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**IMMORTALITY.**



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*IMMORTALITY.*

FOUR SERMONS

Preached before the University of Cambridge.

BEING THE HULSEAN LECTURES FOR 1868.



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TO

CONNOP THIRLWALL, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF ST DAVID'S,

WITH PROFOUND ADMIRATION FOR

HIS GENIUS AND LEARNING,

AND WITH A GRATEFUL SENSE

OF MUCH PERSONAL KINDNESS

RECEIVED.

## PREFACE.

THESE Lectures are a fragmentary contribution to the literature of a great subject. Anything like completeness, or even fulness, of treatment was impossible within the limits to which I was compelled to confine myself. And though in printing, I have added some passages to the Lectures, as originally delivered, I have still found it necessary to omit many points of interest and importance, which might naturally have been discussed as belonging to my subject. For an omission of this kind in the last Lecture, some apology is due to my readers. Nothing is said there on the question of future rewards and punishments, although in the First Lecture it was comprised within the scope of my argument. I had said, that I hoped to show, that the Christian scheme satisfied us, not only of existence, but also of recompense after death. But to do anything like justice to such a question, it would not have been sufficient to maintain that

Christianity satisfies our conscience, by its clear recognition of the truth, that future recompense will be "according to the deeds done in the body." It would have been necessary also to meet the moral difficulties, arising from the application of the term *αιώνιος* ("eternal"), to future punishments; and this would have involved a careful investigation, both of the language of scripture, and of the history of its interpretation, from the days of Origen to our own. For such an investigation I have not as yet been able to command the necessary leisure.

It may be well, perhaps, to state briefly what is the scope of these Lectures.

In the First, I have endeavoured to indicate the leading features of three systems, each of which professes to deal with the problem of a Future Life, and each of which at the present time counts numerous disciples. Without pretending to discuss any of these systems at length, I have satisfied myself with drawing attention to some of their salient defects. Thus, Materialism *assumes* a great deal which it cannot prove, and is supremely indifferent to facts, while professing to deal only with facts. Pantheism destroys personal identity in another life, and gives such immortality as it has to give, only to an intellectual aristocracy. Spiritual-



ism,—understanding by that name the system which admits a belief in God and the immortality of the soul, apart from Revelation,—argues for the perpetuity of individual existence, from the facts of human nature and the constitution of the world, and so far lends some confirmation to our hopes, but fails to yield us that *certainty* which we crave.

As attempts are constantly made, to get rid of the argument from the witness in man himself to his own immortality, the object of my Second Lecture was to show, in a summary review of some of the principal systems of Pagan belief and Pagan speculation, how real and how wide-spread is the instinct in human nature, which leads us to look beyond the grave. This review seemed to tend to the conclusion, that on the whole, there was a development of belief; that generally speaking, in each nation the dogma grew in distinctness, as time went on; and that in particular the moral element, the doctrine of future retribution, did not belong to the earlier stages of belief<sup>1</sup>. But on the other hand, it was equally plain, that in spite of this progress, and in spite of the efforts of their most

<sup>1</sup> See, on this growth of the moral element in the doctrine of a Future Life, J. H. Fichte, *die Seelenfortdauer und die Weltstellung des Menschen*, p. 304 ff.

brilliant thinkers, to solve the problem of man's destiny, they all alike failed in casting any real light on life and immortality. They all confess their imperfection, they all wait for some satisfying answer to their hopes and yearnings.

The Third Lecture deals with the problem, how far a revelation of the Future Life was made to the Jews under the Old Covenant. Of the remarkable fact, that, in the Law of Moses, the promises of a Future Life are never appealed to, as motives of obedience, I have not attempted any explanation. I have merely suggested some considerations, which should weigh with us in dealing with the problem. But to the wider question, what knowledge was actually possessed by the saints of old, of a future existence, of retribution after death, and a resurrection of the body, I have endeavoured to give an answer, drawn from a comparison of all the principal passages which have any bearing upon the subject. The result of the investigation was, to show that although there is very little of a direct testimony to the belief of the Jew in Immortality and a Resurrection, yet that such a belief was virtually implied, in the fact of the soul's conscious relation to a living God.

The Last Lecture explains the nature of the

evidence which is furnished by Christianity to assure us of a Future Life, and a Resurrection of the Body. Christianity appeals to the fact of Christ's Resurrection, as the evidence that we also shall be raised, because by His close and intimate union with us, as our Redeemer, His Resurrection is the pledge and type of our resurrection. Christianity furnishes us also with the inner witness to this fact, in the indwelling of Christ's Spirit in our hearts, sanctifying our bodies as well as our spirits, and so assuring us that our bodies, raised from the dust and glorified, shall be re-united to the glorified spirit. The resurrection of the body is then shown to be a reasonable inference from our natural constitution, and the difficulty of supposing that the body which turns to corruption can be raised again, is met by recourse to natural analogies. Christianity, therefore, gives us the positive evidence we crave, and satisfies the irrepressible yearnings of the human heart to ascertain its future destiny.

That such a subject, at all times of intrinsic interest, possesses at the present time a peculiar importance, will not be questioned. Both at home and abroad may be seen abundant evidence of the rapid growth of materialistic doctrines. Men insist, more and more, upon the study of what they are pleased

to call facts, meaning by that name, only such phenomena as come under the observation of the senses, and either deny or disregard, as unknown, and unknowable, all that lies beyond this narrow range of observation. In Germany, the Pantheistic philosophy of Hegel and Schelling has yielded to the materialistic doctrines of men like Vogt, Moleschott, and others of the same school. It is some evidence of the prevalence of such doctrines that a manual such as that of Büchner (*Kraft und Stoff*), which, without laying claim to any original research, summarizes, and puts in a clear and popular form, the chief arguments of the materialists, passed in five years through seven editions, and has now reached a ninth.

In France, if we are to credit the Bishop of Orleans (*Les Alarmes de l'Épiscopat justifiés par les faits*), "Materialism is publicly taught, under the sanction of the Minister of Public Education, and "is assuming every day more vast and more threatening proportions." "It is triumphant," he asserts, "in the School of Medicine in Paris. We recollect," he continues, "those wild cries of, *vive le matérialisme*, uttered last year (1867) at the opening of the session:" and he then cites passages from a number of theses, admitted by the Faculty of Medicine, and by the authority of the University, which maintain the

doctrines of materialism in their most extreme and repulsive form, and formally deny the being of a God, and the responsibility of man. The same doctrines, it is alleged, are inculcated, even in some schools for girls, which were founded with the professed design of training them as *libres penseuses* and the distinctive feature of which is, that morality is taught apart from religion.

If there is less of systematic and formal inculcation of materialism in England, it cannot be denied that there is a tendency in some of our scientific men to use language, which unquestionably has a materialistic colouring. Do not let me be ranked with those who dread or are hostile to science, because I say this. No one rejoices more than I do in the progress of all true science; no one more heartily honours the men who have devoted their lives to some of the highest pursuits which can occupy the mind of man; no one is more thoroughly convinced that there is nothing in science which can be regarded with suspicion, as antagonistic to religion or to our eternal hopes. Indeed I deeply regret the language which is sometimes used by theologians, in reference to science and scientific men, and the jealousy, the distrust, the suspicion, which are thereby too often engendered between those, who,

if they understood one another better, might become fellow-workers in a glorious cause, the most glorious to which man can devote himself, the cause of truth.

I hope, therefore, I shall not be misjudged if I venture to offer some comment on Professor Huxley's paper in the *Fortnightly Review* for last month (February 1869) "On the Physical Basis of life." I desire to speak with all courtesy of a writer for whose abilities and attainments I entertain a very sincere respect. Mr Huxley says, that he is "no materialist, but on the contrary believes materialism to involve grave philosophical error" (p. 141); and I am bound to believe him. I will go further and say, that his theory of a protoplasm, supposing it to be established, would not alarm me. I should not feel, that in accepting the description of organic life in the language applied to physical forces, I was necessarily "placing my feet on the first rung of a ladder which leads to the antipodes of heaven." At the same time I must confess, that I am wholly unable to see where the difference lies between his language, at least in some portions of his essay, and the language of the avowed materialist. Thus for instance, he quotes with approval the following passage from one of Hume's Essays:—

"If we take in hand any volume of Divinity, or School Metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence?* No. Commit it then to the flames; for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."

And he then adds:—

"Permit me to enforce this most wise advice. Why trouble ourselves about matters of which, however important they may be, we do know nothing and can know nothing? We live in a world which is full of misery and ignorance, and the plain duty of each and all of us is to try to make the little corner he can influence somewhat less miserable and somewhat less ignorant than it was before he entered it. To do this effectually it is necessary to be fully possessed of only two beliefs: the first, that the order of nature is ascertainable by our faculties to an extent which is practically unlimited; the second that our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events."

Is it putting an unfair construction upon this remarkable paragraph to say, that Mr Huxley here expressly excludes everything, as a legitimate subject of enquiry, but such phenomena as can be tested by experiment and observation? Does he not affirm that we do know, and can know, nothing of matters which lie outside of this region, and in which must certainly be included, the soul, its relation to God, and its future destiny. That in the same breath he should allow that "matters may possibly be important," about which we not only "do know," but "*can* know nothing," is an inaccuracy which I will not

press. If he had said merely,—I, as a physiologist or a natural philosopher, have nothing to do with any but physiological questions; psychology does not concern me:—such a statement would have still left it an open question, whether there were truths ascertainable by other methods than those of “abstract” or “experimental reasoning.” But unless I misapprehend him, Professor Huxley denies, that there are any such truths, or that if there are, they can be known. This may not be materialism in name, but it is materialism to all practical purpose. And when he continues on the same page:

“In itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in terms of spirit; or the phenomena of spirit, in terms of matter; matter may be regarded as a form of thought, *thought may be regarded as a property of matter*—each statement has a certain relative truth:”—the words in italics are a well-known materialistic formula, and I do not see that Mr Huxley’s qualification takes off its edge. The latter part of the paragraph, which I have quoted above, fills one with astonishment. Why is it “a plain duty” for each one of us, to do all in our power to lessen the misery and the ignorance, which exist in the little corner we can influence? Whence comes the sense of duty, but from the sense of responsi-



bility? And to whom are we responsible, and what is the consequence of neglect of duty? Are these questions about which we need not trouble ourselves, and to which we can have no answer? And is it really the fact, that in order to exert ourselves effectually to banish ignorance and misery, we need but two beliefs, the belief "that the order of nature is ascertainable by our faculties to an extent which is practically unlimited;" and the belief, that "our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events"? Are these the levers by which we are to move the moral world? Are these the motives which shall lead, through self-sacrifice and devotion, to the regeneration of society? It must be confessed that these are not the beliefs by which, in past ages or in our own hitherto, the great work has been accomplished. It has been accomplished, so far as it has been accomplished at all, by men of humble hearts and holy lives, who have not counted their lives dear unto themselves, whose motive has been, like that of the Apostle, "the love of Christ constraineth us," and who, like him, have been able to look forward to "a crown of righteousness," as the reward of their patience, their labour, their self-sacrifice. History as yet has not given her verdict on the side of Professor Huxley. Nor is there any.

obvious or plausible connection between the "duty" of which he speaks, and "the beliefs" which are to bind us to that duty.

I can only repeat, that if I have misapprehended Mr Huxley, I am sorry for it: but it is a misapprehension which I share with many other educated men, with some, I may add, of great force and clearness of intellect.

The line taken by Mr Herbert Spencer in his *Principles of Psychology* (Part I. Chap. I. p. 48) is different, and perfectly fair and intelligible. He says, "It may safely be affirmed, that Physiology, which is an interpretation of the physical processes which go on in organisms in terms known to natural science, ceases to be Physiology when it imports into its interpretations any psychical factor, a factor which no physical research whatever can disclose, or identify, or get the remotest glimpse of." This is of course simply true. "But," says Professor Rolleston (who quotes this passage in his *Address on Physiology*, p. 23), "I apprehend if the Physiologist wishes to become an Anthropologist, he must qualify himself to judge both acts of factors. There is other science besides Physical Science, there are other data besides quantifiable data. Schleiden, a naturalist of the very first order, compares the Physical Philosopher (*Materialismus*

*der neueren deutschen Wissenschaft*, p. 48), who is not content with ignoring, without also denying the existence of a science based on the consciousness, to a man who, on looking into his purse and finding no gold there, should not be content with saying 'I find no gold here,' but should go further and say, 'there is no such thing as gold either here or anywhere else.'" Is not something very like this, the error into which Professor Huxley has fallen?

Mr Huxley has quoted from Hume. Let me quote the words of a far profounder philosopher. This is the admirable picture which Pascal has drawn of that very state of mind which is now recommended to us as wisdom :—

"I know not who has placed me in the world, nor what the world is, nor what I myself am. My ignorance on all subjects is terrible. I do not know what my body is, or my senses, or my soul, and that part of myself which thinks what I utter, which reflects on everything, and on itself, and has no better knowledge of itself than of all the rest. I behold those appalling depths of the universe which shut me in, and I find myself tied to a corner of that vast space, without knowing why I am placed in this spot, rather than in another, nor why the little moment which is given me to live, has been assigned to me at this particular point, rather than any other in the whole of that eternity which has preceded me, and the whole of that eternity which is to follow. I see nothing but infinities on all sides which enclose me like an atom, and like a shadow which abideth but an instant and returneth not. All

that I know is that I must shortly die: but that of which I am most ignorant, is that very death from which I cannot escape.

“As I know not whence I come, so I know not whither I go, and I know only that when I leave this world, I fall for ever, either into annihilation or into the hands of an angry God, without knowing to which of these two conditions I am for ever condemned. Behold my state, full of misery, of weakness, of obscurity. And from all this I conclude, that I ought to pass all the days of my life without a moment’s reflection on that which shall befall me. Perchance I might find some ray of light to guide me in my doubts, but I will not take the trouble, I will not take a single step to seek it; and after treating with contempt those who do engage in the task, I will go without forethought and without fear to encounter so great an event, and suffer myself to be led softly to death in utter uncertainty of what shall be my condition to all eternity.” “How can a reasonable man,” says Pascal, “entertain thoughts such as these?” “Nothing is so important to a man as his condition; nothing is so awful for him as eternity; and that he should be found indifferent to the loss of his being and to the peril of an eternity of miseries, is certainly not natural. The merest trifles will stir a man to rage and despair, and yet he can contemplate the loss of everything by death without an emotion. It is a prodigy to see in one and the same heart, at one and the same time, this sensibility to trifles, and this insensibility to matters of the weightiest import. It is an incomprehensible, preternatural infatuation, which must be due to some cause of irresistible force.” (*Pensées*, pp. 135—137, ed. Havet).

Yes, whatever Hume and those who think with him may say, we cannot escape from the thought, the anxious and earnest investigation, of subjects such as these. Nor are we doomed only to barren and

fruitless speculation. Not only are there other truths than those which fall within the province of "abstract" or "experimental reasoning," not only are there higher truths, and infinitely more important, but they are more real, more certainly ascertainable, than any facts in the material world. It is not only the things we see, and hear, and touch, of which we can attain to any knowledge. The soul, God, eternity,—these realities lighted up for us by the light which falls on them from the words and the life of Christ, and borne witness to by the voices, accordant here, wherever else they may differ, of the purest, and the noblest, and the truest of our race—men, many of them who stand foremost in the ranks of intellectual distinction, as well as great with moral greatness—are realities which shall last when "the sun himself shall die."

"Whether we be young or old,  
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,  
Is with infinity, and only there:  
With hope it is, hope that can never die,  
Effort and expectation and desire,  
And something evermore about to be."

WORDSWORTH, *The Prelude*.

ST DAVID'S COLLEGE, LAMPETER,  
March 1, 1869.

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## LECTURE I.

### *THE FUTURE LIFE.*

#### ECCLESIASTES III. 18—22.

*I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth? Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?*

THERE are some questions which can never lose their interest, and which from time to time present themselves with fresh force and fascination. They are ever old and yet ever new; old as the heart of man and yet new as the dawn of infancy. Men have thought they have found a solution, or have abandoned them in despair, and yet they start up and confront us again, as if they had never gained

attention, and as if no answer had been given to them. A new age, with new needs and a new science, refuses to accept the solution of a former age, or with fresh hope and irrepressible eagerness insists that the problem, which baffled the thinkers of the past, is not beyond the reach of the thinkers of the present. Among these questions, none possesses a more universal, a more commanding interest, than the question of a *FUTURE LIFE*.

“Who knoweth whether the spirit of man goeth upward, and whether the spirit of the beast goeth downward to the earth?” This was the question wrung from the Preacher in the bitterness of his thoughts, as in the absence of any clear and positive revelation concerning the future, he tried to read the riddle of the world. A selfish life had darkened his heart, and brought him to the verge of a sceptical philosophy. He was weary of the world, weary of the injustice which he beheld, and, ready to accept the conclusion that there was no moral Governor of the Universe, he was ready also to accept the conclusion that man perished like the beasts. And hence he took refuge inevitably in that doctrine which might have come from the mouth of Epicurus: “Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who knoweth what shall be after him?” Happily the Preacher did not rest in this solution of the problem. Happily God led him through the painful discipline of life, through much



disappointment and much sadness of heart to a nobler faith. Happily we see him emerging from that tangled forest in which he had so long wandered, torn by its thickets, and poisoned by its miasma, and bitten by its deadly snakes, and coming forth into the light of God's love and truth, and looking with calm eye on death, and even beyond death, and teaching to others that lesson of highest wisdom which he had learnt himself: "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing whether it be good or bad."

The question of the Preacher has since then been put again and again. Men are never weary of asking it, never weary of seeking an answer. Even in this age, with its singularly positive spirit, with its utilitarian tendencies, this question is so far from being thrust aside, that it presents itself in quarters where we should least expect it. Even in this age which has been termed "the golden age of the exact sciences, and of industry, and the iron age of metaphysics<sup>1</sup>," when men seem to have grown weary of abstract speculations, are almost afraid to think, and are absorbed in the study of facts, material results, the practical applications of science, still the shadow of that other world of mystery haunts them. It "broods o'er them like the Day, a master o'er a slave," "a Presence which is not to be put by."

<sup>1</sup> E. Saisset.

4 *It is a question which forces itself upon us,* [LECT.

They cannot escape from it. The mind most averse to what it considers speculative and therefore fruitless researches, the heart most engrossed in the pursuit of earthly good, will have its moments of awakening, its hours of weariness and dissatisfaction, when some whisper of these strange problems will reach it, What am I? Whence came I? Whither am I going? What is the end which awaits me?

These questions, arising as it were spontaneously, cannot but suggest others as the result of reflection. What is my body, that admirable, but fragile machine which the slightest shock breaks to atoms? Organized matter,—the subject of hourly incessant changes, through which, as through a sieve, there passes an ever-renewed wave of changing particles. Must there not then, if my body is to keep the form which constitutes it, must there not be in it something which has the power to hold it together, some hidden force, some principle of life? And then besides my organic life, do I not perceive within me something which reasons, which suffers, which hopes, which rejoices, which wills, which wills not, a thought, a soul? How marvellous is my nature! A moment since, when I looked only at my body, I thought myself a being of wonderful simplicity: now I see in myself two beings—perhaps three; first my body, then the animal life, and then beyond that life, another life more mysterious still. What am I then? A double or triple being? or is this complication only apparent,

thought being only a superior degree of life, and life only a property of organized matter ?

When once such questions are proposed, it is difficult to set them aside. For if I am nothing but a body analogous to those which I see around me, I shall have the end of the worm I crush, of the grass which I tread beneath my feet. A child of the dust, when I give back my bones to the dust, I shall give back to it all that I am. Then the philosophy of despair is all that is left to me; "That which befalleth man befalleth beasts; as the one dieth, so dieth the other." If, on the other hand, there is in me a principle independent of the body, then that is a true philosophy which says that "man is not a plant of the earth, but a plant of heaven" (*φύτον οὐκ ἔγγειον, ἀλλ' οὐράνιον*), and then the present life, which but now was everything to me, is but a day, an hour, a moment, in sight of the eternity which awaits me.

