that our dear ones pass to the other side, but silently and secretly they are with us still. They are with us as Christ Himself is with us. They are not separated from us in some shut-off and closed-up Heaven. JOHN OXENHAM finishes a little poem in which he tries to express the feelings of a father and mother on hearing that their son is dead, like this :

"He is gone . . . yet he is near us,  
 Maybe he can see and hear us,  
 Yes we feel him, nearer, dearer,  
 Tears have washed our souls' eyes clearer."

The argument may be advanced that if our loved ones know what transpires here below they must still know pain. But physical pain is banished from Heaven, and although with our Lord Himself, who still grieves over the

lost, they may not be stranger to pain of heart, this we know, that seeing the end of all things from the beginning, such a vision of glorious consummation robs them of all bitterness. Perhaps we shall find when we reach Glory that we owe far more than we ever realized to the invisible host above :

"Linger a little, invisible host  
 Of the saved dead, who stand  
 Perhaps not far off, though men may scoff,  
 Touch me with unfelt hand."

### (5) Heaven is a Place of Continual Service.

Heaven will be peopled with real beings, possessed of real though spiritual bodies, and quickened intellects. They will be active, moral, and reflective beings, or they cannot be moral agents. They must also have employment, and the means of stimulating thought. The soul must ever be expanding and developing, or else deteriorating in Heaven. It is only activity that expands; only culture that develops the intellect and soul. This is science and this is religion. Yes, and this is the testimony of the Bible, for it is distinctly affirmed that His servants are to serve Him. Rev. 22 : 4. But our common teachings about Heaven, especially in some of our hymns, have robbed us of its true import. For example, it is depicted as a place,—

"Where congregations ne'er break up;  
 And Sabbaths have no end."

Doubtless the writer of this seventh century hymn had in mind the perfect harmony and sweet fellowship to be found in Heaven. But surely there is more than this! Some of our hymns about Heaven are not Biblical. Here is a child's hymn :

“ I want to be an angel  
And with the angels stand ;  
A crown upon my forehead,  
And harp within my hand.”

We shall never be angels, but as human on the other side as we are on this. Further, we are not to spend eternity “singing around the Throne.” There is service in Heaven, and service according to ability. No favouritism will be shown. Only those will be sent on some honoured errand who *can* do it, who have grown the traits of character it calls for. Each man's special gifts will be developed, seeing that there will be no dead level of attainment, and differing varieties of character and temperament. In fairer realms and under brighter skies, anything that was true and worthy in our lives below will be brought to perfection,—  
“On earth the broken arcs, in Heaven the perfect round.”

And so, what makes Heaven a perpetual delight, what banishes weariness and tedium forever from its borders is that it is a place of constant, happy, delightful activity. Says Dr. ALEX. SMELLIE :

“God bring me to Jerusalem! God bring me home in peace! It is the heart's uttermost

attained at length. It is the heart's harbour made after the stormy sea.

- “There my senses will be marvellously transfigured and sublimed; so that I shall hunger no more and thirst no more, and I shall behold Christ's face, and I shall hear the songs of the seraphim.
- “There my intellect will have its doubts resolved and its mysteries cleared, and I shall know even as also I am known.
- “There my memory will cease to be haunted by grievous recollections of past sins; for I shall live in the presence of my Saviour, and His grace will be all my thought.
- “There my conscience will have its alarms stilled and its perplexities made plain; it will see and follow Him Who has brought in for it a perfect righteousness.
- “There my will will never be visited by uprisings of rebellion and disobedience; Jesus will lead me in perpetual triumph behind His chariot-wheels.
- “There my affections will be satisfied. ‘I go,’ as Jacob Bohme said, ‘to be with my Redeemer and my King in Paradise.’
- “O, sweet and blessed country!”
- “O, for a nearer insight into Heaven,  
More knowledge of the glory and the joy,  
Which there unto the happy souls are given,  
Their intercourse, their worship, their employ.”

## (6) Heaven is a Place of Eternal Bliss.

“Wise theologians of old divided the happiness of Heaven into ‘essential’ and ‘accidental.’ By *essential* they meant the happiness which the soul derives immediately from God's presence, even from the Beatific

Vision. By *accidental* they meant the additional happiness which comes from creatures, from meeting with friends, from the joyous occupations and all the delights of ever-widening knowledge." Praise God! both will be ours.