It is obvious that our whole life must take a colouring from the conclusion at which we arrive. It is obvious that this is no merely theoretical question, however men may be disposed to treat it. It enters into the very heart of our being. If we are but children of the dust doomed to return to the dust, then let this world absorb our cares and bound our thoughts. If we are heirs of immortality, then let our life here be guided by those principles and shaped to those ends which will best fit us for the life to come.

I propose, in this course of Lectures, to examine some of the grounds on which our hope of Immorta-

lity rests: I propose to show, that in Christ only and the Revelation of Christ is to be found the answer to the question of the text. With this object in view, I shall first of all glance at some of the attempts, which have recently been made, to answer the question, either in a sense adverse to Christianity, or without any recognition of its claims. I shall then review the history of belief, so far as this doctrine is concerned, first among the Pagans and next among the Jews. And, lastly, I shall hope to show that whereas, apart from Christianity, we are left only to dim guesses and uncertain conjectures, Christ Jesus has "brought life and immortality to light," and has met and satisfied the deep instincts of the human heart, and the hopes of the world.

It will indeed be impossible to offer more than the outline of so vast a subject in the space allotted to these Lectures. I cannot doubt that I am speaking in the presence of some who will discover defects of knowledge or of method in what I shall advance. But as they will also know better than others, how widely attempts have been made, both in Germany and in France, on the one hand, to substitute a pantheistic absorption for the hope of a personal immortality, and on the other hand, to overthrow all belief in the existence of the soul after death; and how such doctrines have been welcomed and propagated, in our own country, by men who claim to be thinkers and philosophers, they will feel that some attempt to grapple with this question is not out of place, and

they will show some indulgence to what does not profess to be more than a fragmentary contribution to the subject.

“Who knoweth whether the spirit of man goeth upward, and whether the spirit of the beast goeth downward to the earth<sup>1</sup>?” Let us glance at some of the answers which, in our own day, have been given to this question. I shall select three by way of illustration; that of the Materialist, that of the Pantheist, and that of the so-called Spiritualist, who rejects revelation.

I. There is, first, the answer of the Materialist, who tells you that beyond the grave there is nothing, that this life is all. He maintains that his philosophy must be true, because it is based entirely upon facts. He says that he has laid bare the secrets of man's nature, and that its component parts are the same as the component parts of all other objects in the universe. He assures you that there are but two things in the world, matter and force, and that neither of these can exist apart from the other. “No force without matter, and no matter without force<sup>2</sup>;” this is the first brief and pregnant and comprehensive axiom of materialism. “Forces,” says an eminent physiologist<sup>3</sup>, “are not harnessed to matter as horses are to a chariot, which you can put in or take out at pleasure.” Each material molecule has its inherent

<sup>1</sup> I have adopted what I believe to be the better rendering of the verse.

<sup>2</sup> Büchner, *Kraft und Stoff*.

<sup>3</sup> Du Bois-Reymond, quoted by Büchner. See also P. Janet, *Le Materialisme Contemporain*, p. 20.

properties, from which it can never be separated. "A particle of iron is the same thing whether it traverse the universe in the aerolite, or roll in thunder on the railroad, or circulate in the blood-globule in the temples of a poet." Hence it follows that the idea of a creative force, separate from matter, governing it according to fixed laws, is a pure abstraction. To maintain the existence of such a force is to transform an occult quality into an absolute being. Matter and force are inseparable; matter and force have existed from all eternity; matter and force constitute the universe, and constitute man.

This is all that there is in man, the material elements of which his body is composed, and the forces which have helped to build up that body. What then, according to this theory, is the soul? It is an organic function of the body, whose seat is in the brain. Rejecting the monstrous and self-contradictory theory of some earlier materialists<sup>1</sup>, according to which thought is a secretion of the brain, later physiologists prefer to say that thought is the action of the brain: and the action of the steam-engine must not be confounded with the steam which puts the engine in motion. Thought is the resultant of all the forces united in the brain. This resultant cannot be seen; it is, according to all appearance, but the effect of nervous electricity. "There is the same relation," says one writer, "between thought

<sup>1</sup> As for instance Cabanis. The abuse of the term "secretion" is obvious. For a refutation of this theory see E. Naville, *La Vie Eternelle*, p. 65.

and the electric vibrations of the filaments of the brain as between colour and the vibrations of the ether." Finally, the whole doctrine has been summed up in these words—"Thought is a movement of matter<sup>1</sup>." In short, the thesis of materialism is this, that beyond matter and the laws of matter there is nothing, and that consequently mechanics, chemistry, physiology, suffice to explain all phenomena, the production of thought as well as the production of the flame of a candle, the sentiments of the human heart, as well as the colour and weight of a stone or a tree.

A conclusion such as this, which breaks down the eternal barriers between mind and matter, and which boldly says they are one, ought not to be received without the strictest proof. And what is the proof which is offered? It is of this kind. The brain is the seat and the organ of thought; wherever we find a brain, there we find a thinking being, or one, at least, in some degree intelligent. Wherever the brain is wanting, intelligence and thought are equally wanting. There is, moreover, a constant ratio between the development of the brain and the development of the mind. They increase and decrease together; what affects the one, affects the other also. Age, disease, the difference of the sexes, have an exactly corresponding influence upon the brain and upon the mind. There is an invariable relation between the brain, which is the organ of thought,

<sup>1</sup> Moleschott.

and the thought itself, and therefore the brain is the cause of thought<sup>1</sup>.

But, unfortunately for this conclusion, not one of the three propositions on which it rests can be said to be proved. The last is certainly contested by some of the most eminent physiologists<sup>2</sup>. Science has yet vast strides to make before it can establish with certainty the relation between the brain and thought. Some of the foremost of modern authorities declare that the physiology of the brain is yet in its infancy<sup>3</sup>, and that the relations between the brain and thought are absolutely unknown. Who knows what takes place in the nervous extremities, along the nerves, and in the substance of the brain, when we receive, for instance, the impression of light or that of sound? Who knows what the condition of the brain is at the moment when the will becomes the principle of a moment? But suppose you could discover this. Suppose you could ascertain the last fact in the nervous system in the order of impressions, and the first fact in the nervous system in the order of the

<sup>1</sup> See P. Janet, *Le Mater. Contemp.* pp. 30, 31 and 116, 117.

<sup>2</sup> As for instance Lélut, *La Physiologie de la Pensée*, and by Leuret and Gratiolet, *L'Anatomie Comparée du Système Nerveux*. See P. Janet, as above.

<sup>3</sup> Even the differences of structure between the brain of man and that of the lower animals is still a subject of dispute. According to Bischoff, "our knowledge of the finer structural relations and the chemical composition of the brain is still very imperfect." A remark which however he qualifies by saying, that "much as there is marvellous and mysterious in the physical life of men and beasts, the structure of the brain contains quite as many marvels and mysteries." Ulrici, *Gott und der Mensch*. I. 73.



will. Suppose that long and patient study shall at last have discovered the secret, shall at last have led to the knowledge that to a particular sentiment, a particular thought, a particular act of the will, there corresponds such a vibration of the fibres, such a discharge of electricity, such a combination of phosphorus. What follows? Would such a result of the science be of any service to materialism? Assuredly not. All that science will have done in that case, will be to have established in detail the close and intimate union of two orders of phenomena in their nature absolutely unlike. And the conclusion of materialism will be—these phenomena are linked together: therefore they are of the same nature. Thought, feeling, will, are always in harmony with a given condition of the material organs; therefore thought, feeling, will, are properties or products of matter. The sophism is always the same. It consists in saying: these facts correspond to one another, they are closely united, therefore there are not two facts, there is only one<sup>1</sup>. It is like saying the magnetic force is always found in the loadstone; therefore the magnetic force is the product of the loadstone. Materialism, when it identifies the manifestations of the soul with the phenomena of the body, flings a rope across the chasm, and then declares that the chasm no longer exists.

And as the materialist takes for granted in his

<sup>1</sup> E. Naville, *La Vie Eternelle*, pp. 63—6; and see also Appendix, Note A.

own science what he has to prove, and draws inferences which are not warrantable, if his premises were granted, so he altogether shuts his eyes to those other facts, with which neither the anatomist's knife, nor the chemist's crucible can deal. If you attempt to confront him with the inner facts of human nature, with the thoughts and anticipations of the human heart, he will tell you calmly these form no part of his study, that either a thing is reconcilable with reason and experience and then it is true, or it is not so reconcilable and then it is false; it can find no place in any system of philosophy. Insist on it that there is a deep inextinguishable desire of immortality in the human heart, and that the very thought of annihilation is repugnant to man; and he will reply—I quote words actually used—that the thought of an everlasting life is infinitely more terrible, that for himself he does not hesitate for an instant to prefer everlasting annihilation to everlasting life<sup>1</sup>. Such a perpetuity of existence, such an impossibility of dying is the most awful thing the human imagination can invent:—if you would picture it to yourself in all its awfulness, you have only to think of it as it has been conceived and portrayed in the story of the never-dying, ever-wandering Jew. And, indeed, on his principles he is right, for he who denies the Being of a God, may well shudder at the thought of immortality; for, think for a moment of a community of beings, like ourselves, each one

<sup>1</sup> Büchner, *Kraft und Stoff*, p. 212

continuing for ever, each one following his own selfish path, each one without guide or governor, each one the blind slave of his own caprice, or humour, or desperate desire ; think of human pride and passion and hate suffered to prolong their malignant being to all eternity, unchecked and unrestrained. Who does not feel that annihilation is indeed to be courted, rather than immortality without God? If, urging that moral argument which has weighed with so many pure and noble thinkers, you say that we need, that we imperatively require, another world to redress the inequalities of this life, a world where the mysteries which haunt and perplex us now shall receive their solution ; the answer of the materialist is, that it may be we are surrounded with mystery, it may be that it would be delightful if in heaven, as in the last act of some moving drama, all the discords of earth should be resolved into some sweet tender soul-subduing harmony, all the perplexities and riddles of life find their adequate solution ; but science has nothing to do with what *may be*, her business lies only with what *is*, and that facts numerous and unquestionable drive us to the conclusion that man perishes like the beasts<sup>1</sup>. Speak to him of duty, of saintly devotion, of heroic self-sacrifice, of love, so pure, so high, so heavenly, that it gives itself in spite of baseness and treachery, covering all sins with its own glory and asking no return ; tell him of the might of genius which creates

<sup>1</sup> So for instance, Büchner, *Kraft und Stoff*.

an ideal world, and the might of philanthropy which re-creates the moral world, and ask him if he believes that such things are no more than the dance of insects in the dying day, and he will wonder that you should see in these any evidence that the soul comes from God, and returns to God ; they are but so many pulsations of the material machine, to be quenched with it, when it falls to dust, in everlasting night. And if you enquire what hope is left you in the struggle of life, he will perhaps reply, that duty is its own reward, that your best hope is in the progress of the race, and he will give you the assurance that when you die there is nothing lost to the universe, not one particle of the elements of which your body was composed, not one of the forces which built it up. Matter and force may be transmuted, but they cannot perish ; and with solemn irony he will proclaim to you this gospel of consolation, that neither matter nor force can die, and bid you find there the immortality for which you seek. The answer which the Preacher gave to his own heart, in the hour of his scepticism and despondency, is the only true and satisfactory answer to man's self-torturing spirit : "Man hath no pre-eminence above the beast. As the one dieth, so dieth the other. All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."

Entrenched within these double lines, of inferences too hastily drawn from one class of facts, and of absolute blindness to another class of facts, Materialism is hard to be dislodged. Happily, how-

ever, such a theory of human nature carries with it its own condemnation. We need not the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, my brethren, to show us its falseness. The facts of man's nature are a witness against it, the constitution of the world is a witness against it. And they must indeed be in love with death, who can look without shrinking on the annihilation which is thus offered to us as our only hope. Such a creed assuredly will never be popular. The heart of man and the conscience of man will raise their everlasting protest against this cruel degradation; the natural majesty of man lifts itself up, as if with a sense of wrong and insult, when you thus strip the crown from its head, and in spite of all your efforts to debase and dethrone it, asserts its high lineage as an heir of immortality.

II. But besides the answer of the Materialist, another answer has been given to the question of the Preacher which at first sight seems far more hopeful, far more attractive. For many minds it unquestionably possesses a peculiar fascination. This is the answer of Pantheism. Pantheism does not rob us of one part of our nature. Pantheism acknowledges the rights and the dignity of the human soul. It assures you that the soul came from God and returns to God. But as it does not acknowledge a Personal God, so it does not truly recognize a personal soul. It maintains that there is in each of us that divine thing which cannot die, but that divine thing is but a portion of the great informing, self-evolving Spi-

rit. Separated for a moment from the whole, the individual phenomenon returns to the whole. According to the well-known figure of the Eastern poet, the drop from the Fountain of Life, which has been enshrined in the frail crystal globe, only exists, as long as that globe exists, as a separate drop. When that globe is shattered, it will mingle again with the Fountain whence it came.

This is the immortality of Pantheism, this is the eternal life which it offers. The soul does not die, the spirit does not perish, the separate drop does but mingle with its native ocean. Nothing is lost. But is it the fact that nothing is lost? Is the loss of the individual consciousness no loss? Is the extinction of personality nothing? On the contrary, is not everything involved in this? The substance, the metaphysical base of my being you tell me remains, it is only my separate existence which has come to an end. But if the life of consciousness, of thought, of feeling, if that which distinguished me from others is gone, swallowed up in the universal, unconscious, undistinguishable spirit-sea, in what respect does this differ from annihilation and death? For if it be true, 'I think, therefore I am,' it must also be true, 'I cease to think, therefore I cease to be.' What reparation do you make, what consolation do you offer, when you assure me that my substance cannot perish? *My* substance? *I* have ceased to be, I have no substance any longer. You hold out to me the fair vision of immortal life. But

what life? Whose life? Not *my* life, for it is no longer mine. I and my personal history come to an end with death. The consciousness at least of all I have been is swept away. What once belonged to me may remain, but it remains in a form which I am no longer able to recognize, in a form which does not possess even a shadowy outline of being, in a form for which I am unable to feel even one passing emotion of interest<sup>1</sup>. This abstract notion of immortality, even if it were possible, is not worth contending for. It could give no strength to the heart in the trials of life, it could not shield it against the terrors of death.

There is one and one only immortality which can be of any interest to me, the immortality of my individual self. There is that in me, of which I am conscious, and of which none other shares the consciousness with me. Shall I,—will that particular soul which has felt and thought and suffered and loved and acted and struggled, during a life of longer

<sup>1</sup> By precisely the same method of reasoning the immortality of the body might be made out. For when the body perishes and turns to its dust, not a single particle of it is lost. The substance is not destroyed; it merely returns back to the mass from which it was taken, earth to earth, dust to dust, and a new life springs from the mouldering carcase. But would it be reasonable therefore to maintain that the body is immortal? Is this return of the constituent particles of the body to the great mass of universal matter anything else but death? Can I persuade myself that my body does not perish because every particle of it remains, though under other conditions, and in different forms of combination? If any one can find a consolation in such a reflection, he may perhaps console himself with the thought that his soul is immortal, though it is lost and swallowed up in the vast ocean of universal soul.

or shorter duration,—will this, I say, survive the shock of death? Will this continue,—the memory of its former self unimpaired? Will this retain the character, the physiognomy, so to speak, which it has created for itself distinct and separate? This is *the only immortality which can touch my heart.* But strip the soul of all that is distinctive, of thought, of feeling, of will, and tell me that its substance survives, and you leave me as insensible to my future destiny, as if you had preached to me annihilation.

Yet strange to say, in the very act of robbing us of personal immortality, Pantheism claims for itself all the greatness of moral elevation. It contrives to throw over its scheme of existence, all the charm, all the fascination of self-sacrifice. It tells you that the popular theology, with its system of rewards and punishments after death, appeals only to the lower part, to the unreasoning instinct, to the selfish principles of our nature. It tells you that the very desire for the existence of the individual after death is a selfish desire. It bids you discard that ‘sentimental tenderness for the individual I.’ It is far nobler to reconcile yourself to share the common lot, even though it be a lot of destruction, to resign willingly that brief space of personal existence which has been allotted you, when you have fulfilled its ephemeral purpose. And in the meantime it assures you, that you have a far better immortality, than that vague and distant and chimerical



immortality to which you aspire. It offers you a present immortality, one that is real, one that may be grasped by each one of us at any moment. It is not a form of the future life, it is a form of the present life. It is to be realized on one single condition, that in thought we unite ourselves with the Eternal Principle, with the Absolute Substance of things. This it is which makes us divine. This it is which secures for us our immortality. It is childish to look for an eternal life beyond the grave. When we recognize our dependence, when we feel ourselves cradled and upheld on the bosom of the Eternal substance, which for a single moment holds our frail personality suspended over the abyss of nothing, then we possess the only true immortality. There is none other for man, all else is but a dream and an illusion. "The thought of immortality," says one writer, "is immortality." "The true heaven," says another, "is in the spirit, the thought, the human consciousness, that sublime mirror in which universal life is reflected and transfigured." "Heaven," says a third, "is within us. Our future existence is realized every moment. The individual has but one existence, but it depends on himself to enlarge its circle by extending the horizon of his soul. Each man is the artificer of his own life and his own immortality, because he is the artificer of his own progress."

Now observe the consequence which follows

directly from this view. The law of recompense, which is one of the most essential elements of the future life, is marvellously fulfilled in this world. Each one has that immortality which he merits. The distribution is infallible, because that which constitutes in each of us this immortality, that which fixes the degree of it, is exactly the perfection to which we attain. He is immortal in the fullest sense who has most realized the Divine, in his life or in his thoughts, by knowledge or by virtue. All that is good in his life, all that is true in his thoughts, this it is which establishes his participation in the Eternal. The measure therefore of this knowledge and this virtue are the measure of his immortality. They, on the other hand, are altogether excluded from this divine life who fall down into the world of appearance, who separate themselves from the Universal Principle, whether by the baseness of their actions, or the baseness of their thoughts, who give themselves up a prey to unworthy desires, to selfish pleasures, to the humiliating tyranny of the senses. It is not God who banishes these men from Himself, it is they who banish themselves from Him. At every step that they take away from truth their thought becomes darkened, the taste of divine things is extinguished in them, till they reach the last deep of misery and degradation, which is to have no longer any sense of the divine at all. They live in time which is the true death,

instead of living in the thought of things eternal, which is the true, the only immortality<sup>1</sup>.

Now, apart from a certain stoic grandeur which unquestionably lends much of its attractiveness to this Pantheistic scheme, do we not seem to hear running through it certain echoes, however faint and confused, of the strains of a higher and more heavenly harmony? Might we not almost dream for a moment that its hope is the Christian's hope, its triumph the Christian's triumph? How like they are and yet how unlike!