### (a) The Essential.

The great and crowning truth about the heavenly life is this: it is a life lived in the enjoyment of the vision of Christ. We shall see His face; see Him in all His glory! Ours will not be a glimpse of His glory such as the disciples had upon the Mount, but a continual basking in the full blaze of His glory. Faber thought of this open vision when he cried:

"What rapture will it be  
Prostrate before Thy Throne to lie,  
And gaze and gaze on Thee."

Yes, and when we see Him we shall be like Him. And this spells deep, unfathomable, unspeakable bliss for the blood-washed sinners. And all the great saints have experienced a sort of home-sickness to see the "dear Bridegroom's face." Heaven pulled at Paul's heart-strings when he wrote: "I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, that seraphic, covenanting preacher, used to fall into raptures as he thought of Heaven: "Oh, how sweet and glorious shall our case be when that Fairest among the sons of men will lay His fair face to

our sinful faces and wipe away all tears from our eyes. O time, run swiftly, and hasten that day." Said AUGUSTINE: "Christ shall be the end of all our longing and desire! Him shall we perpetually see! Him shall we love without tediousness and grief! and Him shall we praise without ceasing."

"Just to be near the dear Lord I adore,  
That will be glory,—be glory for me."

### (b) The Accidental.

Time fails us to tell of the secondary joys of Heaven. This is known, however, that Heaven will be full of surprises. Many will be there we hoped to meet. Some will be missing we expected to find, while others will be there we had no thought of seeing. But the marvel of marvels will be that through infinite grace we shall be there.

## IV. The Caverns of the Lost.

There is no more terrible topic than that which we are called upon to consider. He who speaks or writes about it should do so with all the compassion in his heart the Master possessed when He pronounced the awful truth of Hell. All harshness, flippancy and sentiment are out of place in dealing with such a solemn theme. It is a painful yet necessary subject. If the doctrine of Heaven may be called *salvation by attraction*, no less may that of Hell be termed *salvation by repulsion*. As no tongue can tell the glories of Heaven, so

neither can any describe the woes of Hell. S. D. GORDON recalls sitting one evening as a guest in the big dining room of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Mr. Moody himself was sitting at the head of the faculty table, and after the meal, there was a little informal speaking. A member of the faculty told a witty story, the point of which was regarding future punishment. It was greeted with a general laugh. Instantly Mr. Moody was on his feet. "Well," he said, "whenever you do talk about Hell, let it be with tears in your voice."

Something of the same thought is found in the "Memoirs" of ROBERT MURRAY MCCHEYNE. One day he asked Dr. A. BONAR what he had been preaching about. "On Hell," replied Dr. Bonar. Then said R. M. M'Cheyne: "Were you able to preach it with tenderness?" And this saintly preacher of revered memory used to speak even of Hell like LIVINGSTONE of Shotts "as out of the very heart of the Weeper of Olivet." May such tenderness be ours as we deal with the tragedy of Hell! Yes, and Calvary-reached hearts are the only ones qualified to declare the doom of the lost!

### (1) The Teaching of the New Testament.

As there is a discreet silence in the majority of our pulpits, a forcing into the background

of the true and awfully solemn teaching about Hell, it behoves us to deal fearlessly with such a subject, keeping nothing back. Well, what saith the Scriptures? Turning to the teachings of our Lord, we find certain truths standing out in bold relief. And in dealing with what He had to say about Hell, let us remind ourselves of His outstanding sympathy with suffering, His tenderness of heart and of spirit, His self-forgetful unselfishness in relieving all suffering. Here are some of his words:

"The broad gate that leadeth to destruction." Matt. 7: 13-14. He here affirms that there are two ways and two radically different ends to them.

"Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity," Matt. 7: 22-23. Religious hypocrisy results in banishment from His presence in the future life.

"Cast forth into the outer darkness." Matt. 8: 12. See also the same dread language in the parable of 22: 13 and 25: 30. Or the thrice repeated words of Matt. 10: 15; 11: 22-24 about "the day of judgment." Then there is the furnace of fire in Matt. 13: 41-42, repeated with variation in verses 49-50. Nothing could be more heart-breaking! In Mark 9: 43-49, we have the triple phrase about the undying worm and the unquenched fire. While in Matt. 25: 41-46, he speaks of eternal fire and eternal punishment, and in Jno. 3: 36, about the abiding wrath of God.

The impression to be gathered from the sayings of Christ has been forcibly expressed by Professor SALMOND in "The Christian Doctrines of Immortality," when he comes to deal with the absoluteness of His words. "If there is no Hell, as He said there was, then He stands branded as a trickster, a colossal liar."

The finality of destiny could scarcely be more unequivocally expressed than it is when Christ concludes His discourse of judgment with the last contrast: "And these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life." . . . In Christ's own words, the last issues of life are given with a notable frequency in different forms of discourse, and sometimes in outline, sometimes in large representation . . . Exclusion from the kingdom, banishment from Himself, is the end of those who have the language of faith but not its fruits (Matt. 7: 21-23). Repudiation is the sentence of those who deny Him before men (Matt. 10: 33; Lk. 9: 26). Inability to enter the Kingdom of Heaven is the judgment of the merciless and ambitious (Matt. 18: 3-35); weeping and gnashing of teeth, that of the selfish (Matt. 13: 42). The outer darkness is the destiny of the unprofitable (Matt. 25: 30) . . . The same impression is conveyed by many of His words which are of larger and more general meaning,—those which speak of losing one's soul or forfeiting one's life (Mk. 8: 36); of perishing (Jno.

3: 16); of dying in one's sins (Jno. 8: 21-24); of its being good never to have been born (Matt. 26: 24; Mk. 14: 21); those, too, in which, leaving the exclusion of the opposite class to suggest itself, He declares eternal life to be for him who believes (Jno. 3: 15); and those in which, giving both aspects of the spiritual condition, He says of him who believes, that he "is not judged"; but of him who believes not, that he "hath been judged already" (Jno. 3: 18).

Christ's own teaching, we must conclude, gives the significance of finality to the moral decisions of life . . . He never softens the awful responsibilities of this life even by the dim adumbration of any change. His recorded sayings nowhere suggest the provision of ministries of grace, whether now or continued in the after-existence. They nowhere speak of a place of repentance unto life in the other world.

And equally final is the teaching of the Apostles. Paul speaks of a day appointed when God will judge the world (Acts 17: 31; Rom. 2: 5-9). Peter emphasizes the judgment of the wicked and the destruction of this earth (2 Pet. 2: 4; 3: 7). Jude in his intense little letter tells us about the blackness of darkness, verse 6. John has some terrible things to say about the wicked in the Revelation,—There is the lake of fire; the second death; without are dogs 21: 8; 22: 15; the fixity of choice, 22: 11.

Now, who shall speak after God? Who shall give contrary opinions after the Book has spoken? We have the teaching of the Infallible Christ and of holy men who spake as they were moved by the Infallible Holy Christ. And their combined revelation must be the last word on the subject of Hell. "And the ostrich shutting its eyes to danger became a sure victim of the danger. We'll do well not to see an ostrich if there's a mirror at hand."

## (2) The Terms Used.

As words are dangerous things if not carefully watched, owing to their tendency to change their meaning as a language grows, or is translated, a brief review of the words and terms used in connection with the doom of the wicked will help us to a right understanding of the subject before us.

### (a) The Words "Damn"— "Damnation."

Although such words convey the idea of the sinner's eternal punishment, it must be borne in mind that when used by our Lord and when translated out of the original they did not mean what we now impute to them. They are connected with two Greek words meaning "to judge" and to judge adversely or to condemn. In the Revised Version, the words "damn" and "damnation" are swept away.