For Christianity like Pantheism holds out to us union with God, the Everlasting Fountain of Life, as the highest object of attainment; but, unlike Pantheism, Christianity teaches, that the God in whom we live and move and have our being is not an abstraction, but a Person, not the Eternal Substance, but the Eternal Father. Christianity like Pantheism bids us find the best evidence of our immortality in this union with God, but unlike Pantheism she bids us attain to it, not by "the thought of immortality," but by faith in Jesus Christ. Christianity like Pantheism insists upon it, that eternal life is a present possession, but unlike Pantheism she no less emphatically assures to the individual an individual permanence after death, and a righteous retribution according to the deeds done in the body. But there is one point, on which it cannot be pretended, that

<sup>1</sup> For the substance of the last two paragraphs I am indebted to Caro, *l'Idée de Dieu*, p. 370, &c.

even any shadow of likeness exists, between the immortality of the Pantheist and the immortality of the Christian. There is one point in which the divergence between the two is marked, absolute, final. On the principles which Pantheism lays down, there is no immortality but for the élite of humanity. If the sense of immortality is immortality, and if I am eternal because I think of the eternal, then there is no immortality for the crowd. There is no future life but for thinkers. It is not the inalienable heritage of the race, it is the prerogative and privilege of the few. And we must add of the very few. For if immortality depends not only upon our thought of God, but upon our thought of so abstract a being as the God of Pantheism, and if our share of eternity depends on the development which we give to this idea, then the majority of mankind is for ever robbed of all right to eternal life. The poor, the wretched, the struggling, the vulgar and ignoble crowd, who are doomed to eat their bread in the sweat of their brow, these are not worthy of so great a gift. The multitudes who, because they have the hearts of men, look to heaven in their sorrow, and cry to God above, to give them hereafter the peace and rest which are denied them here, are full of aspirations, as vain and mistaken, as they are selfish. The wail of anguish which has gone up into the ear of God ever since the world was made, and to which men have so often thought they heard an answer, has but been mocked and derided. There

is no answer. There is no hope. "I can see no reason," says a recent writer, "why a Papuan should be immortal!" But if the fundamental principle of all Pantheism be true, there is no reason why ninety and nine in a hundred of the human race should be immortal. Immortality is the privilege of an intellectual aristocracy, and it is a privilege which they make for themselves; for they create their own immortality.

I need scarcely remind you, how wide is the divergence between such a scheme, and the message of the Gospel, with its large hopes and glorious promises embracing all mankind. It is emphatically the glory of the Gospel that it addresses itself to the universal heart. It knows no distinction, when it makes the offer and gives us the warrant of eternal life, between the peasant and the sage. But keenly alive to the miseries, the sorrows, the sufferings, the fears, the hopes of the race, it addresses itself to all alike. It confirms the just instincts of the heart, it ratifies the verdict of the conscience. It leaves no cloud on man's future destiny. "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for honour, and glory, and immortality," it promises "eternal life." But "to them who obey not the truth" it threatens "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil."

III. Materialism slays our hope. Pantheism mocks us with a false hope. But it must not be for-

<sup>1</sup> Renan, *Essais de Morale et de Critique*.

gotten that there are teachers of a better philosophy, who, without professing to accept the Christian revelation, have striven to establish on sure grounds our hopes of immortality. They have given no doubtful answer to the question of the Preacher. They have adopted his later and better language. They have maintained that when the body falls into dust, the spirit returns to God who gave it, and they have sought to establish at the same time its distinct personality. And the grounds on which they encourage us to build our hopes of a future life have with some minds considerable weight. They appeal first to the constitution of man, and next to the constitution of the world<sup>1</sup>.

i. They appeal first to the constitution of man. If man is destined to a life beyond the grave, then if God is wise and good and righteous, He has written in human nature some prophecy of that life.

(1) Look, then, at the heart of man, see how vast a thing is human love. Conceive of it in any form you please, the love of family, the love of father, child, wife, friends; or the love of art, or glory, or country, or mankind. Whence comes that marvellous force of love? It is not the object which creates the love, for the heart may set itself upon

<sup>1</sup> In what follows, I am greatly indebted to Jules Simon, *Religion Naturelle*, who thinks that he has *demonstrated* from such considerations the immortality of the soul. Strange to say, he takes no notice of the argument from conscience, which to other thinkers appears the strongest of all. See M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, p. 514, sixth edition.

an unworthy object, and the object which to one seems loveliest may possess no attractions for others. It is the love which clothes the object with ideal loveliness. Nothing shows more strikingly than this fact that we are something in ourselves, that we do not depend entirely upon our senses, and upon the outer world. Look above all at that soul which lavishes itself without one thought of self, which only lives and breathes for the happiness of another, which thinks no sacrifice too great, which cannot be disenchanted, which death cannot rob altogether, which even treachery and contempt cannot alienate, which sheds all its treasures of affection on a deformed body, a sickly spirit, an ungrateful heart. Is that mighty force of love no more than the flame of a candle which at last goes out in the socket? Nay more, when rising above the works of God to God Himself, love fastens itself immediately on the supreme object of love, shall it be frustrated in its hopes? Shall that love, at once so holy and so strong, be for ever shattered by death? Shall God never show himself? Shall God never give Himself? Shall that which seemed the most real thing in life, prove only to be a deception and a torture? No, the heart of man prophesies his immortality.

(2) Look again at the intellect of man. This likewise is too large for the world; eternity is in its eye, and upon its forehead. How "confined and pestered" it is "within the pinfold" of the body! How it strives to vanquish space and to triumph

over time. How it ranges through the past and anticipates the future. How boldly it endeavours to gather all phenomena however scattered into the common unity of Universal laws. Does it not seek to grasp eternity? Does it not desire to know God? And does not every fresh discovery that we make call forth in us, as it were a new power, impelling us, with ever fresh and sustained ardour, on the path of further investigations? Can we recognize in such facts no footsteps of a Divine purpose? Shall we only behold afar off the Promised Land, and never be suffered to enter into its borders? Surely the intellect of man, like the heart of man, prophesies his immortality.

(3) Once more, look at the conscience of man. Is there not a Law to which we involuntarily do homage? Do we not know and feel that there is an Eternal Right which claims our allegiance? And do we not strive to render that allegiance, whilst we are ever painfully conscious that we fall far short of its just and acknowledged demands? It is of no consequence to the argument what view we hold as to the origin or the education of Conscience. It is the fact that such an authority exists, that such an authority is felt to be binding. There is implied, in every recognition of duty the sense of a law, and therefore, we instinctively feel, of a Lawgiver, who is also a Judge, and who will punish the transgression of duty. Conscience reminds us of perpetual failure, short coming, transgression, and conscience



1.] *from the heart, the intellect and the conscience.* 27

sets before us the penalty, and not content with the retribution here extends it into the world to come. It is not merely the Christian conscience which thus speaks, it is the conscience of all men. St Paul scarcely describes more feelingly, than many a heathen moralist and poet, the terrible disruption of the inner man, the knowledge of the Law and the obedience to appetite, the sense of right and the slavery to evil. Christianity scarcely speaks more clearly, than many a heathen religion, of the retribution which the Righteous Judge shall mete out on the final day of reckoning. "Every man feels," it has been said, "as if he had at the end of his earthly career to appear before his Governor, and as if there was to be a reckoning at the close of the day of life. The time and manner of the judgment are unknown, but the judgment itself and the law are so far revealed. There is a feeling of this kind originating in deep internal principles, and strengthened by the observation of retribution in the providence of God, haunting mankind all through their life, and coming on them impressively at a dying hour. Such a day of account evidently implies a future world, and a separate state<sup>1</sup>."

But this is not the only part of the witness of conscience. There is the witness which arises from the sincere effort to obey, as well as the witness from a sense of opposition to the law. All these honest, broken, imperfect struggles, ever baffled, ever dis-

<sup>1</sup> McCosh, as quoted above.

appointed, are they all without meaning, and without aim? If the very fragmentariness of human hopes, and efforts and aspirations, may be taken as any indication, that the heart and the intellect shall ultimately find their completeness, much more may we argue, that the highest part of man's nature is not intended to be always stunted and deformed. The knowledge of God, and obedience to God were not intended to be imperfect. Most surely the day will come when "we shall know even as we are known," when we shall "be perfect, even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect." The conscience of man, more clearly than heart or intellect, prophesies his immortality.

Such is the appeal made by the advocates of Natural Religion to the constitution of man. They appeal to the heart of man with its mighty capacity of love never satisfied till it has laid hold on God. They appeal to the intellect of man with its mighty capacities of knowledge, never satisfied save as it seeks to track the ways of God. They appeal to the conscience of man, that witness to an Eternal Right, ever acknowledging the authority of God, ever struggling more or less imperfectly to fulfil His will, yet ever, as it falls short, confessing that hereafter, if not here, His will shall be done upon earth even as it is in heaven. Thus the heart of man, and the intellect of man, and the conscience of man, alike refuse to accept the sentence of annihilation.

ii. Not less convincing is the argument drawn from the constitution of the world. There is evil in the world, physical evil and moral evil. And evil cries out against the power or the goodness or the justice of God. Physical evil is not difficult to account for; nor yet the mere fact that some portion of evil attaches to us as created beings. We must be imperfect. It would be absurd to complain that God, who has made us in His image, has not made us His equals. But it is not so easy to understand why God, who has given us all the same nature, the same name, the same destiny, has not given us all the same means and opportunities of success, that He has made one poor and another rich, that He has set the imperishable crown of genius on the head of one, and has given to another a degree of intelligence scarcely above that of the brutes, that He assigns to each, in such unequal measure, his portion of good and evil, filling the cup of one to the brim with every pleasure that can gratify the sense, taking away from another, by an arbitrary sentence, health, honour, wife, children, all that makes life sweet, all that supports and strengthens and consoles. No stoic philosophy can charm us into insensibility to these facts. But this inequality in the distribution of good and evil weighs upon us far more heavily, when we see the good man bowed down with undeserved misery, and the sinner prosperous and triumphant. It is a shock to the best part of our nature to witness such contradictions. It would

30 *Present imperfection suggests a Future Life.* [LECT.

crush us, if we were to believe, that they shall be for ever without redress. It is quite true that, the good man would love goodness apart from future recompense, but so long as there is the sense of justice in his heart, you can never bring him to believe, that wickedness deserves success and goodness defeat. If we can form any true idea of righteousness, and if God is righteous, then who will pretend to say, that in the present constitution of the world His righteousness is fully vindicated? The hard, grasping, money-loving, money-getting man, who grinds the faces of the poor, and rises to affluence on the stepping-stones of human lives, is prosperous and honoured, and takes his seat in Parliament, and fares sumptuously every day, and is buried magnificently, and has a proud epitaph on his tomb. And the poor Lazarus at his gate, starving and with scarcely a rag to cover him, sees his wife and children pining with sickness and hunger before his eyes, and drags his miserable existence to an end, with no hand to smooth his pillow. The proud and delicate and highborn woman lives her easy, fashionable, luxurious life, insensible to every claim but the claim of her own vanity; and in yon miserable garret, her poor sister is toiling through the long hours of a winter's night, with weary eyes and weary heart, the fatal flush on her cheek, and the sharp quick cough shaking her to pieces, and the hot tear in her eye as she feels her strength failing, and so she sinks, unknown and uncared for, into her early grave.

Who can believe that there we see the end of the tragedy? It is not poetry, it is the divinest justice, it is the truest truth, which gives us to see in the other world the reverse of the picture: "And now he is comforted and thou art tormented." Yes, either there is no justice and therefore no God, or there is a life to come, in which the naked horror of wickedness shall appear, stript alike of its covering and its pre-eminence, and the pure beauty of goodness shall be everlastingly revealed.

By these and other like arguments, men have sought, even apart from Revelation, to build up and confirm their hope of Immortality. But it cannot be said, whatever those who advance them may claim for them, that such arguments make a future life *certain*. They do unquestionably confirm the instinctive hope of the human heart. They make a future life not improbable, but they do not prove it: they leave us still with a doubt in our hearts and a perhaps trembling on our lips. So far as they are strong, it is because in a degree which we little suspect, we bring them in aid of our Christian faith: but apart from that faith they have no solid ground. Take away the Christian truth of a resurrection, assured to us by the Resurrection of Christ, and these arguments lose their force. You are left in a world of shadows. You are struggling in vain to assure yourself of your personal existence hereafter. The immortality of the soul is a phantom which eludes your eager grasp. Natural religion

can never make a future life certain ; such arguments as I have mentioned are only corroborative of a foregone conclusion. The Christian doctrine of the Resurrection, as I shall hope hereafter to show, alone meets the instincts of the human heart, alone satisfies us both of existence and of recompense after death.

Meanwhile, what is it to us, my brethren, that we possess that Revelation of Life and Immortality unless we are walking in the light thereof? What is it to us that the Son of God has come, and having in our flesh died and risen again, is our Precursor in the path of Immortality, unless in the strength of His life we are triumphing over sin and death? We may indeed reject the Materialist's creed. We may profess to look upon it with horror and aversion. Those words which we have been taught to repeat from our earliest years, linked with so many holy associations, "I believe in the Resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting," may linger still like some echo of a far off world in our minds, and we may not be able,—God forbid we ever should be able,—to make deliberate shipwreck of our Christian faith. But they may, alas! have lost their hold upon us. The materialism of the senses, or the materialism of the intellect, may have enslaved and enthralled us, till, having brought ourselves to live like the brutes, we may even desire to perish like the brutes. If this be so with any here, may God open their eyes to their folly, ere it be too late. May He teach

us to know that for all our human life, for every act, every word, every thought, He will bring us into judgment. May He rouse and sober and solemnize us. May He give us grace "to cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armour of light," that quickened by His life we may stand erect before Him, in the full consciousness of our high privilege as sons of grace, heirs of God, and "candidates for IMMORTALITY."

## LECTURE II.

### *THE HOPE OF THE GENTILE.*

2 TIMOTHY I. 10.

*...Who hath abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality  
to light through the Gospel.*

IN my last Lecture I glanced at some of those philosophical systems which, having their origin later than Christianity, profess to deal with the problem of a Future Life.

I purpose in this Lecture briefly to pass in review some of the doctrines of heathen religions, and some of the speculations of heathen philosophers on the Life to come. In the religious system, we may recognize the voice of man's heart and conscience; in the philosophical speculation, we shall trace the effort to give certainty to the instincts of nature by the aid of reason and experience. We shall observe—however it may be accounted for—that there is for the most part a growth and development of belief. The primary, elemental belief, that death is not the end



of man, may be said to be as wide as the human race. Even in such systems as those of Buddha and Confucius, which have sometimes been held either formally to deny, or at any rate to pass by in silence a life beyond the grave, there may be found traces of such a belief, and whatsoever the sage may have held, or the philosopher have thought, there can be no doubt as to the popular persuasion. The worship of ancestors in China, the infinite series of transmigrations through which the Buddhist must pass, before he can hope to attain Nirvana, are witnesses to that indestructible instinct of the human heart, which refuses to admit the annihilation of so divine a thing as man. But this universal, ineradicable belief has assumed a variety of different forms. Its first and simplest *expression* has been in the respect shown for the dead, in the interment, in the treasuring of the ashes in the urn, in the tomb however simple and unadorned. Its first attempt to conceive of another life has been by assigning to the soul a form, and by imagining, that the pursuits and occupations of the next world were a mere continuation of the pursuits and occupations of the present world. In a later stage of culture, when the moral problems of life have begun to press more heavily, and the moral sense has been more keenly exercised, we see men not content with the bare belief in a future existence, but picturing it to themselves, as the great theatre of Divine Righteousness, as a state in which the final sever-

ance shall be made between the good and the wicked, as everlasting joy to the one, and everlasting confusion to the other. And, finally, as marking a yet higher degree of the reflective analysis, or of the Divine education we find a belief, more or less clearly implied, that the body itself shall be redeemed from corruption, and raised to share with the spirit an endless and incorruptible life.

Let us glance at some of the more salient forms which the belief in a Future Life has assumed, and let us take them as they have been developed in Egypt, in Greece, in Asia.

What is the language of the most ancient documents to which we can appeal? We shall find it, as we might anticipate, not in a formal treatise, but in a popular expression, and, strange to say, in an Egyptian romance. There is in the British Museum an old papyrus, brown and crumbling, covered with mysterious characters, traced two and thirty centuries ago by the hand of the scribe Annana. He was, in all probability, a contemporary of Moses, and the story which he has written, and which has recently been deciphered, bears in some particulars a curious resemblance to the history of Joseph, as recorded in Genesis. It is full of interest, both from its many points of contact with the rites and traditions of other countries, and also from the singular light it throws on the manners and customs and beliefs of the ancient Egyptians. But the special interest, for our present purpose, lies in the way in

which throughout it implies a belief, not only in the transmigration of souls, but also in the separate existence of the soul from the body. Two brothers figure in the story. The soul of one goes into the topmost blossom of a cedar-tree while he is still alive. After a time he dies, and then his brother, seeking three years for the soul, finds it at last in the fruit which has fallen from the tree. He places it in a vessel of water, and it revives, and enters again into his brother. After this, his brother is changed into a bullock, and then, when the bullock is slain, the soul passes into a tree, retaining in each of its transmigrations the power of speech, and the recollection of his former life<sup>1</sup>. Such is perhaps the earliest account, to be found in any heathen nation, of a belief in an existence after death. It is in many respects coarse and material; it is confused in its expression. It stands in strange contrast with those yet earlier words of a Jewish book: "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him:" but it has its value, as an ancient testimony to man's instinctive assurance of his own immortality. Granted that this takes the form of metempsychosis, still, in one noticeable respect, it differs from later systems in which the same doctrine appears. The soul preserves its personality. Whatever body it may assume, it remembers its former existence. It drinks no water of

<sup>1</sup> For a full account of this papyrus, see Eragisch, *Aus dem Orient*. I have given a translation of it in "Good Words" for Feb. 1867.

oblivion as in the myths of Plato, or in the fantastic pictures of some modern philosophers. It is however in the "Rituals of the Dead," that we look for the fuller and more definite statements of the Egyptian creed. These documents, rolled up in a cylindrical form and placed not unfrequently in the Sarcophagi, were intended to serve as a guide-book for the soul, in her pilgrimages in the train of Osiris through the regions below; and they furnish us with ample evidence, that the old Egyptian believed in an individual immortality, and a judgment after death. Here, as in almost every ancient system, the life to come is conceived of as little else than a continuation of the life that is. If the soul survives, it cannot be regarded as a pure spirit, it must still possess some of the properties of the material body<sup>1</sup>. Hence, "at an Egyptian funeral, common articles of food and dress and certain implements of war, of business, and of pleasure, were deposited with or near the corpse: the scenes of daily life were pictured on the mummy-cases, not so much in order to express the piety of survivors, as to gratify and stimulate the dead: a string of prayers and other formulæ were also buried with him for his constant admonition, and as passports through the unknown world to which he had been destined; and at length when he was entering 'the dark place' itself, the popular belief assigned him bread

<sup>1</sup> *Animos enim per se ipsos viventes non poterant mente complecti; formam aliquam figuramque quærebant. Cic. Tusc. I. 16, § 37.*

and drink, and slices of flesh off the table of the sun; when he traverses the fields of the blessed, corn and barley are given to him, for he is provided as he was upon earth!." But the Egyptian, if he thus conceived of a quasi-material soul, did not on that account make light of the body. If we do not find any mention of the resurrection of the body, yet the body was evidently regarded as partaking, in some mysterious manner, of the immortality of the soul. In no other way can we explain the care taken in embalming, or that lofty title given to the mummy, which designated it as 'the habitation of Osiris,' or the prayers offered to the same god for its incorruptibility, or the sepulchre built as it seemed to defy all time, which the Egyptian might well call his dwelling-place and 'everlasting home.' It would detain us too long, to enter at any length into that very remarkable portion of the Egyptian creed, which relates to a judgment after death. But as they held that the personal individuality was not lost, and as they cherished the belief in some close and mysterious connection between soul and body after death, so also they believed in a future state of rewards and punishments. "Each one must submit, as he enters the unseen world, to the awful judgment of Osiris and his assessors, Truth and Justice. The heart of the deceased is weighed in the fatal balance, and if he cannot declare himself free from sin, he is

<sup>1</sup> Hardwick, *Christ and Other Masters*. Pt. iv. pp. 79—90.

handed over to the ministers of vengeance, and after passing from one bestial shape to another, is at last plunged into a lake, whose waters of flame and waves of fire are of the most intense and unconquerable heat, while the thirst of the dead in it is unquenchable; and they have no peace in it because it is filled with weeds and filth<sup>1</sup>." The spirit, on the other hand, which has been pronounced free, passes into the abodes of the blessed, and at last attains to perfection by absolute union with Osiris, the Sun-god. 'This great god speaks to them and they speak to him; his glory illuminates them in the splendour of his disc, while he is shining in their sphere.' It is scarcely necessary to remark, how much there is in such a theology as this, which, if it is not the echo of an earlier revelation, finds at least some points of contact with the Christian faith. That lake of fire and that thirst unquenchable, do we not find them in the words of our Master and the writings of His Apostles? That union with the true God and blessed converse with Him, is not this the hope which, beyond all things else, animates the Christian, as he seeks to pierce within the veil, and pictures to himself a glorious immortality? I do not indeed pretend to put the one belief on a level with the other. Still less would I be thought to imply, that the one is in any true sense the anticipation of the other. But no more

<sup>1</sup> Birch, as quoted by Hardwick.

striking proof could be given of the *testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ*; no clearer evidence that the heart and the conscience of man are witnesses to the truth. What Christ did was not, for the first time, to teach immortality and a judgment to come; for God had written these things in human nature at the creation. But He dispelled the doubts which perplexed and tortured men in the prospect of death. By His own Resurrection He annulled death, and in the light of that Resurrection made Life and Immortality sure.