### (b) The Word "Hell."

This word occurs eighteen times in the Authorised Version. In five cases it is a translation of the word "Hades"; twelve times it is a translation of the word "Gehenna," used by our Lord; once it is translated "Tartarus." Now, although this English word "Hell" has come to mean almost exclusively the place of torment of the wicked, such was not its original significance. "Hell" is akin to "Heal," *i.e.*, to cover (as a wound with skin). It was used in regard to such acts as tiling or slating a house by which it was covered in. And the meaning the covered, the hidden region, expresses the Hebrew Sheol and the Greek "Hades," the covered state of all, both good and bad, containing abodes of comparative bliss or of woe. In its neutral meaning, "Hell" refers simply to the world of departed spirits regardless of what their condition there is. It is a first-cousin of the word "hole," and means a cavity, the underworld, a hollow subterranean place. In its positive meaning, it is used for the place of punishment. Thus, the wicked are spoken of as having gone to "Sheol," to endure torment and anguish. Ps. 9: 16, 17; Deut. 32: 22.

In the word "Gehenna," occurring twelve times in the New Testament, eleven of which are in the first three Gospels, we come across a picture word having an historic origin. It is

a shortened term for the Vale of Hinnom—Ge-Hinnom—a valley south of Jerusalem. The story of this place is told in 2 Chron. 28 : 3.

In earlier days it was a fair garden, but under two kings became a place of idolatry. Little children were placed within a heated metal image, thus being made to pass through the fire as an act of worship. In good king Josiah's time, he abolished this repulsive and cruel form of idolatry and defiled the Vale of Hinnom by making it the great rubbish-heap of Jerusalem. Dead animals, unburied bodies of criminals were consumed therein. Fires continually burned with an intense burning on that immense pile. It was still used in this way in our Lord's day. In the third century, it once more reverted to its original use as a garden. To-day, the railway station of Jerusalem stands almost on the same site.

Now, this word "Gehenna" is clearly used by Christ as a name for the place of punishment for wicked men (Matt. 5 : 22, 29, 30 ; 10 : 28 ; 18 : 9 ; 23 : 15, 33). In His use of it He did not mean the Gehenna burning outside the Jerusalem walls, but used it as a symbol of utter ruin. It means consignment to something equivalent to the great rubbish-heap of Gehenna.

(c) Then we have phrases like THE LAKE OF FIRE ; The Second Death ; Eternal Punishment ; Eternal Fire ; Eternal Destruction ; Outer Darkness ; Blackness of Darkness (Matt. 25 : 41-46 ; 22 : 13 ; 2 Thess. 1 : 9 ; Rev. 19 : 20 ; 20 : 1-15). Much discussion has

been focussed upon the words "Eternal," "Everlasting," "Forever." Exponents of the "Larger Hope" theory seek to show that they are "age-long," denote a quality and not duration, a full discussion of which can be found in "Human Destiny," by Sir ROBERT ANDERSON. But they carry the air of finality. Such expressions as employed in the New Testament upon the grave subject of future retribution refuse to be despoiled of their content by linguistic analysis, or of their credibility by philosophical reasoning. They mean what they bear upon their face and convey an intelligible and reliable, however awful, conception of the futurity of the impenitent. If Heaven is unending, so is Hell.

AS PROFESSOR ORR puts it : "It adds to the terribleness of these sayings that, as before remarked, there is nothing to put against them ; no hint or indication of the termination of the doom. Why did Jesus not safe-guard His words from misapprehension, if behind them there lay an assurance of restoration and mercy?" One may ask with OXENHAM in a reply to Jukes, "Whether if Christ had intended to teach the doctrine of eternal punishment, He could possibly have taught it in plainer terms?"

### (3) The Necessity of Hell.

Caussin says, "If there be a paradise for virtues, there must be a Hell for crimes. No less does Hell contribute to publish God's

omnipotency than Paradise . . . . The justice of the Sovereign will no less appear in the condemnation of the culpable than in the defence of the innocent." Obedience as seen in doing the will of God means blessedness. Disobedience to that will entails chastisement. "Sin is both an insoluble riddle and a terrible fact in the freely created universe of the Holy God," says BISHOP MOULE. And sin, resolving itself in disobedience to the revealed will of God, has formed Hell. All the theories seeking to mitigate the sufferings of the wicked forget the unfaltering decisiveness of the Christian doctrine of sin. "All these theories," as Professor CLOW reminds us, "are motivated by a terror of suffering, rather than by a horror of sin. We ignore the exceeding sinfulness of sin. But not only with Jesus, but with the whole Scriptures it is sin, not suffering, which presents the torturing future to their minds. These theories are further shaken by the truth held in the cross, and the atonement of Christ. That truth is that sin against God is so deadly, and its consequences so awful, that it required the life and the passion of the Holy One to redeem man from his fate and grievous destiny." Yes, and in a world where sin and truth are seen thoroughly, we want no other Hell. Shallow views of sin and of God's holiness, and of the glory of Jesus Christ and His claims upon us, lie at the bottom of weak theories of the doom of the unpenitent. "When we see sin in all its