From the Egyptian we turn to the Greek. And here again we encounter, first and in its earliest stage, the popular doctrine—the accepted fact of an existence after death, and an attempt to conceive, and to set forth to the popular mind, the nature of that existence, the pursuits and employments of the world below. But the Homeric representation is indistinct, confused, even contradictory. The dead have lost their true conscious personality, yet they can be recognized; they still retain their earthly image and lineaments. They have a form, but it is an unsubstantial form which eludes the grasp. “Such is the lot of mortals,” exclaims the mother of Ulysses, “when they die; the muscles no longer hold together the flesh and bones, but they perish in the fire when the breath leaves the body, and the soul flits hither and thither like a dream.” They have neither speech nor power of recognition, till they taste the blood of

the victims, which Ulysses has poured into the trench<sup>1</sup>; for in the blood is the life. They dwell in a region of thickest darkness. So profound is the gloom that settles even on the noblest spirits, that nothing can charm it away. It is in vain to soothe Achilles by reminding him that, as he was honoured like a god when alive, so now he is supreme ruler of the dead. He puts away the consolation, and declares that he would rather be the hireling of a man of no substance, and of cramped and narrow means, than be lord of all the dead. One thing only touches his heart with joy, and that is, to hear that his son bears himself bravely in the fight, and sustains the honour of his name. Such then is the future life, as it presented itself to the early thought of the Greeks, and such is the popular mythology. The body falls to dust, even the spirit perishes for ever<sup>2</sup>; but the soul exists, and its dwelling-place is beneath the earth: it lives a cold, sad, gloomy, dream-like life; it lives mindful of its former pursuits, but no longer able to enjoy them. Of the doctrine of a retribution, we find only the germ in the genuine portion of the Homeric poems. The crime of perjury is singled out for mention, as one which draws down upon it vengeance in another life. The judgment of Minos in the shades below, and the Tartarus and Elysium, the abode severally of the just and unjust, are doubtless subsequent accretions, the embodiments of a later mytho-

<sup>1</sup> *Od.* xi. vv. 142—390.

<sup>2</sup> Nägelsbach, *die Homerische Theologie*, p. 397, 398.



logy, which, however, grew and took more definite shape, till they became an acknowledged element in the popular creed<sup>1</sup>.

In the dramatic Poets of a later age, the picture is not very different: except in the greater prominence given to the punishment of the wicked, the representation is to all practical purpose the same. The dead, says Æschylus, sleep "in light which is not light, but darkness visible" (*Cho.* 311): they are past feeling; they "have lost the wish even to rise again." Darius, though a king below, yet like Achilles, finds no joy in his kingly dignity, and bids the suppliants who had evoked him to reap pleasure while it is yet day, "for the dead are shrouded in thick gloom, where wealth avails not."

In one respect however the view of Æschylus, as has been recently pointed out, is one of peculiar gloom and severity. For him there exists no Elysium for the blessed, no reward for goodness in the life beyond the grave. "Æschylus has not one word of true hope for a future state, not one image of another field of labour, where the character trained by sorrow here shall find exercise for its chastened power. It is scarcely too much to say, that for him the other world, and the powers by which it is governed, exist only for the guilty. There remains an awful and just punishment for all who sinned in life against God, or strangers, or parents:—

<sup>1</sup> Nägelsbach *ut supra*, p. 407. He points out how confused, and even contradictory, the Homeric representations are.

For Hades is a stern inquisitor  
 Of men beneath the Earth, and views their deeds,  
 And enters them in the tablets of his mind.....  
 The lewd offender shall not, when he dies  
 Escape arraignment in the shades below,  
 Even there, another Zeus, as legends tell,  
 Gives final judgment on the crimes of men.

And so it comes to pass that the retribution is completed there, which the Erinyes had begun on earth." ...But "the fulness of human life is on earth. The part of man in all his capacity for passion and action is played out here; and when the curtain falls, there remains unbroken rest, or a faint reflection of the past, or suffering wrought by the ministers of inexorable justice. The beauty and the power of life, the manifold ministers of sense, are gone. They can be regretted, but they cannot be replaced. Sorrow is possible, but not joy<sup>1</sup>."

But there were those whom neither the popular mythology, nor the deeper theology of the poets could satisfy. The philosopher, questioning with himself concerning himself, asked for some clear evidence of immortality, and speculated concerning the nature of a life beyond the grave. In Plato the question recurs again and again. It arrests and fascinates him. Never was a nobler effort made by man, to attain to certainty on any question affecting his own nature and destiny. And nowhere is to be found a more signal proof, that by the unaided reason of man such certainty cannot be attained, that,

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *Theology of Æschylus*, in *Contemp. Rev.* for Nov. 1866.

II.] *Socrates wavers in the assertion of his hope.* 45

as Socrates himself confesses, man needs a Divine teacher to dispel his ignorance and to cast light upon life and immortality. In the *Phædo*, Socrates considers himself to have proved, that the soul cannot die, though he admits that there may be ground for disputing the soundness of his reasoning. In the *Republic*, he thinks that he has established beyond the reach of doubt, the immortality of the soul. But in the *Apology*, true to his principles, he confesses his ignorance. To fear death, would be to pretend to a knowledge which he does not profess, for no one knows what death is; for ought that appears to the contrary, it may be the greatest of blessings, and yet men fear it as if they *knew* it to be the greatest of evils. For though he does not *know* what shall be hereafter, yet he does know that injustice and disobedience to one who is better than ourselves, be he god or man, is evil and base. Death, he says, is one of two things. Either it is the extinction of all perception, like a dreamless sleep, and then it is a wonderful boon—for who would find many days and nights in his life to be preferred to a night which he has slept all through without a dream?—or it is the migration to another place, where the rest of the dead are gathered, and there it will be a pleasure to mingle with the great men who have gone before, to pass under the scrutiny of the three judges who cannot be corrupted, like earthly judges, to converse with the great poets, such as Orpheus and Musesæus and Hesiod and Homer, or to cross-examine

the great heroes of the Trojan war, and to compare his experience with theirs.

Although Plato's doctrine of a future life is troubled by the Pythagorean dream of a metempsychosis, still he does not hesitate to teach in no doubtful language, that the future state is a state of rewards and punishments, in which each man receives his sentence, according to the things he hath done in the body. Those rewards and punishments are not arbitrary, but follow by a natural law; for the soul takes with it to Hades nothing but the results of its education and growth, which immediately begin to manifest their effects. In the magnificent myth with which the *Phædo* closes, he thus expounds the law of retribution;—"When the dead reach the place whither their genius carries them, they obtain their sentence, and those, whose lives have been neither very good nor very bad, are conveyed along Acheron to the Acherusian lake, where they are purified of wickedness by punishment, and receive the reward of their good deeds. Those who are judged to be incurably guilty, owing to the greatness of their sins, are thrown into Tartarus, from which they never come out. Those again, whose sins are very great, but not past all cure, are thrown, for so it must be, into Tartarus; but after a year they are carried by Cocytus or Pyriphlegethon to the Acherusian lake, where with loud cries they call on those whom they wronged, beseeching them for pardon, that so they may leave their place of

torment and come to them ; and if their prayer is heard, it is well ; if not, they return to their place of suffering, for they gain no respite till it is granted by those whom they injured. Those, lastly, who have lived with conspicuous holiness, are they who are freed from their prison-house in the lower realms, and rise aloft to radiant habitations, and dwell upon the earth which I have described. And such as have purified themselves sufficiently by philosophy live wholly without bodies for the future, and rise to habitations more glorious than these, which it were hard to paint...But I think what I have said shows that we must strive by all means to gain virtue and wisdom in our lives. The prize is glorious and the hope is great." The myth in the *Gorgias* is not less striking and not less explicit. In both the same truths are enforced. As Plato has insisted in the *Republic*, that the brief space between childhood and old age is too short for the reward of virtue, so now he shows us, how both virtue and vice receive their just recompense in the life to come. He sees that punishment may be exemplary as well as remedial. He does not shrink even from the awful sentence of everlasting woe, pronounced upon desperate and incurable wickedness. He sees the holy and the just crowned with everlasting felicity. In the use which he makes of these myths, Plato shows his power as a religious teacher. The popular allegories for him contain the profoundest of moral truths. They are the poetry of the conscience and of the heart.

Surely there is no "half smile playing upon the lips of the divine old man which betrays his scepticism without showing his contempt<sup>1</sup>." The philosopher and the moral teacher finds his lessons confirmed by the beautiful fictions of the popular creed, which he embellishes and exalts, and reads in them a living confirmation of his teaching, that "we must strive by all means to gain virtue and wisdom in our lives." It was a noble attempt to marry the wisdom of the sage and the religion of the vulgar, to show that reason did not contradict faith, but that the truth, which was reached through the conclusions of the intellect, had already its support in the conscience and in the instinctive belief of mankind. So far as philosophy can accomplish the task, it may be said that Plato has established by solid reasoning the immateriality of the soul, the absolute distinction between mind and matter. The triumph was great; and yet Cicero with all his admiration for Plato, confesses how slight an impression such reasoning produced. Plato, he tells us, seems to have convinced himself, and to have made others wish, that he was right<sup>2</sup>. "Whilst I am reading his treatise," he says, "I assent to his reasoning; when I lay down the book and think over the question of immortality myself, my assent slips away from me<sup>3</sup>." But in truth, as we have seen, Socrates himself shrinks from a positive affirmation of his belief. And it

<sup>1</sup> Cousin, *Œuvres de Platon*, I. p. 179.

<sup>2</sup> Cic. *Tusc.* I. 21, § 49.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* I. 11, § 25.

is evident, as has been remarked by some of Plato's most accomplished critics, that no reasoning can do more than make the life to come probable. "Philosophy demonstrates," says one of them, "that there is in man a principle that cannot perish. But that this principle reappears in another world with the same order of faculties and the same laws which it has here, that it carries with it there the consequences of the good and evil actions which it has committed ...this is a sublime probability, which does not admit perhaps of rigorous demonstration, but which is authorized and consecrated by the secret trust of the heart and the universal consent of the world<sup>1</sup>."

Yes *a sublime probability*, and "probability is the very guide of life." And yet something more is necessary, if religion is to lend her sanction to morality. If the future life is to sway and rule the present life, if a man is to sacrifice the pleasures of time to the joys of eternity, if he is to resist the fascinations of sense and the strong grasp of covetousness, if he is to master the swelling of passion, and turn a deaf ear to the voice which bids him take his ease, eat, drink and be merry, then he needs something more than a wavering hope to be the anchor of his soul. Then he needs a voice that he can recognize as that of God, to confirm his doubts and fears. Then he needs the word and the promise and the example of One, who rising Himself in human flesh from the grave, has brought Life and Immortality to light.

<sup>1</sup> Cousin, *Œuvres de Platon*, I. p. 178.

If our examination of ancient systems of belief and of speculation were to stop here, we might conclude with Cicero that the belief in the Immortality of the soul is like the belief in God, universal. But we must not omit all notice of forms of religion which count their disciples by millions. The East as well as the West claims our consideration. Whilst Greece was advancing on the path of civilization, another civilization was developing itself between the Indus and the Ganges. Two vast rival systems of religious belief have there sprung up, and struggled for the mastery, the system of the Brahmin, and the system of the Buddhist. Full of interest, at any time, to the student of man's nature and history, these systems derive a fresh interest, from the singular coincidence which they often present with the course of modern speculation. In fact it is not too much to say, that "the history of mind in India, corresponds to the same history in Europe:" and that "Every system that has appeared in the West, has had its counterpart in the East!"

As in Egypt, and in Greece, so in India we can trace distinctly the development of doctrine. In the most ancient religious poems of the Aryans, in the earliest Vedic hymns, the future life is scarcely mentioned; the fears and hopes of the present life occupy the foremost place, in the midst of a pantheistic worship of the forces of nature, not wanting either in grandeur or in poetry, but in which

<sup>1</sup> Hunt, *Pantheism*, p. 18.



the notion of a wise and righteous Providence can scarcely be discerned. Even there, however, we meet with the doctrine of transmigrations, though in a form less extravagantly grotesque than that which it subsequently assumed. And there too is the germ of future recompense, though the palm is given not to moral virtue, but to the zealous practice of ceremonial observances.

In the more matured system of the Brahmins, the world is an ever-fluctuating development of the great soul of Being; it issues from, and is a part of Brahma Himself, as the stream issues from its source, as the tree from the seed, as the spider's web from the spider. The universe is the theatre of a perpetual movement, in consequence of which souls find themselves, now nearer, now further removed from their native source. They pass from body to body, they visit in succession the bodies of stones, plants, animals, gods, men, without truce, and without repose, doomed according to their merits or demerits, to ascend or descend the eternal ladder, plunged now it may be in all the horrors, exquisite and prolonged, of the eight and twenty hells, or raised to the rank of higher beings, in an existence above that of this world, till at length the vast sum of revolutions being completed, they are absorbed in the great principle of the Universe, the immovable Brahma, in whose immovable void, existence is the only perfection, and the only bliss<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Taine, *Nouveaux Essais de Critique et d'Histoire*, pp. 327, 328.

When in the Vedānta, the question is asked, "What is the nature of that absorbed state which the souls of good men enjoy after death?" the answer is: "It is a participation of the Divine nature, where all passions are utterly unknown and where consciousness is absorbed in bliss."

Everlasting metempsychosis, everlasting evolution, with everlasting re-absorption, this is the future life in which sixty millions of the human race at this day believe.

Buddhism was a reformation of Brahmanism. With the exception of Christianity, no religious system that the world has seen, has ever produced so mighty a revolution, has ever inculcated a morality so pure, or breathed so Divine a charity, or spoken words of such tender compassion to the Pariah and the outcast. Its founder Sakya Muni lived some five centuries before the Christian era<sup>1</sup>. The son of a king, and accustomed to all the pleasures and luxury of an oriental court, he at an early age became profoundly convinced of the vanity of the world. The spectacle of the miseries of life, of sickness, old age and death, touched his heart, and he set himself with noble purpose to deliver men from the curse which weighed upon them. With this object in view, he made no distinction of caste or race or sex. He broke down the barriers of prejudice and of custom. He called all to salvation, the king and the slave, the Brahmin and the Tschandala, the pure and the

<sup>1</sup> See Barthélemy St Hilaire, *Le Bouddha et le Bouddhisme.*

impure, his own countrymen and strangers, men and women. The good news which he preached, was deliverance from the burden of existence. Our sufferings, he said, spring from our passions, and are the punishments for sins committed in a former state of existence. Our aim, then, must be to crush our passions, to crush every desire which binds us to life. When this is accomplished we shall find rest, we shall find it in non-existence, in freedom from that existence which is itself a penalty for sin. It has been much disputed whether the Nirvana, the final rest which he promised to the perfected disciple, is or is not equivalent to annihilation. It would ill become one, who has not made a study of the original texts, to pretend to pronounce a decision on this question. Great authorities are arrayed on either side. But even if Sakya Muni himself proclaimed annihilation as the crown and reward of perfection, it may be certainly affirmed that this teaching has since been greatly modified<sup>1</sup>. Nirvana is to the Buddhist rather the negation and opposite of the present existence, than annihilation in the sense in which we commonly understand it. It is that state "which is followed by no birth, and after which there is no renewing of the miseries of existence. It is beyond the world of sensation and of change. Here there is coming and going, change

<sup>1</sup> It may fairly be questioned whether Buddha himself taught nihilism, but if he did, his teaching was certainly not generally received. See Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I. p. 233.

and motion, fulness and manifoldness, combination and individuality. In Nirvana is rest and stillness, simplicity and unity for ever. Here are birth, sickness, age and death, virtue and vice, merit and demerit, *there*, there is Eternal repose, complete deliverance from existence and all the conditions of existence. The soul can no longer be born, and therefore no longer die. The 'I' is extinguished as plants no longer watered, as trees whose roots have been dug up from the earth, or as the light goes out when the oil fails in the lamp'."

Such, roughly sketched, are the systems of the Brahman and the Buddhist, such is their consolation in death, such their hope of a life to come. Widely differing in many respects, the two systems are alike in this, that they both tend to the destruction of the individual personality. The one destroys the individual by plunging him in the Absolute Being. The other destroys him, if not by actual annihilation, by robbing him of all character, of all thought, and feeling, and will, and action. Both look for something after death; both deny the only immortality which is worth contending for, the immortality of the conscious individual life.

We have directed our glance in turn to Greece and to India, to the West and to the East. A day came in the history of the world, when in consequence of the great political events which modified ancient society, the East and the West

<sup>1</sup> Hunt, *Pantheism*, pp. 24, 25. See also Taine *ut supra*, p. 340.

met on the shores of the Mediterranean. Then took place that wonderful fusion of the thoughts and hopes of the world, all the fruits of which we have not even yet gathered; and not only did the East and the West meet, but at the same epoch religion and philosophy stretched each to the other her hand. It was a solemn moment. What was the result?

Let us transport ourselves into Greece in the fifth century of our era<sup>1</sup>. Athens, glorious Athens, the illustrious mother of thought, and of the arts, was near to her fall; that 'bright particular star' in the heaven of mind was about to set for ever. But at the moment when the star was touching the horizon, it shot forth one last gleam of surpassing splendour. A numerous youth, gathered from all parts of the Roman Empire, crowded the amphitheatres of the city, which was still the capital of the intellectual world. In those large assemblies were heard the words of a man, whom some venerated as a god. He styled himself the Universal Pontiff. He was the most esteemed of philosophers, and the most erudite of priests; he seemed to sum up in his person the whole moral and intellectual growth of past centuries, all philosophy and all religion. The name of this man was Proclus. He was the last in a long series of sages, and his doctrine con-

<sup>1</sup> E. Naville, *La Vie Éternelle*, to whom I am greatly indebted in what follows, though he hardly does justice to Proclus or to the Alexandrian School.

tained the result of four centuries of intellectual toil. This doctrine was that of the famous school of Alexandria. To form that school East and West had united. Into it, as into some vast reservoir, two mighty streams had poured their treasures of thought and learning. It was the teaching of this school that Mythology was the bark and rind of truth, and that Pantheism was the inner heart of truth. For the living God, the First cause of the Universe, the Alexandrians substituted an abstract and barren conception, a God without intelligence, without liberty, without power. Far from making any successful attempt to assure to us immortality after death, the whole practical result of their doctrine was to do away with such a belief. The Greek myths, those graceful fables, which gave life and movement to all around, were no more than the airy and transparent clothing of the gloomy thoughts and conceptions of Asia. The dogmas of the Brahmins were erected under a different form in the country of Homer and of Plato. Such was the result of the meeting between the thought of the East and the thought of the West.

It was a crisis in the intellectual progress of the world. Ancient wisdom seemed to be gathering all its forces, as if again to assert its pre-eminence. Never was it animated by a deeper enthusiasm of activity, never had it armed itself for a more resolute, a more desperate struggle. The representatives of the ancient world strove in vain to marry the brilliant fictions of fable to the profound conceptions of genius.

Another and a mightier power was sweeping past them, and advancing to conquests for which they could not dare to hope. And why?—because in a distant province, four centuries before, One who had studied neither the wisdom of the East nor the philosophy of the West, One whose garb and speech were those of a Galilean peasant, had preached eternal life and the resurrection from the dead to a few boatmen on the Lake of Gennesareth; because a man, named Paul of Tarsus, forgetting his Greek and Jewish lore, had been content to know nothing else but Jesus crucified and risen from the dead; because at the preaching of this word, there had been kindled in hearts far and wide, east and west, north and south, a hope so full of immortality, that men went to meet martyrdom, as they would have gone to a festival, not because they were weary of this world, but that they might attain to the palm of an endless life. Nothing could arrest the development of the new doctrine. The seed had become a sapling, the sapling had shot up and spread itself into a mighty and umbrageous tree. Just as the pine of the forest stretching its branches to the sun covers with its shadow the lesser undergrowth, killing the vegetation whose nourishment it absorbs, so Christianity, as it grew, robbed of air and light the gods of Olympus, and covered the earth with the fragments of ancient theories, all whose life it had drained, all whose meaning it had gathered into its own bosom. Have we ever tried to picture to

ourselves the struggle of which the world was at that time the theatre? Have we ever tried to conceive what must have been the feelings of the citizens of Rome, when that proud city was asked to renounce all that pomp, in which the ceremonies of religion lent splendour and dignity to the service of the State, that Capitol in which were gathered the spoils of the Universe, those triumphs in which the princes of the world did homage to the majesty of the sovereign people? Can we understand what must have been the feelings of those young men, who were bidden to give up their pleasures, their festivals which were the charm of their life, the brilliant poetry which fascinated their imagination, and all this for a word rugged and uncouth as it was new, for a message of which it might justly be doubted, whether it were in a greater degree foolishness to the wise, or a stumblingblock to men of the world. And yet that word had conquered. The ancient religions, long assailed alike by the force of reason and by the protests of conscience, at length fell, as Dagon fell before the Ark, on the day when outside the walls of Jerusalem, Jesus of Nazareth was nailed to the cross, in the midst of women who bewailed Him and a people who derided Him. Thus did the Wisdom of the old world pale before the Word which shed light upon life and immortality.

Yes, the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men. It was so then, it is so now. System after system has sprung up and perished. Even



in the last few years, in the full light of Christianity, we have seen men building up, with a force of genius worthy of a better cause, theories of metempsychosis and transmigration, pretending to explain the world and man without any recognition of God and of Providence, denying to the human race the hope of immortality, substituting the immortality of the race, or of works, of matter and of force, for the immortality of the soul, and a personal existence after death. We listen with fainting heart to these prophets of destruction. We listen perchance more hopefully to the advocates of a better wisdom, who yet bid us shut our Bibles, because Reason suffices of herself to place on sure grounds our eternal hope, to construct for us the charter of our immortality. And as we turn away, with our doubts and fears still thick about us, our misgivings and perplexities unallayed, our eye falls on the page, written from his prison in Rome, by one of whom the world was not worthy. He was no dreamer, he was no fanatic. He was a man of cultivated intellect, of large heart, of profound convictions. He writes to a friend in the near prospect of death, but no shadow of gloom darkens his spirit; there is no faltering, no fear, but the light of eternity is in his eye, and the great peace of God is in his heart, and it is thus he writes: "I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which

the Lord, the righteous Judge; shall give me at that day." And if you ask, Whence this high confidence, this unshaken hope, this holy joy? the answer is to be found in other words in the same letter: "I know whom I have believed; I am the herald and the apostle of Him who has abolished death, and brought Life and Immortality to light."

## LECTURE III.

### *THE HOPE OF THE JEW.*

LUKE XX. 37, 38.

*Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.*

WE have already reviewed some of the principal systems of Gentile belief, and Gentile speculation, concerning the life to come. Apart from any other value which they may have, they are witnesses for God, they are signs of man's moral nature, evidences of an inner revelation of the heart and conscience, which proclaims a future life and a future judgment. When we turn from these beliefs and speculations, to those records of Jewish faith which we have in the Old Testament, we might certainly and reasonably expect that, if here we have a more distinct, personal revelation of God, here also a clearer light would rest on the problem we are considering. For the knowledge of God and the knowledge of man are inseparably associated. Whatever throws

light on the one must throw light on the other also. In proportion as the belief in God's nature and attributes is pure and elevated, in the same proportion will man form a right conception of his relation to God, and therefore of his future destiny. And this expectation would be strengthened, by observing that there is a vital continuity between Judaism and Christianity<sup>1</sup>, that the New Law is in some of its most essential features but a development and spiritual interpretation of the Old. The God of Moses is the God of Christians; the general principles of morality—notwithstanding some obvious and admitted exceptions—are the same in the Pentateuch and the Gospel. In both, there is the same close and intimate connection between morality and religion; in both, the same precept to love our neighbour, flowing out of the one great primary command to love God; in both, the same trust in the infinite wisdom and justice and goodness of God, the same submission to His providence, the same belief in the efficacy of prayer. It would have seemed but natural therefore, that a judgment to come which forms so powerful a sanction in the Christian scheme, should have had its due place in the sanctions of the Law of Moses.

And yet it is remarkable that, whilst not only the unity of God, but the holiness, the truth,

<sup>1</sup> This has been strikingly illustrated in Lord Hatherley's recently published Volume, "The Continuity of Scripture."

the loving mercy of God are presented in the Old Testament, in a manner not very unlike that in which they are presented in the New, and in the most marked contrast with the gross and revolting conceptions to be found in the religious systems of the heathen, and the feeble and imperfect conceptions of the most enlightened of pagan philosophers,—it is remarkable, I say, that so little should be revealed concerning the final destiny of man. The Future Life, as a doctrine, occupies no prominent place in the religion of Moses and the Prophets. The immortality of the soul is neither argued nor affirmed. The resurrection of the body is kept in the background, and not fully disclosed till towards the end of the Old Testament dispensation. Darkness rests upon the grave and upon all beyond it; and the rewards and punishments of the Future Life are either unknown, or apparently exercise no practical influence on men's conduct here. At first sight and on a cursory examination, there seems to be no advance whatever upon the pagan systems, so far as this article of faith is concerned.

In the Pentateuch the silence is profound. Only a hint is dropt here and there, suggestive of a belief, which is never explicitly stated. The immediate derivation of man's life from God<sup>1</sup>, the translation of Enoch, who was taken early from

the world because he pleased God<sup>1</sup>, the prayer of the dying Jacob<sup>2</sup>, the wish expressed by Balaam,—who however was a Gentile, not a Jew,—that he might die the death of the righteous<sup>3</sup>, these are all, or nearly all, the intimations, certainly neither very many nor very clear, of hopes reaching beyond this world, to be found in the Books of Moses. In later Books, the recognition of another life grows somewhat more distinct. There we find for instance, the belief that they who are separated by death shall meet again in another life, and this thought was David's consolation, when the child he loved was taken from him<sup>4</sup>. We find even a belief, that it was possible for the dead to revisit the earth, and hold converse with those that they had known here, as in the appearance of Samuel to Saul<sup>5</sup>. And so far there would seem to be evidence, that the Jew, whatever other conceptions he might form of the unseen world, felt assured at least, that the soul did not perish with the body, that there was a true continuation of personal existence after death. But nevertheless, in the near prospect of death, the other world is even to faithful spirits full of gloom and terror. The representations of Sheol, in the religious poetry of the nation, are not very different from the representations of Hades among the earlier Greeks. The same obscurity hangs over the dwelling of

<sup>1</sup> Gen. v. 24, comp. Eccles. xliv. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Num. xxiii. 10.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Sam. xii. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xlix. 18.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Sam. xxviii.

the dead; there is the same recoil from its dreary darkness. Read such complaints as these :

“What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?

Shall the dust give thanks to Thee?

Shall it declare Thy truth<sup>1</sup>?”

“In death there is no remembrance of thee,

In the unseen world who shall give Thee thanks<sup>2</sup>?”

“My life draweth nigh unto the unseen world,

I am counted with them that go down into the pit

Like the slain lying in the grave,...

Whom Thou rememberest no more,

But they are cut off from Thy hand<sup>3</sup>.”

“Wilt Thou show wonders unto the dead?

Shall the shades below arise and give Thee thanks?

Shall Thy loving-kindness be told in the grave

Thy faithfulness in destruction?

Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark?

And Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness<sup>4</sup>?”

Or read again the elegy of Hezekiah, written on his recovery from sickness :

“I said in the cutting off of my days,

I shall go to the gates of the unseen world...

I said, I shall not see Jah,

(Even) Jah in the land of the living :

I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

The unseen world cannot give Thee thanks,

Death cannot celebrate Thee :

They that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxi. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. lxxxviii. 3—5.

P. H. L.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. vi. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ib. 10—12.

The living, the living, he shall give Thee thanks,  
 As I do this day;  
 (The) father to (the) children shall make known concerning  
 Thy truth<sup>1</sup>."

I do not insist here upon the language of the Preacher asking in utter perplexity if there be any difference between the death of man and the death of the brute<sup>2</sup>. For his words are manifestly the utterance, not of his higher, but of his lower self. A worldly life, devotion to material objects, the pursuit of selfish ends, had engendered that cynical scepticism which, losing its hold on God, loses also its hold on immortality. And before the writer closes that journal of his inner life, you see that faith has vanquished doubt, and that in the light of that triumph he can look beyond death and the grave. But take only such passages as these I have read, and what is the impression left upon the mind? Is not the picture dark as that in Homer? The dead are without sensation and without hope, forgotten of God, and unable to praise Him. It may be said, indeed, that in such passages, sickness and pain and distress of mind have wrought their natural effect, and that the dark colours of the picture are the unhealthy projection of a disturbed and melancholy mood. Yet one feature at least is the same in another song, where the feeling expressed is anything but that of dejection or despondency. It

<sup>1</sup> Is. xxxviii. 10, 11, 13, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Eccl. iii. 21.



is in a liturgical Psalm, it is in a Psalm sung by the whole congregation gathered before God in Zion, it is in the midst of a loud strain of triumph and thankfulness and exultation, that we meet with such lines as these :

“The dead cannot praise Jah,  
Neither all they that go down into silence<sup>1</sup>.”

It cannot be denied, then, that so far as any distinct *knowledge* of a Future Life went, the Jew had no advantage over the Gentile. Like the Gentile he thought that in some form, he knew not what, his existence would be prolonged after death. To him, as to the Gentile, Sheol was a gloomy, sunless abode, and life in this world more blessed than life in the next even for the righteous. But there is one marked and characteristic difference between the thought of the Jew, and the thought of the Greek, as they look upon death. Both cling to life, both recoil from the awful shadow that sits at the portal of the grave. But the Jew clings to life, not for the sake of its pleasures or its gifts, but because here he can know and love and praise God ; he hates death, because there he is cut off from God, forgotten of His hand. The Greek clings to life, because it is life, because the sun is bright, and there is much animal and sensible enjoyment ; he hates death, because with death all his earthly pleasures are extinguished. The thought of God

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxv. 17.

is far from him, the thought of this world only is in his heart.

With conceptions thus imperfect respecting existence in the unseen world, we cannot be surprised that the doctrine of *a future retribution* is, at least during the earlier periods, but vaguely hinted at in the Old Testament. Moreover, the promises of temporal prosperity for the good, and the threat of punishment, swift and visible in this world for the wicked, tended no doubt to fix men's gaze on the present scene, and to darken, if not absolutely to hide from them, the future recompense. Hence the judgment upon the wicked is not misery in hell, but speedy extinction here. When the Psalmist exclaims in triumph, "The wicked shall be turned into hell<sup>1</sup>,"—it is the unseen world, Sheol, not the place of torment, Gehenna, of which he speaks, and what he anticipates is, not that the wicked will be punished hereafter, but that they will speedily come to an end here, and be cast into the abode of darkness and forgetfulness. Even in a Psalm like the 49th, where the contrast is so striking between the rich in this world, who in their folly live like the brutes, and think to build for themselves an immortality

<sup>1</sup> Ps. ix. 17. Yet, owing to the ambiguity of our English word "hell," which, though now denoting commonly the place of torment, originally meant nothing more than the separate state of spirits, the *hidden* place, without reference to bliss or woe, this text is usually quoted in our pulpits, as teaching the future punishment of the wicked. I may be allowed to refer to my Commentary for an exposition of this, and the other passages, quoted in this Lecture from the Psalms.

here, and the servant of God, sustaining his faith in the hope of everlasting union with God, there is nothing said of future punishment.

“Like sheep they are gathered to the unseen world,  
 Death is their shepherd :  
 And the upright have dominion over them in the morning;  
 And their beauty shall the unseen world consume,  
 That it have no more dwelling-place.”

Whatever sense be attached to the morning—whether the morning of deliverance for those who have been sighing as it were in a night of misery and suffering, crushed and trodden down by their oppressors, or the morning of the resurrection, when the triumph of the righteous shall be complete, when the tables shall be turned, and they and not the wicked shall have dominion, still defeat and darkness, not groans and despair, are the portion of the unjust. It is the same in the 73rd Psalm. The problem of life which there weighed so heavily upon the Psalmist's heart was this, that the constant prosperity of the wicked, the constant suffering of the righteous, seemed to impugn the very righteousness of God. The facts of the world were a glaring contradiction to His government. It was this which perplexed the Psalmist's spirit, as he strove to reconcile those facts with his conscience, and his conscience with his faith. And when at last, tried and shaken, and well nigh swept from his foothold by the waves of doubt, he finds a shelter in the sanctuary of God from the wreck which threatened him, still the light which is

cast on the justice of God falls rather on retribution in this life, than on retribution in the life to come.

“ Oh how suddenly are they destroyed as in a moment ;  
 They come to an end, they are cut off because of terrors ;  
 As one despiseth a dream when he awaketh,  
 (So) Thou O Lord, when Thou arousest Thyself, despisest their  
 image.”

The wicked perish in the very bosom of their prosperity, their end is as sudden as it is fearful, their hard, selfish, unloving life is gone, like a hideous dream, which in our waking moments we forget. No trace is left of that image, which once seemed so fair and so proud. God has poured His contempt upon it, and it has vanished from the earth.

Even in the magnificent song of triumph which the prophet Isaiah raises over the King of Babylon, where he pictures in language, the poetic force and vividness of which have never been surpassed, the descent of the overthrown monarch into Hades, the judgment which falls upon him belongs more to this life than to the next :

“ Hell [Sheol, the unseen world] is moved from beneath for thee,  
 To meet thee at thy coming.  
 It stirreth up for thee the shades below,  
 All the mighty of the earth :  
 It maketh to arise from their thrones  
 All the kings of the nations.  
 All of them answer and say unto thee :  
 Thou also art become weak as we !  
 Thou art made like unto us !  
 Thy pomp is brought down to Sheol,  
 The music of thy harps.

Under thee the worm is spread,  
And worms cover thee.  
How hast thou fallen from heaven,  
O Lucifer, son of the morning!  
How art thou cast down to the earth,  
Thou that didst lord it over the nations!<sup>1</sup>

I do not forget that this is the language of poetry, and the language of poetry, it will be said, is not to be pressed. But so far as we catch here any glimpse into the unseen state, it is a state very different from that which our Christian belief is wont to portray, it is a state in which even the externals of the present life are in some measure at least prolonged. The kings of the earth are still kings below, each one sitting on his throne. They have the memory of their former greatness, they triumph in the fall of a proud and oppressive rival, who comes to take his place among them, but who in that abode of darkness can exercise no sovereignty, and who shorn of his power can inspire no terror.

I am not aware that there is a single passage in the Old Testament, which represents the unseen world as a place of punishment for the ungodly. The final judgment is indeed announced in clear terms by the prophet Daniel, but he is speaking of retribution, not as following immediately on the separation, of the soul from the body, but as following on the sentence pronounced after the resurrec-

<sup>1</sup> Is. xiv. 9—12.

tion. And let me say in passing, does not this fact, that so impenetrable a cloud of darkness rests on the future condition of the wicked, account, partly at least, for much of that language which has so often shocked sensitive minds, in which Jewish bards and prophets cry out for vengeance, on proud tyrants or faithless friends:

“Let death come hastily upon them,  
Let them go down alive into Sheol<sup>1</sup>.”

“Let his days be few,  
And let another take his office<sup>2</sup>.”

“The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth their vengeance,  
He shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the wicked<sup>3</sup>.”

May it not be pleaded in justification of those, who, hating wickedness with all their hearts, saw it great and prosperous in this world, and knew not its terrible chastisement in the world to come, that they longed to see God's righteous judgment executed here, and hoped themselves to be the instruments of His justice? Is it not exactly what we might expect? If to the saints of old, as to us, had been preached “a worm that dieth not and a fire that is not quenched,” would not some accents of sorrow, or of intercession, have mingled with their indignation? Would no balm of pity have been shed upon their verse, no prayer for forgiveness have softened, or turned away those imprecations, which now are poured in a hot lava-stream upon

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lv. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cix. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lviii. 10.

the head of the wicked? Surely had the eyes of the Hebrew Poet been opened to see the terrors of the world to come, his prayer would have been not, 'Blot them out of Thy book,' but rather with Him who hung upon the cross, 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!'

But although the next world is itself shrouded in darkness, and although there is no positive revelation concerning future happiness for the good, and future misery for the wicked, yet Faith ever and anon asserts her prerogative, as the evidence of things not seen, the confident assurance of things hoped for. The hope of the righteous is not altogether hidden from their eyes, like the doom of the wicked.

When the saint of God, in the midst of the discouragements and sorrows of this life, looks for refuge to God, he wins for himself bright, though passing, glimpses of a happiness in store for him beyond the grave. A risen Saviour has not yet indeed taken the sting from death, or robbed the grave of its victory, but the faith which clings to God can rest assured, that God will not forsake it, but will make the soul that trusts in Him, partaker of His own immortality. It was in this faith, that David resisted the temptation which beset him, to

<sup>1</sup> I have entered more fully on this subject in the Introduction to my Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. I. p. lxxiii. and in a note on Ps. xxxv. 22.

<sup>2</sup> See note on Ps. lxxiii. 18.

forego his heavenly hope for an earthly. The nations of the world, by whom he was surrounded, were distinguished in art and science, and conspicuous in all that could give lustre and strength to empire. Wealth and commerce, luxury and power, contributed to recommend and illustrate the seductive idolatries of the vast and aggressive kingdoms, by which the Syrian shepherds were hemmed in. The god of this world was ready with his whisper, 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' And how was it that the fascination was broken? How was it that the Poet-king could say with righteous scorn,

"Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer,  
Neither take their names upon my lips!"<sup>1</sup>

It was because he had tasted a purer joy, a holier pleasure. It was because he could say to the eternal God,

"Thou art my Lord:  
I have no good beyond Thee."

It was because he could claim for himself a blessing like that of Levi,

"Jehovah Himself is my portion,"

and triumphantly exclaim,

"I have set Jehovah always before me;  
Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved."

Could he dream for a moment, that death should

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xvi. 4.



sever between him and his God? In that hour of resolve, and joyful self-consecration, and ardent cleaving of the soul to God, could it doubt its own immortality? The life of God which was its life, was its own sufficient and triumphant witness. That life could never perish. The breath of God was not breathed into man in vain. It must impart even to the frail tabernacle, which it had helped to fashion, something of its own eternity. Hope resting on God made all the future its own:

"Thou wilt make me know the path of Life,  
Fulness of Joy in Thy Presence,  
Pleasures at Thy right hand for evermore."