hideousness and enormity, the holiness of God in all its perfection, the glory of Jesus Christ in all its infinity, nothing but a doctrine that those who persist in the choice of sin, who love darkness rather than light, and who persist in the rejection of the Son of God, shall endure everlasting anguish will satisfy the demands of our own moral intuitions. Men who eternally choose sin, should eternally suffer." And with this solemn statement of Dr. R. A. TORREY we are in full agreement.

"It is full knowledge of the truth,  
When truth resisted long, is sworn our foe,  
And calls Eternity to do her right."

#### (4) The Arguments Against Hell.

To be tender-hearted without being truthful is not loving. It is unkind. It is cowardly. Alas! however, the truth about Hell is not told simply and clearly from the majority of the pulpits in our land. In fact, efforts are made to soften down such a stern doctrine, *e.g.*,

##### (a) There is the Humanitarian Idea.

The trend of modern thought is against the unalterable torment of the lost. A softer humanitarian mind prevails. We are more concerned about the feelings of men than the facts of Scripture. And yet, none was so kind as Jesus and none so stern in His language on Hell. Although we have the broad record of the New Testament that on the one hand there



is the unchanging felicity of those who have come into a loyal relationship with God, and on the other hand, the unchanging doom of the impenitent rebel, the bulk of preachers are silent about such truths, for fear of causing offence. And so, the thoughts of men are focussed upon the life that now is. One trembles at the thought that the silence of some preachers is responsible for so much of the ignorance and indifference about the future, and that they are consequently not free from the blood of Christless souls in Hell.

#### (b) The Character of God.

Many remembering the Justice and Love of God say with TENNYSON:

“ Oh, yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
The pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;  
That nothing walks with aimless feet ;  
That not one life shall be destroyed,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God has made the pile complete.”

But while these lines may contain beautiful sentiment, they are not the truth of Scripture. The common argument used against Hell is that God is too kind, loving, gracious, and forgiving to allow men to be lost forever. Having infinite purity and infinite pity, inexhaustible love and enduring mercy, He will not let men perish utterly out of His hand. If He remained indifferent to the lost, if He allowed a soul to suffer in hopeless torment,

if He were callous before an unalterable doom, He would not be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But no arguments about the love and power of God to save to the uttermost can cancel the fact of the free will of man or the plain statements of the Bible confirmed beyond question by the living Lord Himself, as to the awful fate of the finally impenitent. Men walk on streets,—mock equally at the voice of wisdom and the accents of love, treat the Cross of Christ with scorn.

What reason is there to suppose that if their impenitence persists in this world and God is in His Heaven, it will not persist in the world to come? It is idle to say that the anguish of Hell will make men repent. There are men in a living Hell here and now. Their vices are scourging cords, tormenting fires, avenging furies, torturing devils. Yet, though they suffer in spirit and soul and body, and those whom they love suffer with them and through them, they do not repent. They love darkness rather than light for their deeds are evil.

And, moreover, escape from Hell does not depend upon the love and goodness of God, but upon the repentance of man. God does not consign men to Hell. They go there on their own feet, by the use of free action and only so. And it seems quite clear that the sinner *stays* in Hell in the same way as he goes, viz., by his own free choice. The walls of Hell, then, are

not of God's building. They are the fashioning of man's sin. It is, therefore, no disparagement to God's moral character that Hell remains unchanged. "I would—ye would not."

### (c) The Final Defeat of God's Will.

Because men cannot reconcile the sovereignty of God with the teaching of Hell, they force the latter into the background, or else explain it away. "We cannot reconcile God's love and the doctrine of Hell," said one preacher, "therefore we drop out one of them—Hell." But surely Justice and Punishment are not irreconcilable!