No philosophic reasoning comes to the aid of the Hebrew, as he questions with himself concerning a life hereafter. He can construct no argument for the immateriality of the soul, he can build up no plausible hypothesis, and find no legends of his race which shall stay his trembling heart in the hour of his dissolution. He does not reason, 'I think; therefore I am;': 'I shall continue to think; therefore I shall continue to be.' He does not argue with himself, The soul is one and indivisible; therefore it cannot perish. He does not draw his hopes from the constitution of man, from his memory, his affections, his intellect, his sense of law and duty. Even in face of the terrible problems of life, and in sight of all the prosperous wrong-doing, which was so great a trial to his constancy, he does not escape from his perplexity by any chain of reasoning, by any ana-

logies that Nature might suggest and philosophy confirm. He does not infer, that, because the world is out of joint, God's righteousness must have a larger sphere of action, than this world and the short years of man, and so conclude that there is a life to come, in which the vindication of God's moral government shall be complete. His is a grander logic, for it is the logic of the heart. His conclusions are reached, not in the schools, but in the sanctuary of God. There, drawing near to God, who is his Life, in penitence, in humility, in adoration, in faith, he can but wonder that he should have so "pierced himself" with the goads of doubt, that he should have been like the beasts in his ignorance and folly<sup>1</sup>. There, casting himself into the Everlasting arms, he knows that these shall be beneath him, though heart and flesh should fail. There, holding sweet converse with his Eternal Friend, he is sure, that the God who has stooped to speak to him, as a friend, will not suffer him to drop into the abyss of annihilation. His life is no passing phenomenon. He is not like the tree, or the flower, or the bird, or the beast, creatures of God's hand who know Him not, and do but yield Him the homage of a reasonless praise. He knows God, he has spoken to God, he has heard the voice of God in his heart. This is no illusion, but the most blessed, as it is the most certain, of all truths. Faith and love have won their everlasting victory in those words, which will

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxiii. 21, 22.

for all time remain the noblest expression of the soul pouring itself out towards God :

“But as for me—I am always by Thee,  
 Thou hast holden me by my right hand.  
 Thou wilt guide me in Thy counsel,  
 And afterwards Thou wilt take me to glory.  
 Whom have I in heaven but Thee?  
 And beside Thee, there is none upon earth in whom I delight.  
 My flesh and my heart may fail,  
 But God is the rock of my heart and my portion for ever<sup>1</sup>.”

This great truth, then, of a continuity of existence is felt out, rather than reasoned out, by the Jew. And hence we so often find that the doctrine of Immortality is implied rather than expressed, in the Old Testament. We infer its presence, where the language does not directly convey it. When a Psalmist writes,

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
 And I will dwell in the house of Jehovah for ever<sup>2</sup> ;”

we are certainly not justified (unless it be for our own private edification) in interpreting his words to mean, that he expected to dwell for ever in God's presence in heaven. But we are justified in concluding from the very largeness of the expression, that he is uttering a hope and a conviction, that the God, whose loving-kindness he has tasted all his life long, will not suffer him to drop, like a withered leaf from

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxiii. 23—26.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxiii. 6. See Calvin, *in loc.*

the tree, only to mingle with the dust beneath. Or again, who that reads such words of bounding joy in God, such intensity and greatness of affection, pouring itself out upon God, as we find in the 63rd Psalm,

“O God, Thou art my God,  
My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh pineth for Thee,  
For thy loving-kindness is better than life;

—who that reads words such as these can persuade himself, that the affection thus centered upon *God* could believe itself mocked, could for a moment conceive, that the love of God, which is the life of God, would pass away like water or an untimely birth? The Love of God is Immortality. So likewise, what is the meaning of that sublime hymn, which, written by Moses in the desert, is now emphatically the Christian's funeral anthem? Is it only a wail over disappointed hopes? Is it nothing but an exceeding bitter cry over the transitoriness of human life? Does it sum only the years of our mortal pilgrimage, and shut out all beyond? If so, then whence the instinct of the Christian Church, which bids us use it as Christians, strong in hope, by the grave of those we love? In those words we discern the hope which rises above this world. For what means the prayer,

“So teach us to number our days,  
That we may gather a heart of wisdom<sup>1</sup>,”

if that wisdom come to an end with the seventy

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xc. 12.

years of our pilgrimage? Or why speak of the eternal Jehovah, as "the dwelling-place" of man "in all generations," if the hearts He has gathered into that home drop from it and are no more remembered? No, whatever doubt and darkness might rest upon the grave, however at times the Jewish believer might shrink in vague terror from death and the uncertainties beyond death, yet he who could say, 'O God, thou art my God,' had the witness within himself, that his life could never perish, that neither Death nor Hell could pluck him out of the hand of God<sup>1</sup>.

It may possibly have appeared to some minds, that I have not given sufficient weight to more direct testimony, expressive of the future hopes of the saints of old. I cannot disguise my conviction that some passages, alleged in proof of that hope, do not bear the full stress of the argument based upon them. In particular the doctrine of a Resurrection, which it must be remembered, is quite distinct from the belief in a future existence, holds by no means a prominent place in the Old Testament. It first appears distinctly in the Prophet Isaiah<sup>2</sup>. Ezekiel's parable of a national resurrection<sup>3</sup> may be taken as evidence that the doctrine was not unknown to him. Daniel expresses it in clear and unam-

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xc. 1.

<sup>2</sup> In the very able Lectures of my immediate predecessor, Mr Pritchard, substantially the same view is taken of the Jewish hope of immortality. See his *Hulsean Lectures*, pp. 33—55.

<sup>3</sup> ch. xxvi. 19.

<sup>4</sup> ch. xxxvii.

biguous terms<sup>1</sup>. But these are all the certain witnesses, whose voice makes itself heard along all the centuries of Old Testament Revelation. The celebrated passage in the Book of Job<sup>2</sup>, when once fairly rendered, and taken in connection with the general scope of the book, is seen to have no bearing on the question. Our English Version has so imprinted this sense upon our minds, and the association of those grand and impressive words with some of the most solemn scenes of our earthly existence has so consecrated them to us, as the utterance of our Christian faith, that it requires some courage to listen to any other interpretation. It is a shock to us to be asked to give up the familiar rendering. We shrink from tampering with it. Yet that rendering is certainly false. There is no allusion I believe either to a resurrection or to a future existence. The two great Continental Scholars<sup>3</sup> who maintain a reference here to a future life, do so only by substituting the forced and unnatural and improbable rendering, "*without* my flesh I shall see God," for the simple and straightforward one, "*from* my flesh shall I see God." And most certainly if there be any expression here of a hope reaching beyond this world, then there can be no doubt, I think, that Job looks for a resurrection, not merely for a future life. But on the other hand I am quite unable to see how, even supposing the words capable of such an inter-

<sup>1</sup> ch. xii. 2.<sup>2</sup> ch. xix. 23—27.<sup>3</sup> Ewald and Renan. See more in the Appendix.

pretation, it can be made to harmonize with the context, and especially with the very next answer of Job to his friends, where contrasting the lot of men in this life,—one man “dying in full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet,” and another “dying in the bitterness of his soul, and never eating with pleasure”—he sums up their end alike,

“They shall lie down alike in the dust,  
And the worm shall cover them;”

never hinting at anything beyond. The close of the Book, where Job is recompensed *in this life* for all his losses and all his calamities, comports best with the obvious meaning of his words in the passage under consideration, that he hopes in this life, in the body, in his flesh which he now wears, to see God face to face, as his righteous Avenger, maintaining his cause, and putting his adversaries to confusion. It was precisely because Job had no clear vision of the life to come, that he was so oppressed with the problem of God’s moral government here. It was precisely on that account, that it weighed upon his heart, “heavy as lead and deep almost as life.” Had the sunrise of conviction once flashed upon his mind, that his body laid in the dust should be raised again to a glorious immortality, in the presence of God his Redeemer, could he have fallen back again immediately into the tone of distress and perplexity, which continues to pervade his language? Was there any need for God to appear

for his rebuke? Must not the drama have appropriately closed, with this lofty recognition of Eternal Righteousness, misunderstood here, manifesting itself in all its integrity hereafter?

That view of the Old Testament revelation respecting a future state which I have endeavoured to establish, is singularly confirmed by the argument of our Lord as recorded by three of the Evangelists. He teaches us to find immortality and a resurrection in the Old Testament, but He teaches us to find it in the spirit rather than in the letter. He teaches us to look for it, not as a dogma but as a life, not as a revelation, but as implied in and underlying all revelation. He refuted Sadducean scepticism by an appeal to the writings of Moses, by an appeal to those very writings, which to a superficial observer seem to make almost an ostentation of reticence on the subject. And it is important to observe what is the exact nature of His appeal. How does He frame His argument? He might have appealed to some passage, such as that in Isaiah, "Awake and sing ye that dwell in dust," or that in Daniel, "Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall wake and arise." But in the very fact that He omits all reference to these more obvious passages, He seems to imply, that there is but little of a direct witness to this truth in the Old Testament. If He had quoted these, the Sadducee might have argued, that they were as nothing, a mere speck, in the whole mass of Revelation, or he might have ventured even



to question the authority of the Book of Daniel. But our Lord leaves no door for such fencing with texts. He does not attempt to hang so important a doctrine on one or two passages, which, it might be alleged, stood alone in their bearing. His divine philosophy goes far deeper; it lays bare the inmost heart and spirit of the Old Testament. He shows us how inevitably a Resurrection follows, from the very recognition of that relation between God and man of which Moses speaks. If the Eternal God has made men His friends, if He has taken them into covenant with Himself, and declared to them His counsel, if He has given them their names, singling out His friends from the world, and vouchsafing in infinite grace to call Himself their God, then He does not mock them with fleeting hopes and transitory promises. He does not bid them stay themselves on Him, for threescore years and ten, and then cast them into the abyss of annihilation. Even a human father would not let the day come, if he could help it, when his child should cease to know and love him; even a human friend would never cast from him the friend, whose heart was bound up in his own. Much less does the Eternal Father and the Eternal Friend,—much less does He whose name is Life and Love, suffer His children and His friends to perish. God is not a man that He should lie or change. His is an Everlasting Love. And because He calls the man His friend, because He calls Himself the God of

the individual, singled out by name, therefore the whole man must survive the shock of death. It is not the spirit's immortality which alone is secured. It is not a mere prolongation of existence, of which the pledge is given. The body as well as the soul is God's. In the body, He calls these men His children; on the body, He sets the seal of His covenant: And therefore, though the flesh may turn to corruption, and the worm may feed upon it, yet from their flesh shall they see God, see Him not only in this world, the Avenger of their cause, but see Him in the world to come, the Judge who metes out to them their recompense, the Rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.

Yes, a Resurrection is everywhere in the Old Testament to him who can look beneath the surface. It lurks in every word which expresses a sense of personal relation to God. It breathes in every prayer of faith. It is the life of every hymn in which the soul lifts itself, on wings of light and love, to the Throne of the Eternal. Before you can expunge that doctrine from its pages, you must expunge the name of every one of the heroes of Faith, you must blot out the burning words of Psalmists and Prophets, you must deny the reality of every aspiration after truth and holiness and purity, you must assert that God is the God of the dead not of the living; in a word, you must assert the empire of universal death; for "all who live, live unto Him."

We see reason, then, to correct our first impression. Though we meet in the Old Testament, for many centuries, with no express revelation of a Future Life, though darkness seems for the most part to rest upon the grave, yet the hope of the faithful Jew is, after all, brighter and truer than that of the wisest of the heathen; for though not kindled by direct promise, it rested nevertheless on a known and manifested God. And if we trace the history of Jewish belief beyond the Old Testament scriptures, through the four hundred years which intervened between the last of the Prophets and the Advent of Christ, we shall see that this belief gains greatly in distinctness of expression. Thus the Author of *The Wisdom of Solomon* has portrayed, in language full of truth and beauty, the solemn retributions of eternity. He has drawn the picture of the ungodly leading their lives of selfish merriment, saying, "Come, let us enjoy the good things of youth, let us crown ourselves with rosebuds ere they be withered, and let no flower of the spring pass by us;" and justifying their conduct by the plea that "in the death of a man there is no remedy, neither was there any man known to have returned from the grave." And he rebukes them for their blindness: "Such things they did imagine and were deceived, for their own wickedness hath blinded them. As for the mysteries of God they knew them not; neither hoped they for the wages of righteousness, nor discerned a reward for blameless souls.

For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity<sup>1</sup>." Then looking on the end of the righteous he exclaims: "But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is *their hope full of IMMORTALITY*." And again, "The righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand<sup>2</sup>."

It is in the sure hope that they shall attain to "a better resurrection," that the Martyr-brothers in *The Maccabees* refuse to accept the tyrant's mercy, proffered on the condition that they shall deny their God. Thus with his last breath does one of them declare his faith, "Thou like a fury takest us out of this present life, but the King of the world *shall raise us up*, who have died for His laws, *unto everlasting life*." And the heroic mother standing by, and looking with undaunted spirit on the agonies of her sons, exhorts them to a like courage and constancy, saying "Doubtless the Creator of the world, who formed the generation of man, and found out the

<sup>1</sup> Chap. ii. 21—23.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. iii. 1—4.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. v. 15—16.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Macc. vii. 9.

beginning of all things, will also of His own mercy give you breath and life again, as ye now regard not your own selves for His laws' sake<sup>1</sup>."

A hope thus clear and thus explicit seems almost to anticipate on this point the Christian revelation. There is no longer any gloom, any shrinking from death, even in its most terrible forms. The future recompense and the resurrection from the dead are unquestioned articles of the popular belief.

We have traced thus far the growth of belief. We have marked its several stages. First, there is the belief (at least implied) in a *future existence*, the continuance after death of the personal life, though evidently this was held amidst much uncertainty as to the nature of that existence. We observe next, how the doctrine of a *future retribution* gradually took shape; and finally, how the doctrine of a *Resurrection* became at last an admitted article of the popular Creed. And we have seen, further, that the principal factor in this belief, thus gradually forcing itself into light, was not a distinct revelation, but the living consciousness of the soul's relation to God. He who knew and loved God did so, because he had the life of God, and therefore had within himself the witness that he could not perish. Hope, the hope of the future, was rooted in Faith and Love, and like these made eternity its own. -And so it was, as the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches us, that the saints of old "con-

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* ver. 23.

fessed that they were strangers and pilgrims" here, and "desired a heavenly country, and looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and Maker is God."

We might conclude here. But a question arises out of this investigation into the nature and growth of the Jewish belief which cannot be altogether put aside. That there was in the revelation given to Moses a strange reticence on this subject cannot be denied. Are we able to account for it? Why was there this silence? why was there only a gradual and partial disclosure, for many ages of Jewish life, on a subject which is of so absorbing importance, which lies so near to the heart of man, which is so essential a part of all religion, and which did in fact form a leading feature of every heathen system? One thing is perfectly clear that Moses could not have been ignorant of the truth. For Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and the Egyptians, as we have seen, went beyond all other nations in their assertion of personal immortality and a judgement after death. His silence is not the silence of ignorance. Is it the silence of a deliberate reserve, or how shall we account for it? The phenomenon is so remarkable, that it has engaged the attention of great thinkers in all ages of the Church. Augustine and Chrysostom, Aquinas and Leibnitz, Bossuet and Warburton have each attempted to solve this problem, but they scarcely win from us a partial assent. The very elaborate attempt

of a recent writer<sup>1</sup> to deal with the same difficulty is anything but convincing. It is scarcely possible to read it, without feeling with how much satisfaction the contrary thesis would have been maintained, had the language of Scripture happened to be the other way. With what a tone of triumph would the Christian Apologist have then appealed to such a revelation, as the most convincing proof of the moral superiority of the Jewish faith to that of the Gentile. But though we may not be able wholly to explain the phenomenon, some light falls upon it from two considerations.

1. First let us remember that God does not always teach us as men would have Him teach. There is no haste, no impatience, no crowding of truth upon truth in His teaching<sup>2</sup>. His lessons are deliberate and orderly, and to us who are always in a hurry may seem but slowly imparted. But He who works in Eternity and is not cramped by time makes no haste in what He does. One principle runs through all the Divine Education. He speaks to us as we are able to bear it, here a little, and there a little. Thus He imprints His lessons upon our minds. Thus He helps us to educate ourselves. Things rapidly learnt are easily forgotten; truths which we attain to through discipline and struggle and failure and disappointment, through much self-questioning,

<sup>1</sup> Th. H. Martin, *La Vie Future, suivant la Raison et suivant la Foi*.

<sup>2</sup> On this slowness in the Divine teaching, see Mr Pritchard's *Hulsean Lectures*. Lect. III.

and much self-denial, and much earnest striving, are those which lay hold of us, enter into us, form as it were the staple of our character. They are those to which we cling most steadfastly, and which are most serviceable to us in the long run. So it was with the truth of the soul's immortality: the very struggles through which God's saints had to pass to assure themselves of the truth, may have been the very reason, why the truth at last appeared to the Jew, with a brightness, a distinctness, a purity, which it never possessed for the Gentile.

2. But we may, I think, see a Divine purpose in this reticence<sup>1</sup>. God was teaching the fathers of the Jewish Church the primary truth on which all other truth was to rest, that He and nothing else was their sufficient portion. "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward," this was His great word to Abraham. It was by this that Abraham lived. The whole discipline of his life had this purpose in it, to lead him to find the everlasting God, his strength, his portion, his all. He was called "the friend of God," and he who had God for his friend could need, could have, nothing more. On this fact Abraham's life was built, on this, the lives of all his true children. The Jews were not merely designed to be witnesses to the world of the Unity of God. They were this no doubt, but they were far more. They were witnesses to a better truth, that the Eternal God loves men, and calls them

<sup>1</sup> See my *Commentary on the Psalms*, Vol. I. pp. lxxvi, lxxvii.



His children and His friends, and that men can be, and can know themselves to be, His friends and His children. It is of this truth that Psalmists and Prophets are full. The poetry of the Hebrews, it has been well said, is "a poetry of friendship between God and man<sup>1</sup>." And it seems to have been designed, that the truth of this Divine communion should occupy so commanding a position, that no other truth should be suffered, as it were, to come into competition with it. This was to stand alone in its grandeur, because upon it man's life was to be built. We must rest upon the broad foundation of faith, before we can have the hope that maketh not ashamed ; and never can there be a sublimer heroism of Faith than that, which, claiming no promise of future recompense, goes down into the mystery of Darkness, leaning only upon God.

<sup>1</sup> Herder.

## LECTURE IV.

### *THE HOPE OF THE CHRISTIAN.*

JOHN XI. 25, 26 AND XIV. 19.

*...I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.  
...Because I live, ye shall live also.*

WE have watched hitherto the instinct of the human heart, struggling to assert, in the face of death and corruption, its hope of immortality. We have seen how deep-rooted the conviction of another life is, and at the same time, how unable Reason is to attain to certainty respecting it. On the one hand, man craves and yearns for immortality: on the other hand, a future life seems to slip away from him in proportion as he strives to satisfy himself of its reality. Reason and Conscience are alike witnesses to the truth, but they can neither create the truth, nor discover the truth, nor prove the truth. Only when the truth comes, can they recognize it and embrace it as the truth.