### (d) Salvation out of Hell?

Believing that men must suffer eternally for their sin does not impute unto God any display of temper, or vindictiveness. A man who deliberately does evil on this side, idly trusting in the mercy of God, deserves all he gets on the other side. But will his crimes be generously overlooked? This is the question we want to answer. In Luther's letter to Hansen von Rechenberg, he said: "God forbid that I should limit the time of acquiring faith to the present time. In the depths of the Divine mercy there may be opportunities to win it in the future state." This is a pious hope. But has it the guarantee of Scripture? No! unquestionably it is established beyond

all doubt that *every* man dying in sin is lost forever. The Lake of Fire is the eternal abode of the finally impenitent. Death produces no change whatever in a person's character. The man wakes on the other side as he went to sleep on this side. Retribution continues there as it commences here. The law of habit forges a man's Hell. Life is opportunity, and if man fails to use his opportunity down here, the door of life closes upon him. The Bible declares with unfaltering voice that death is the dividing line of opportunity. It urges right choice *now*. And what is Hell but this truth seen too late?

Because it is not God's will that they should perish, He gives to man not *a* chance, but *every* chance. The cross of Christ proclaims this beyond doubt, for in order that men *might* be saved, Jesus shed His precious blood that men might not perish but have eternal life.

## (5) False Ideas about Hell.

There are theories and statements about Hell which shock our sense of justice, jar upon our intellect, hide the essential truth from us as well as contradict the inner message of such a solemn theme. We offer a brief summary of these.

### (a) The Fate of the Heathen.

Many years ago, it was held that any man who had not heard of Christ's salvation and accepted Him as Saviour passed to eternal

perdition. That conception aroused compassionate hearts to a fervid evangelism, both at home and abroad. Now, as there are still vast multitudes in heathen lands out of Christ, what is to become of them? They are all to be accounted as lost! Surely not! for they cannot be judged by the revealed Word or measured by its standard who have not even heard of its existence. At least this is the teaching of Paul in Rom. 2 : 14-15.

The Talmud has a saying to the effect, "When you hear of a death, say, 'Blessed is the righteous Judge.'" And as we think of the death of the dim millions of heathenism, we know that God as the Judge of all the earth will do right, and that we shall all be tried by a juster Judge than man. As BISHOP MOULE states it, "It is well to remember that the judgment is not in our hands, but that God is both legislature and executive." In each one of the innumerable cases, the "Judge of all the earth will 'infallibly' do justly (Gen. 18 : 25). Nothing will be decided roughly and in the mass. No one will be condemned for ignorance of that which it was impossible for him to know."

But because the heathen in his darkness must miss the highest, even although not doomed, seeing that he has obeyed the light received, it is imperative for us to take him the Gospel of God's dear Son in order that he may share with us the full fruits of Christ's redemption.

### (b) The Injustice of Absolute Punishment.

It is affirmed by some that the absoluteness of punishment is unjust in view of the facts of life. "Men recall," as Professor CLOW tells us, "the circumstances of many millions or human lives. They think of the strain and trial and disadvantage under which so many live from the cradle to the grave. They recall the inheritance of evil, the entail of a succession of progenitors who indulged ignoble passions, the legacies of a mind and a temper and of words, which made a vicious life almost a foregone conclusion. They think of the number of short, undisciplined, and frustrate years which are the portion of so many. They recall the environment of limitation and of seducing evil; the mean street, the narrow home, the squalor of the fireside, the drab days spent in the company of the vicious and obscene, the continual odds against truth and purity. To think of a fixed fate and destiny for these would, it is said, be not only unreasonable but vindictive." And so we have the difficult question as to the fate of those who, through evil inheritances and hindering environments have had no adequate opportunity of facing the claims of Heaven upon their lives. How will God act towards such?

Well, it is necessary to bear in mind that a man's life has a moral value apart from any destiny, but that in the light of the Bible his

moral decisions have an eternal value. For by his moral decisions man enters into a relationship with God which determines his destiny here and hereafter. And as the Gospel is God's message of redeeming love to guilty men, He will judge men according to their reception of such. As such an orthodox writer as Sir ROBERT ANDERSON puts it in "Human Destiny": "Half measures are impossible in view of the Cross of Christ. The day is past when God could plead with men about their *sins*. The controversy now is not about a broken law, but a rejected Christ. If judgment, therefore, be our portion, it must be measured by God's estimate of the murder of His Son."

But who are they who shall be held guilty of this direct sin? The answer is with God, and not with us. If any who have heard the Gospel can prove that they are guiltless, we may be assured that "the Righteous Judge" will accept the plea.

### (c) The Question of Un-Baptised Children.

Perhaps there is no more brutal doctrine than that all un-baptised children go to perdition simply because they are not baptised according to the rites of a particular Church.

Such is a monstrous, false doctrine, and absolutely contrary to the character of God, so opposed to the evangel of Christ.

AUGUSTINE taught that all children dying un-baptised would certainly be damned. And in a book published a few years ago, the same heartless doctrine is expounded: "Suppose a child die having committed a few sins through ignorance or temptation, of which it has not repented, the common doctrine is that the child will be burned in Hell fire to all eternity, and have devils, whoremongers, drunkards and liars for its companions."

Something of the same blasphemous and ghastly theology is found in a book by a Roman Catholic priest,—the Rev. FATHER FURNISS. In his volume for children, entitled, "The Light of Hell," here is what he says: "Little child, if you go to Hell there will be a devil at your side to strike you. He will go on striking you for every minute for ever and ever without stopping. The first stroke will make your body as bad as the body of Job. The second stroke will make your body twice as bad as the body of Job. The third stroke will make your body three times as bad as the body of Job. The fourth stroke will make your body four times as bad as the body of Job. How, then, will your body be after the devil has been striking it every moment for a hundred million years without stopping?"

How different is the conception of Him who loved little children, saying of them: "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Among the inhabitants of Hell no children will be found.

Dying before they came to the age of moral responsibility and the power to discern between right and wrong, they pass right into the presence of Jesus in virtue of His atoning work upon the Cross. Original sin they do have, which is covered by the Blood. Practised sin they have not, and therefore are not guilty of transgressions incurring the wrath of God. The mentally deficient enter Heaven, that is, if born insane, upon the same conditions as young children.

#### (d) The Gradation of Punishment.

Another erroneous idea within the minds of some is that the lot of all who fail of the eternal life in Christ is all of one grade. But Hell is not a place of uniform punishment, just as Heaven is not a place of uniform reward and honour. The very terms "judge" and "justice" in themselves render uniformity of treatment for offenders impossible. Just as no states or people have administered the law on such lines, neither will Christ so administer justice, as passages like Job 19: 11, Matt. 16: 27, 23: 18, Ch. 22: 48. Rom. 2: 6, Rev. 20: 13, etc., so clearly prove.

Opportunity and its use and abuse are taken into account. In the law of proportion, chastisement in Hell is proportioned to the fault. There can be no one common punishment, since the principle of equity declares that differences of guilt demand different

degrees of chastisement. Equality of punishment for inequality of crime no judge would administer, since such is unjust. And so, as PROFESSOR ORR tersely states it: "The fullest weight must further be given to what the Scripture so expressly says of gradation of punishment, even of the unsaved . . . There are 'few stripes' and 'many stripes' (Luke 12: 47-48); for those then it will be 'more tolerable' than for others in the day of judgment (Matt. 11: 20-24). Even 'Sodom and her daughters' will be mercifully dealt with in comparison with others (Ezek. 16: 48-61). There will be for every one the most exact weighing of privilege, knowledge, and opportunity. There is a vast area here for the Divine administration on which no light at all is afforded us."

Yes, and of this we are certain, that Hell is not for the majority of the human race. On this point Dr. GUTHRIE well says: "My belief is that in the end there will be a vastly larger number saved than we have any conception of." What sort of earthly realm would that be where more than half the subjects were in prison suffering varying grades of punishment? Hallelujah! Heaven is to contain "a great number no man can number," etc.

"And would all be set to rights again  
When God had gleaned a few,  
While the harvest of the nations  
Was fagotted for fire?"

Praise God! the harvest of the nations will not

be faggots for the fire of Hell, but eternal followers of the Lamb.