Now the Revelation of God addresses itself to us, as having needs and instincts of the heart and conscience, and it satisfies those needs and confirms those instincts. Strictly speaking, it does not bring before us something strange, novel, unheard of, something far removed from our nature and our modes of thought, and bid us accept it with a wondering faith, because it comes from above. No,—beyond all things else, God's revelation of Himself to us, is also a revelation to us of ourselves. It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, not only because it lays all "naked and opened" before God, but because it discovers to ourselves the depth and the meaning of our own hearts, their motives, their impulses, their yearnings, their inmost being. Man cannot understand himself; he cannot express rightly his own thoughts; when he essays to do so, he speaks with lisping tongue, like an infant; and, like an infant, he struggles for the word which shall express his meaning, which shall utter and convey his thoughts. And Christ, the Eternal Word, gives him the word he needs, interprets his heart, and helps him to interpret it to himself. No revelation can be a true revelation, which does not thus explain to us our inmost selves, which does not break the fetters that limit and circumscribe our thought and knowledge, which does not set free our stammering tongues, teaching us to speak plainly. That which gives it its right and its power over us is, that coming from without, it

seems to be the voice of all that is purest within ; that the truth which it declares is in fact our own truth, the truth which we are longing to find and to utter, the truth which we need. It was this 'divine word' for which a Socrates was seeking, that upon it, as 'a securer vessel,' he might make his journey without peril, and for lack of which, he was obliged to content himself with 'the best of human words,' trusting to it, as to a raft, for the voyage of life. It was this 'divine word' which a Paul had found, when he wrote, "for we *know* that if the earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens<sup>1</sup>." We listen to Socrates, in his prison at Athènes, ere yet the hour is come when he must drink the hemlock, discoursing with calm dignity of death and immortality, but confessing his uncertainty as to what shall be hereafter, and solacing himself with the thought, that at the worst death is but a dreamless sleep. We turn to the letter which Paul wrote, from his prison at Rome, to his Philip-pian friends, and there is no shadow of doubt or uncertainty here ; every word is lit up with the radiance of joy and hope, as he contemplates the approach of death—"I have a *desire* to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better;" "to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

It is impossible to read such words, without feeling, that, to the Apostle Paul, Christ Jesus was

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 1.

no phantom of the imagination, but a true and living person. It is plain, moreover, that it was in consequence of his own conscious relation to Christ, that he had so calm and so sure a hope for the future. That hope rested, he asserts again and again, upon the Resurrection of Christ, as an historical fact to which he could appeal, and upon the risen life of Christ, as an experienced fact, of which he had the witness in himself. St Paul must have had his doubts and his perplexities like other men; one whose heart was capable of such deep tenderness and such deep sadness as his, could never have escaped from them altogether. Yet it is not by any arguments, except such as were based on the Resurrection of Christ, that he seeks to remove doubts, and to plant in other hearts the hope which had given courage to his own. St Paul, trained in the school of the Pharisees, had been taught from his earliest years to accept the resurrection, as an article of religious belief; yet he never falls back on that teaching as the ground of his hope. In Christ alone did he find "the rock of his heart, and his portion for ever." It was because Christ lived, that he lived. Christ was his life here; Christ was in him, the hope of glory hereafter. It was this certain assurance of a risen Christ, this conscious relation to a risen Lord, which filled him with such confidence and exultation in the prospect of death, which made him even "desire to depart," that he might "for ever be with the Lord." And here, too, has been the secret and the

strength of all Christian hope, from the Apostle's days to our own. It rests upon this double fact, the external fact of the Resurrection of Jesus, and the internal fact of a present participation in that risen life. Hence it is that Christian hope derives the confident certainty, by which it is distinguished from all other hope whatsoever.

Now this is the point upon which I am anxious to insist. I am anxious to put before you—or rather, let me say, to indicate, to suggest, briefly and imperfectly though it must be, the outlines of a philosophy of Christian hope. Man and the world are alike, in their very constitution, prophets of immortality. Man puts away from his lips with loathing the cup of annihilation which you offer him, as the anodyne of his misery. But where shall he find the ambrosia of immortality? How shall he be quite sure of—not desire merely, nor tremblingly expect, nor doubtfully anticipate or dread, a life beyond this life?—how shall he be *sure*, that Death has no power to destroy him; but that he, the same person, the same in his memory, in his thoughts, in his affections, in his will, shall continue, knowing himself to be himself, and perpetuating his own individual existence beyond the grave? Christianity answers by two facts:

I. First by the Resurrection of Christ.

II. And next by the Life of Christ communicated to us.

I. First, by the Resurrection of Christ. Christian hope differs emphatically from all other hope

in this, that it rests, neither upon any instinct of the human heart, nor upon any inference from human reasoning; nor even upon a promise sent from heaven to earth,—and capable, as all words are, of a variety of interpretation—but upon a fact, upon a Person. One is set before us, who born into this world, as we ourselves are, and living here a chequered human life, in no way removed from our common lot, bearing upon it the unmistakeable impress of human thoughts and feelings, has in that human form achieved the victory over death. It is a human history we are reading, when we read the history of Christ. We can follow it step by step, a series of facts, apart from any theory we may form of it, or from any colouring with which imagination may invest it. If a future life had merely been announced, we might have built upon the announcement what hopes and what hypotheses we pleased. But here we see One made like unto us, in all points tempted like as we are, united to us in the fellowship of our trial and suffering and death, rising again from the dead and taking with Him the nature which He wears, into the very presence of the Majesty on high. Hence we have the visible pledge and the type of our own resurrection.

It is indeed quite conceivable, that such a spectacle might not be sufficient of itself to assure us of our own resurrection to life. We might argue, and on reasonable grounds, that such a resurrection, after all, was not a type and a prophecy, but an exception

to a universal law. The very perfection of our Lord's human character might seem to merit some exclusive distinction. The cases, it might be said, are not really parallel. That life of spotless beauty stands alone in the world's history. It may well be crowned with glory. But why should the crown wherewith God has crowned that perfect life, be placed on the head of those, who, if they strive at all to lift themselves towards heaven, strive with poor, feeble, broken efforts, which seem to end in nothing but disappointment? How shall we, born in sin and all our life tainted with corruption, gather from Christ's resurrection any hope, since assuredly we have no claim to His reward? Most certainly, if Jesus Christ were only man, this argument would remain in all its force. The resurrection of one perfect man could be no valid ground for expecting the resurrection of millions of beings imperfect as ourselves. But the Incarnation of Jesus gives its true and proper significance to His Resurrection. It is no longer a unit of the human race, who has been singled out for special favour. It is no longer a solitary individual, having no other relation to the race than this, that like them he has flesh and blood. It is One who, as equal with the Eternal Father, has the power, as He has the right, to take up the manhood into God. The Divine Word did not unite Himself to a man. He was "made flesh." He became man. He took our nature, and therefore in all that He does and is, our nature has



a share. He took it in its weakness, that He might redeem, purify, exalt it. He took it in its liability to death, that in it He might vanquish death, and set free those, "who through the fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." By this His union of the human nature with the Divine, He became the Second Head of our race, and therefore in the truest and deepest sense its Redeemer. For he did not stand aloof from us to save us; He did not stretch out His hand from heaven to pluck us from the jaws of hell; He did not come as a conqueror to break our chains; but as a friend He placed Himself in our prison house, and refused not to share our bondage. All that the First Adam had brought upon us of ignominy, degradation and death, the Second Adam took upon Himself, and by taking it, He put it for ever away. Sin had made human nature corrupt and foul, and the Sinless Man cleansed it from the awful taint. Death had made man his prey and set up, as it seemed, a Universal Empire, and the human Lord of Life broke in pieces that dread dominion. He did not merely reverse the sentence of death, by an arbitrary annulling of it, but He did so by the actual victory of Life over Death, in the same nature which had become subject to Death. The Life of God in man vanquished Death: it was impossible that that life could be holden of Death. The First Adam was made "a living soul," and therefore could only transmit to his posterity the natural life, tainted with sin

and containing in it the seed of death. The Second Adam was "a quickening spirit," having life in Himself, and of power to impart that life to others: because the First Adam was "of the earth, earthy"; the Second Adam was "the Lord from heaven."

The Resurrection, then, of Christ Jesus, both God and Man, is to us the pattern and the sure pledge of our own resurrection, because He is inseparably united to us as the Second Head of our race.

II. But again, Christianity establishes our hopes, not only by pointing to an outward fact, but by the experience of an inward fact, the communication of the life of Christ to all who believe in Him. Jesus Christ is the Resurrection because He is the Life, and He imparts that life to us, "Because I live, ye shall live also." There is a sense in which it may almost be said, that the resurrection is begun here, because the germ of it is to be found in every renewed and sanctified nature. A power has been put forth upon the man, which must issue in his final and complete glorification. A life has been begun, which in its very nature can never end, because it is the life of God Himself. The resurrection to life, though it is sometimes described as a gift, is also to be regarded as the natural and necessary development of the work of grace. Both truths are stated by our Lord in His discourse with the Jews, recorded in the 5th chapter of St John's gospel: "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth

on Him that sent me, *hath everlasting life*, and shall not come into condemnation, but *is passed from death unto life*. Verily, verily I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is, when *the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live*. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself, and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man." Here as in so many other places of the New Testament, we are taught that eternal life is not merely to be looked for beyond the grave, but is a present reality. There is a quickening of the spirit to newness of life here, as well as a quickening of the body hereafter. Of this twofold life, Christ is the source. Christ gives eternal life to all who believe in Him; Christ raises the dead: and He does both the one and the other, by virtue of that Divine life which He receives from the Father and yet has in Himself<sup>1</sup>, of which He is at once the Author and the Giver. It was to give this life that He came into the world: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly<sup>2</sup>." It is from Him that this life is derived; it is only by communion with Him that this life can be sustained. So he declares: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever<sup>3</sup>." And again: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and

<sup>1</sup> John v. 26; comp. vi. 57.

<sup>2</sup> John x. 17.

<sup>3</sup> John vi. 51.

drink His blood, *ye have no life in you*. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood *hath eternal life*; and *I will raise him up at the last day*<sup>1</sup>." Here likewise there is a reiteration of the same truths; here there is the same intimate connection between the present gift of eternal life, the present partaking of Christ, and the future resurrection to glory. You cannot separate these things. That which is spiritual is in its very nature eternal. Death is but as the episode of a sleep; it has no power to touch the heart of that life which is "hid with Christ in God." That life given here in the body imparts to the body share in its triumph over death, is the seal and the pledge, that even though the body fall into dust, it shall be raised again from the dust, incorruptible. So essential, indeed, is this connection between the life eternal and the resurrection of the body, that it is almost the only view of the resurrection which is presented to us in Scripture. There are, I believe, but two passages in the New Testament, in which the resurrection of the wicked is so much as mentioned; once by our Lord, when he speaks of a resurrection of damnation, to which they that have done evil shall come forth from their graves<sup>2</sup>; and once by St Paul, when he acknowledges, as a truth common to himself with his Jewish opponents, a resurrection both of the just and the unjust<sup>3</sup>. But with these exceptions, the other view of the Resurrection is exclusively pre-

<sup>1</sup> John vi. 53, 54.<sup>2</sup> John v. 29.<sup>3</sup> Acts xxiv. 15.

sented; it is invariably spoken of as the fruit and result of a spiritual life, of which Christ is the fountain and source. The one, as it were, by a moral and spiritual necessity, implies the other. "Even the universal resurrection," it has been truly said, "shall be but the natural development of that which now works in the children of God<sup>1</sup>."

Sometimes the same lofty and mysterious truth is presented to us under another aspect; and the Resurrection is associated with the indwelling in our hearts of a Divine Person. Thus, for instance, St Paul speaks of Christ as "our Life," as "living in us," as "in us the hope of glory." And again, he says, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken your mortal bodies also on account of His Spirit that dwelleth in you<sup>2</sup>." The Resurrection follows from such inhabitation: those bodies, in which He has vouchsafed to make His tabernacle, are not destined merely to be the prey of the worm and to be left in corruption. I know it may be said, that to speak of such a Divine life and such a Divine indwelling is mysticism. It may be set down as a pious sentiment, or the dream of a disordered imagination. Yet a heathen<sup>3</sup> will rebuke the hasty speech and the shallow thought, which deny that man's heart can be the chosen abode of a heavenly visitant, and will tell us, that "there dwells

<sup>1</sup> Archer Butler.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Seneca.

in us a Holy Spirit, who keeps watch over our thoughts and actions." And surely unless we are prepared to deny the possibility of so high and blessed a gift of grace, unless we are prepared to maintain, that the noblest and purest of our race, the men of the loftiest aims and holiest lives, have been the victims of a mere delusion, we must admit the reasonableness of the scheme, which connects the life here with the life hereafter; we must admit the force of the conclusion, that the body, which God has deigned to sanctify, shall be raised again to a glorious immortality. If it be true, that Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word of the Father, has as the fruit of His own Death and Resurrection sent the Holy Ghost, to dwell in our hearts and to make our bodies His temple, then that Divine visitant sheds His sanctifying influences upon the whole man. Every member of the body is consecrated to the service of the most High God. The eye, the ear, the hands, the feet, all have been baptized with a Divine baptism. "Holiness to the Lord" is written even on the outermost edge of the garment of the flesh. Not only is the heart filled with joy and peace, with meekness and gentleness, with faith and hope and love, but the body in all its appetites and desires is governed and sanctified by the same holy Presence. Those imperious lusts, those ungovernable passions, which naturally hold the dominion of the body, till the flesh imposes its thralldom upon the spirit, and the soul itself, made the slave of lust, becomes tran-

substantiated into flesh', are not crushed and extirpated by the crushing and extirpating of the body, but are brought into obedience to the law of the Spirit of Life. The body as well as the spirit is holy. One part of our nature is not left to curse and barrenness whilst the dew of heaven falls richly upon the other. When St Paul exhorts the Colossians, as partakers of a spiritual resurrection together with Christ, to "mind the things above," connecting the exhortation with the thought of Christ's appearing, and the future glory of the Christian, he immediately adds: "Deaden therefore your members which are upon the earth<sup>2</sup>;" and he proceeds to enumerate sins of the flesh, sins for which the body in its members and organs furnishes the instruments. And when writing to the Romans, in the passage already quoted, he speaks of the resurrection, as effected on account of the indwelling of the Spirit, he subjoins the exhortation: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do deaden the deeds of the body ye shall live<sup>3</sup>." The body is to be revered and sanctified, because the Spirit of God dwells in it, and because by His mighty power working in it, it shall be raised from death. Thus, then, according to the Christian scheme, our hope is doubly assured. It is assured not only by the Resurrection of Christ as an outward fact: it

<sup>1</sup> *Anima victa libidine fit caro.*—Augustine.

<sup>2</sup> Colosa. iii. 1—10.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii. 12, 13.

is assured by the gift of eternal life, by the indwelling of Christ and of His Spirit in our hearts, there reigning and ruling, sanctifying the whole man; not purifying the spirit only, but shedding a divine unction upon the body, and so giving the pledge and the foretaste not only of immortality, but of a Resurrection to life and glory.

Such a hope, consistent in itself, and satisfying the deepest needs of our nature, essentially differs from and transcends all pre-Christian hope.

What was the hope of the best and wisest of pagan philosophers? At most, a bare hope of Immortality, a bare hope of personal continuance after death, in some vague and shadowy form. But Christ does not preach to us Immortality, He does not promise us merely an eternity of individual existence; He gives us now the life which cannot die, He gives it to us in the body, that the body may be consecrated to God. Nay more, God has not only come to tabernacle *with us* in human flesh, but He dwells *in us*, He is one with us, His Life is ours. Our souls and our bodies are His, filled and pervaded with His Life, and therefore can never perish.

What was the hope of the Jew? Kindling with triumph and ecstasy, as it rose above the world and time and death, and laid its hand upon God, it won for itself the conviction, that He who was the Life of His children and the Rock of their hearts, would also be their portion for ever. But the Jew had still the horror of Death unvanquished, of the grave from



which none had ever returned. Whereas the Christian believer is partaker of a life which he not only knows to be the Life of God, but the Life of God which *in human flesh* has overcome death, and therefore the sure pledge that he himself also shall overcome death. It is the same Life; it must therefore win the same victory. Not only is it true, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," but it is also true—and of this he has the witness in himself—"Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die." Death is abolished. The Life of which he has been made partaker is one over which Death has no power, for it is the Life of Him who says: "Because I live, ye shall live also."

But again, the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body is not only self-consistent, it commends itself to us as in perfect harmony with the observed facts of our nature. For all experience shows us how close and intimate is the union between the soul and the body. It is quite true that so far as our observation extends, the material organism is destroyed by death. It may be very difficult to frame any probable hypothesis for the reconstitution of the body, after it has turned to corruption. And yet as by an imperious necessity, the body enters into all our conceptions of another life: we would not "be unclothed but clothed upon." And this is not exclusively a Christian sentiment. In spite of the famous saying of Plotinus, who thanked God 'that he was not tied to an immortal

of death. Is it not almost as if the soul had but taken flight for a moment, and the body were waiting for the return of its tenant? Never can one who has witnessed this forget it. In circumstances favourable to the preservation of the body, Death has no power to rob it of this witness to its immortality. Who that has ever seen that wonderful death-group in the dead-house of the Hospice of the St Bernard has not felt fascinated and appalled by this triumph of life in death? In a corner of that dark chamber are to be seen a mother and her child. Her eye is turned to Heaven in supplication, and agony is written in every feature as she strains her child to her bosom, and prays to God for mercy and succour. It was thus she sank in the blinding snow, it was thus she died. Years have passed since then; yet the thought, the agony, the prayer of that last moment, are written on her face, never to be obliterated, till the form shall crumble, and return to its dust, and perish. Such a spectacle gives us a vivid conception of the imperishable connection between mind and body. It helps us to understand how possible it is—may we not say how natural it is?—that in the world to come, the soul should resume its ancient fellowship with the body. Would not this indeed be almost a logical inference from the belief, that in the other world we our proper selves shall still continue? Human beings consist of body as well as soul. The continuance of human beings implies the continuance of body as well as of



soul. Only as we anticipate the enlargement and perfection of the powers of the soul, so we may reasonably anticipate the perfecting and the exaltation of the body. In the language of the Apostle, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

The Christian Doctrine of a Future Life, then, it may be said, is in conformity with our nature, and meets and satisfies those yearnings, which are in themselves a witness to our immortality. It regards the whole of man's compound nature. It introduces no dissonance, it does not honour one part of our being, to the neglect or degradation of the other. The Life of which it speaks is a life of the body as well as of the spirit, a life the form and pledge of which are given in the Resurrection of Christ, a life which is actually communicated to us, by a true and vital union with Him: "Because I live, ye shall live also."

I must pass by many topics of interest which rightfully belong to my subject; for time presses. In particular I can say nothing now of future rewards and punishments.

But hastening on I must still glance briefly, before I conclude, at some of those speculative difficulties which beset the doctrine of the Resurrection of the body. And I do so, because I know from experience, what a real stumblingblock they are to minds by no means dull or uninstructed.

“Some man may say, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?” The question put in St Paul’s day is still frequently repeated in our own. How can the same body which falls into dust be raised again, to become anew the tabernacle of the immortal spirit? The particles of which it is composed may be scattered to the four winds, they may assume new forms, they may be made to contribute to the formation of other beings—of plants, of animals, of men. How can each several particle be disentangled, how shall each be brought together again to constitute the same body which was dissolved at death? Now we presume to put no limits upon the Almighty power of God. We do not doubt that amid all the ceaseless infinite fluctuations of the material particles His eye could trace each grain of dust, and His hand collect it, and bring it back to reconstitute the body. But we contend that any such process is as unnecessary as it is improbable. We maintain that the same body which has been laid in the grave may be raised at the last day; though not one single material particle, which went to constitute the one body, shall be found in the other. For what is it that is necessary to the identity of the body? The identity of the body does not depend on the identity of the material particles of which it is composed. These are in a state of perpetual flux. The body of our childhood is not the body of our youth, nor the body of our youth that of our manhood, nor the body of our manhood that

of our old age. Every particle has changed, and yet it is the same body: the person to whom it belongs still continues the same person. If you insist upon it that every particle of matter of which my body is built must be brought together to form my new resurrection-body, then I ask, What body during this present life is my true body? Is it the body of my childhood, or of my youth, or of my old age? The body in which I die is no more truly mine, than the body with which I came into the world. Both are mine, both are in some sense the same, and yet they have not a single material particle in common. What possible reason is there then for contending, that the body which is laid in the grave, must be brought together again, particle for particle, at the resurrection; when it is no more essentially a part of myself, than my body at any other stage of my existence? The only thing of which we need to be assured is, that the principle of identity which governs the formation of the body in this life, shall govern its formation at the resurrection. In the ever-flowing torrent of life, as wave after wave passes through our bodily frame, bringing with it growth and variety in the structure, there is some principle, or law, or specific form, call it what you will, which remains ever the same. The organism is essentially one, despite the modifications of size, of form, of inward constitution. This holds in every region of nature, where there is life. From the acorn buried in the earth, there springs first

the little slender stalk, the germinant shoot hidden between its two cotyledons, then the sapling, then the monarch of the forest. But the oak and the germinant shoot, and the acorn, unlike as they are in appearance, are one and the same vegetable existence. The butterfly which unfolds its wings of purple and gold in the summer's sun, is the same creature which was but lately a chrysalis, and before that a crawling worm, and before that an embryo in a tiny egg. And is it not the same with man? Is not the human embryo the same individual when it becomes child, youth, old man? And yet does there remain in the oak, in the butterfly, in the man, a single one of the ponderable molecules which existed in the germ, the egg, the embryo? What physiologist would venture to affirm there is? And still we repeat, it is the same vegetable, the same insect, the same man.