### (e) The Fire of Hell.

We pass by many fanciful ideas of Hell, such as the Jews have in their Talmud, with its seven abodes in Hell, each abode having 7,000 caverns, each cavern 7,000 clefts, each cleft 7,000 serpents to bite the wicked, and other representations to be found in the Koran and in various heathen treatises.

Let us face the question regarding the fire of Hell. Is it Literal or Symbolic?

MILTON, the poet, is early responsible for the extreme teaching of the Eighteenth Century regarding the actual flames in Hell. Here are some of his passages :

“ Hither by harpy-footed furies haled  
From beds of raging fire to starve on ice  
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to fine  
Immovable, infixed, and frozen round  
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.”

JONATHAN EDWARDS, who when he preached about Hell could make the people grip their seats lest they should tumble into its caverns, spoke of “ a Lake of Fire in the centre of the world in which the wicked will lie sensible for ever and ever, with billows of fire always rolling over them.” And, while we may think such language unjustifiable, we must not forget that God has been pleased to greatly

bless and use such teaching, as to wit, the conversion of MARY SLESSER.

The fire of Hell, however, is not literal, but symbolic. Eternal fire cannot be harmonized with “ darkness,” since fire implies a certain degree of light. We cannot have total darkness and fire at the same time and in the same place. And, further, fire cannot kindle a spirit that is immaterial. Fire, then, is figurative, signifying the pangs of guilt and remorse of conscience which no expression can more fittingly describe than the undying worm and the unquenched fire. The conception of the literal fire and the literal worm may be rejected, but what these mean for the body something corresponding must be for the spirit. The experience must be worse than the figures expressing it. The fire is symbolic of retribution, the symbol of Divine vengeance against evil. It stands also as a symbol of remorse, dissatisfaction. Conscience and unrest can even on earth torture a man far more acutely than fire. Those two sides of the image represent two sides of the one truth ; that God is hostile to sin and that man suffers for committing it.

### (6) The Conclusion of the Whole Matter.

It now remains for us to gather a few scattered thoughts together and apply them accordingly to our hearts.

As we are free agents up to the edge of the

grave, this life is serious, for no one can roll off on another his responsibility; and there is only one safeguard,—faith in Christ and love for Him. The Bible places emphasis upon the solemnity of living. Jesus came to bestow life upon men; to cause them to fulfil the end of their existence. And so here and now, upon this earth plane, is our grand opportunity to serve God, to be true Christians, and to submit to the glorious mastership of Christ. No purgative will ever give any man the right to enter through the gates of the Celestial City. If the blood of Christ is not sufficient, the cleansing fires of Hell will never fit a man for Heaven. *Here and now is the day of salvation*, and through the acceptance by faith of God's salvation we reach the only certainty regarding our destiny in the life to come.

And the grace of God lasts to the furthest limit of our sojourn here below. Says PROFESSOR SALMOND: "The mercy of God extends to the last hour of life. The grace of God may be efficacious with many as it was with the robber on the Cross. Death itself may be their purgatory." When men come to die, whether in battle or otherwise, we can never tell what intercourse their spirits had with God; whether they did or did not turn to Him for pardon and grace at last. "*There's life in a look at the Crucified One.*" What we do know is that as long as sin is persisted in, and as long as God's loving grace is resisted, the sinner and God occupy spheres apart.

And if we believe that men and women must be eternally banished from the presence of God if they linger and die in their sin, it behoves us to present the Gospel of the grace of God prayerfully, earnestly and believingly, agonising lest any should miss so great salvation. Because of the sorrows and agonies the lost must endure, let us plead with them to "flee from the wrath to come."

In speaking to a company of cadets, the late "GENERAL" WILLIAM BOOTH said: "I wish I could send you all to Hell for a fortnight as a part of your training." We know what he meant! To fully realize the doom of the impenitent will lead us to "warn them day and night with tears" to accept the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour, seeing that He is the only avenue of escape.

"O God, to think the countless souls that pass away  
Through each short moment that we live,  
Destined to dwell in Heaven or groan in Hell for aye.  
O stir me up, and new strength give,  
And let not one pass out through death in shame and sin,  
That I through Thee might seek and win."

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