What then is this thing which remains ever the same, the same in the vegetable in all its developments, the same in the insect in all its metamorphoses, the same in the human body in every phase of its existence? What is this, which never perishes, is never destroyed, in all the changes and fluctuations of the material organism? It escapes all our investigations; we see it only in its manifestations, in the phenomena of life; but that it is a reality all observation goes to show: and if through all the changes of the body during this life, this principle continues in all its force, why may it not survive the

shock of death? Why may not this specific form, as Gregory of Nyssa terms it, remain united to the soul, as he conjectured (and as other thinkers like Leibnitz have supposed), after its separation from the body, and thus become at length the agent in the resurrection, by reconstituting, though in a new and transfigured condition, the body which was dissolved at death? Why may not the same body, which was sown in corruption, be raised in incorruption, and that which was sown a natural body, be raised a spiritual body? There is at least nothing improbable in such a supposition; there is everything in the analogies of Nature to confirm it; and when Revelation is silent, we may be thankful for such glimpses of probability as come to us in aid of our Faith.

Lastly, this deliverance, this perfection, this glorifying of the human body, is in the Christian scheme, intimately connected with the deliverance, the perfection, the glorifying of the whole visible creation. As they who are one with their risen Lord, ransomed by Him from the power of Death, and raised with Him even here to newness of life, still wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body; so when that redemption shall be accomplished, the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. There shall be new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. This is the great consummation, to which all is



tending. The universal curse shall be changed into universal blessing. The signature of Sin and Death, and the serpent's trail, shall be for ever effaced, and the signature of God, unblotted and undefiled, shall be seen on every portion of the works of His hands. All things shall reach that perfection, that ideal which now as it were with sighs and groans of travail, they seem ever to be seeking, never to attain. For there is nothing created so mean, or so trifling, that it is not a thought of God, and therefore it must be realized, it must be perfected. "All that is transitory," says the great German poet, "is only a parable<sup>1</sup>," a parable of that which in truth it ought to be, of that which finally it shall be. "That which falls short of its end," he continues, "shall attain to its end." It shall be seen that not one of the creative thoughts of God, not one of His works has only a transitory purpose, that nothing has been made only to be destroyed, but that all has been made to be perfected, transfigured, glorified. "Behold I make all things new;" these are the words of glorious hope, of boundless promise, which the seer of the New Testament hears issuing from the Everlasting Throne. The veil which hides the inner glory of the world, the covering spread over all nations, the symbol of transitoriness and corruption, shall be taken away, and coming forth as by a resurrection, in new splendour and beauty, shall be

<sup>1</sup> Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Parabel.—Goethe.

perfectly disclosed the hidden meaning, the eternal idea, of its Creator and Redeemer, God.

But meanwhile, tied and bound as we are with the chain of earthly things, busied with the poor and fleeting aims of this life, buried in its cares, its pleasures, its distractions, can we for a moment rise above them and make full proof of our eternal hopes? Can we grasp Eternity in the midst of time? Can we without being led astray by the false lights of the imagination, obtain some foretaste of the future glory?

“More than fourteen centuries ago’, on the shores of the Italian sea, that Eternal life of which I have been speaking was the subject of discourse between a woman who was drawing near to the end of life, and a man, still in the prime of his years, who had just consecrated himself to the work of Christ. We may have seen the engraving from a picture by Ary Scheffer at the bottom of which are inscribed the words, ‘St Augustine and his mother Monica.’ We may have noticed those two faces turned towards the same heaven, where one seems to be seeking some foretaste of an approaching felicity, and the other, the strength and the courage which should fit him for his arduous task, as the future champion of the Faith. In the page which inspired the painter, Augustine thus speaks:

‘When the day drew near on which my mother

<sup>1</sup> See E. Naville, *La Vie Éternelle*.

was to leave this life, it chanced that we found ourselves alone, she and I, leaning upon the sill of a window which looked on the garden of the house where we had stopped at the port of Ostia. There, far from the crowd, after the fatigue of a long journey, we were waiting for the moment when we must set sail. We were alone, conversing with indescribable sweetness; and forgetting the past, and stretching forward towards the future, we asked ourselves, what shall be for the saints that eternal life, "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which hath not entered into the heart of man"? And borne aloft on the wing of Love towards Him who is, we climbed, as it were, up through those celestial regions, whence the stars, the moon and the sun, send us their light. And rising still higher in our thoughts, in our words, in our admiration of Thy works, O Lord, we sought in our own souls to attain to that uncreated wisdom, which is that which it hath been, that which it shall be always, or rather, in which there is no *hath been*, or *shall be*, but only *is*, because it is eternal. And as we thus spake, in our ardent aspirations towards that life, we touched it for a moment with a bound of the heart, and sighed as we left there captive the first-fruits of the Spirit, and came back again to the sound of the voice, to the word which begins and ends.

'Then we said: Let there be a soul in which every earthly passion is hushed, and the soul itself hushed into silence and forgetfulness of itself; let there be no

voice heard in it, but the voice of Him alone speaking not by His creatures, but by Himself; let Him speak only whom we love in all, and speak in the absence of all; let our thought rest only in Him, and insensible to every lower object, ravish, lead us captive, absorb us, in that great joy; in short, let the eternal life be but like that fugitive ecstasy, the remembrance of which makes us still sigh—is not this the promise of that word: “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord”? Such were our thoughts in this conversation; and that same day my mother said to me, ‘My son, so far as I am concerned, there is nothing more to bind me to life. What should I do in it? There was one thing for which I desired to continue in life, and that was to see you a Christian, before I died. My God has granted me that, and more than that; why should I tarry here any longer!’”

In this page, “in which the faith of a Christian is expressed in the language of a Plato,” St Augustine declares that he obtained, for a brief passing moment, a sight of the heavenly glory surpassing thought and all power of human utterance. Such a vision may not be vouchsafed to us. It is not given to all men to see, with a Stephen, heaven open and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, or with a Paul, to be rapt into the third heavens, or with a John at Patmos, to gaze on the temple above, and the golden

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *Confess.* Lib. ix. I have omitted some portions of the passage and freely paraphrased others.

city, and saints and angels, striking their harps and raising their triumphant songs to the Lamb who died; but it is given to every servant of God to know in whom he has believed. The humblest and the weakest need not fear death, because Jesus has died. The humblest and the weakest may lie down in the grave, in sure hope of a joyful Resurrection. For each one may say, with meek yet rejoicing faith, He loved me; He gave Himself for me; He rose from the dead. What shall separate me from the love of Christ? In *all* things I am more than conqueror through Him that loves me. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Because He lives I shall live also."

## APPENDIX.

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### LECTURE I. p. 11. NOTE A.

SINCE writing this Lecture, I have read Professor Tyndall's Address delivered by him as President of the Mathematical and Physical Science Section of the British Association at their Meeting in Norwich last year. A passage in that address, which amply confirms all that I have said on the relation of the brain to thought, I here subjoin :

“ Associated with this wonderful mechanism of the animal body, we have phenomena no less certain than those of physics, but between which and the mechanism we discern no necessary connexion. A man, for example can say, *I feel, I think, I love*; but how does *consciousness* infuse itself into the problem? The human brain is said to be the organ of thought and feeling: when we are hurt, the brain feels it; when we ponder, it is the brain that thinks; when our passions or affections are excited, it is through the instrumentality of the brain. Let us endeavour to be a little more precise here. I hardly imagine that any profound scientific thinker, who has reflected upon the subject, exists, who would not admit the extreme probability of the hypothesis, that for every fact of consciousness, whether in the domain of sense, of thought, or of emotion, a certain definite molecular condition is set up in the brain; that this relation

of physics to consciousness is invariable; so that given the state of the brain, the corresponding thought or feeling might be inferred; or given the thought or feeling, the corresponding state of the brain might be inferred? But how inferred? It is at bottom not a case of logical inference at all, but of empirical association. You may reply that many of the inferences of science are of this character, the inference for example that an electric current of a given direction will deflect a magnetic needle in a definite way; but the cases differ in this, that the passage from the current to the needle, if not demonstrable, is thinkable, and that we entertain no doubt as to the final mechanical solution of the problem; but the passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granted that a definite thought and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously; we do not possess the intellectual organ, nor apparently any rudiment of the organ, which would enable us to pass, by a process of reasoning, from the one phenomenon to the other. They appear together, but we do not know why. Were our minds and senses so expanded, strengthened, and illuminated, as to enable us to see and feel the very molecules of the brain; were we capable of following all their motions, all their grouping, all their electric discharges, if such there be; and were we intimately acquainted with the corresponding states of thought and feeling, we should probably be as far as ever from the solution of the problem, How are these physical processes connected with the facts of consciousness? The chasm between the two classes of phenomena would still remain intellectually impassable. Let the consciousness of *love*, for example, be associated with a right-handed spiral motion of the molecules of the brain, and the consciousness of *hate* with a left-handed spiral motion. We should then know when we love that the motion is in one direction, and when we hate that the motion is in the other, but the 'WHY?' would still remain unanswered. In affirming that the growth of

the body is mechanical, and that thought, as exercised by us, has its correlative in the physics of the brain, I think the position of the 'materialist' is stated as far as that position is a tenable one. I think the materialist will be able finally to maintain this position against all attacks; but I do not think as the human mind is at present constituted, that he can pass beyond it. I do not think he is entitled to say that his molecular grouping and his molecular motions explain everything. In reality they explain nothing. The utmost he can affirm is the association of two classes of phenomena, of whose real bond of union he is in absolute ignorance. The problem of the connexion of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form as it was in the pre-scientific ages. Phosphorus is known to enter into the composition of the human brain, and a courageous writer has exclaimed in his trenchant German, 'Ohne Phosphor Kein Gedanke.' That may or may not be the case; but even if we knew it to be the case, the knowledge would not lighten our darkness. On both sides of the zone here assigned to the materialist he is equally helpless. If you ask him whence is this 'matter,' of which we have been discoursing, who or what divided it into molecules, who or what impressed upon them this necessity of running into organic forms, he has no answer. Science also is mute in reply to these questions. But if the materialist is confounded and science is dumb, who else is entitled to answer? To whom has the secret been revealed? Let us lower our heads and acknowledge our ignorance one and all. Perhaps the mystery may resolve itself into knowledge at some future day."

From the *Athenæum* for Aug. 29, 1868.



## LECTURE III. p. 80.

AFTER all that has been written on this celebrated passage (Job xix. 24—26), the rendering still remains doubtful, as well as the interpretation.

Ewald renders :

O dass doch aufgeschrieben meine Worte,  
 ins Buch—o dass sie würden eingezeichnet;  
 mit Eisengriffel und mit Blei  
 auf ewig würden in den Fels gehauen!  
 Aber ich weiss es, mein Erlöser lebt,  
 ein Nachmann auf dem Staube wird erstehen;  
 nach meiner Haut, die man abgeschlagen, dieser,  
 und frei vom Leibe werd' ich schauen—Gott:  
 ihn den *ich* schauen werde *mir*,  
 gesehn von *meinen* Augen und nicht fremden!  
 —es schwinden die Nieren in Busen mir!

Renan :

Oh! qui me donnera que mes paroles soient écrites,  
 Qu'elles soient écrites dans un livre, qu'elles soient gravées

Avec un stylet de fer et avec du plomb,  
 Qu'à jamais elles soient sculptées sur le roc;

Car je le sais, mon vengeur existe,  
 Et il apparaîtra enfin sur la terre.

Quand cette peau sera tombée en lambeaux,  
 Privé de ma chair, je verrai Dieu.

Je le verrai pour moi-même;  
 Mes yeux le contempleront, non ceux d'un autre;  
 Mes reins se consomment d'attente au-dedans de moi.

Renan explains this hope on the part of Job that he "shall see God," by saying: "Job s'abandonne à l'espérance de voir Dieu descendre un jour sur la terre, quand il sera réduit à l'état de squelette, pour le venger de ses adversaires." Both he and Ewald, as I have remarked, render, מִבְּשָׂרִי "without my flesh," thus conceding to Job the hope of Immortality, but not conceding to him the hope of a Resurrection. But although מִ is certainly sometimes used in a negative sense, I believe that in all cases where it is so used, there is something in the context to guide us as to its signification. Used as it is here, merely dependent on such a verb as אֶרְאֶה, I confess it seems to me that the preposition can only have its usual meaning "from." So far I entirely agree with Dr Pusey's criticism when he says (*Daniel*, p. 505 note): "The rendering of מִבְּשָׂרִי, 'without my flesh,' adopted by Davidson, II. 227, from Ewald, is unidiomatic and unnatural. מִ can no more, of itself, mean 'without' than our 'from'." But I must part company from him, when he asserts, that "no doubtful meaning of any words can efface from the passage the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh," and I must demur to his rendering of the line:

And after my skin, they have destroyed this *body*,

as being to the full as objectionable, as the rendering of the line following by Ewald, Renan, and others. What possible pretext can there be for supplying the noun "body" with the feminine pronoun הִיא? The word "body" is not in the original, nor is it suggested by the context, any more than the word "worms," which has been introduced by our Authorized Version. I believe myself it is better to take the pronoun adverbially, with Hävernicks, or as a kind of further predicate, said δεικτικῶς<sup>1</sup>, and I would render the passage as follows:

<sup>1</sup> And so it is also taken in H. H. Bernard's *Book of Job*, edited by Mr Chance, p. 171, where the whole passage is explained as having only a reference to this life.

"I, even I, know that my Redeemer liveth,  
 And that at the last, He shall stand upon the earth (lit.  
 dust);  
 And after my skin has been thus pierced through<sup>1</sup>,  
 Yet from my flesh, I shall behold God,  
 Whom *I* shall behold *for myself*,  
 And mine eyes shall behold and not a stranger's.  
 My reins are consumed within me."

The last line probably alludes to Job's longing for the time when God shall appear to maintain his cause against his friends, and to make his innocence clear. Having mentioned the name of Hävernicks, I may say, that in his *Vorlesungen über die Theologie des Alten Testaments*, p. 203, he discusses the passage critically, and denies all reference in it to a future life, though he also renders *בְּבִשְׂרִי* "und von Fleisch entblösst," connecting this, however, with what precedes, and explaining it to mean, "in spite of all I have suffered, though I am but like a skeleton without flesh, still I shall see God, i. e. be conscious of and enjoy his immediate manifested presence in this life." It is painful to think that the interpretation of such a passage should be made a test of orthodoxy, and that a critic may incur the charge of "rationalism" who dares to say honestly, that he cannot accept the current interpretation, that he believes the Hebrew has another meaning. It is therefore some relief, to find a critic of such unquestionable orthodoxy as Hävernicks taking the same view. Surely it is high time, as I have already said in my Preface, that we should agree to settle the meaning of words, in accordance with the rules of grammar, and with reference to the general scope of a writer's argument; and that we should abstain from calling one another hard names, when we happen to differ in our conclusions.

<sup>1</sup> In allusion to the ghastly disease, probably elephantiasis, from which he was suffering.

I cannot but think, that the more carefully the Book of Job is studied, as a whole, the less probable will it appear that he is here uttering any distinct hope either of Immortality or of a Resurrection. On what grounds Mr Liddon (*University Sermons*, p. 99) can speak of the Book as "throughout a very hymn of immortality," I am at a loss to conceive. A recent writer, M. Godet, in his review of Renan's Job, has taken, as it seems to me, a far juster view both of the general scope of the Poem, and also of the particular passage under consideration. His article appeared first in the *Revue Chrétienne* for 1860, and subsequently, translated into German, in the *Studien und Kritiken* for 1863.

At the risk of lengthening this note somewhat unduly I give the following extract :

"The problem [of the Book of Job] is this, How far suffering is a proof of guilt? Is the punishment always in proportion to the sin? Does the epithet "merited" necessarily attach to the word "misfortune"?

"The love of our neighbour seeks anxiously for an escape from such a conclusion. The Book of Job shows us how to escape from it. In this Book, God Himself initiates us into one of the deepest mysteries of His government. He teaches us that there are cases in which He chastens men, neither for their transgression, nor to purify them, but only for His own glory. Blessed is the man, who suffers for so high an end! That he can do so is *his* glory; that he will do so is God's glory."

"No one, I think, will deny the loftiness of such a Theodiciæa.

"We must however draw attention to the remarkable circumstance, that the Book of Job succeeds in solving the problem without introducing the doctrine of future retribution, a doctrine which has always been regarded as absolutely necessary to its solution.

“Have not all thinkers from Plato to Kant had recourse to the dogma of the immortality of the soul, when they have attempted to explain the apparently unequal distribution of human suffering? The Book of Job is a solitary exception: the Poet ventures to handle the problem without any such assistance. Was it perchance, as some critics have conjectured, that the dogma of immortality was unknown to him? Granted that it were so, it would redound the more to his honour, that he should have succeeded in solving the problem, under circumstances so unfavourable to success. To say nothing, however, of examples like those of Enoch and Elijah, the Book of Genesis hints, in more than one passage, at a belief in personal continuance after death. For instance, a distinction is made between the burial of Abraham and his being “gathered to his fathers” (xxv. 9). Moreover it is well known, that the doctrine of immortality and future retribution were fundamental articles of the Egyptian creed. How could such truths be unknown to the Hebrews, who had lived in Egypt for 400 years? The rudest tribes have had some conception of this truth; how impossible to suppose that the nation, which in point of religious education was the most advanced, should alone have remained ignorant of it? Historically such a view is absolutely without foundation. How comes it to pass then, that the Book of Job, which ought to have laid particular stress on this truth, as being according to our modes of thought decisive of the question, makes no use of it at all?

“Revelation amongst the Jewish nation has, as we might expect, always kept pace with the history. It has developed, extended, taken its shape, in the same degree as the destiny of the people. It was the destiny of Israel to prepare the way for the setting up of the kingdom of God, not in heaven but *upon earth*, by means of the Messiah. Consequently all questions bearing on personal continuity of existence had, in the strictest sense, nothing to do with the positive mission of this people. Express revelations on this

point would have turned away their eyes from the goal set before them, instead of fixing them upon it. With the Christian Church the case is very different. This has a destiny which embraces both heaven and earth. In this way is very naturally explained the silence of the Old Testament, and the fulness of revelation in the New respecting the future life. But the author of the Book of Job who came forward, not as a philosopher but as the organ of Revelation, could not step beyond the limits of the Revelation then vouchsafed.

“If, however, he is silent with regard to the doctrine of future recompense, he nevertheless lays the foundation stone, on which it is afterwards built. Do we not see at the close of the Poem, the stream of the divine blessings pouring itself forth in all its fulness, when the hero’s time of trial is at an end? The divine mercy descends upon him all the more richly in proportion to his sufferings for God. Does not the author thus point to a law, which includes the principle of retribution? Whether this law comes into operation in this life or in the next, is a matter of indifference to him. The Singer boldly places himself above this alternative. The law itself engages his attention more than its application.

“But I shall perhaps be found fault with for ascribing to him a strain of thought to which he was a stranger. Uninfluenced by all the contradictory explanations which have been given of it, I appeal simply to the well-known passage in which Job rises to the summit of his hope, chap. xix. v. 25 (following De Wette’s translation):

“‘I know that my Redeemer liveth, and the last He remaineth upon the earth; and after this my skin is pierced through, even without my flesh shall I see God; yea, I myself shall behold Him, mine eyes shall see Him, and not a stranger.’

“Does Job utter in these words his belief in the Resurrection, as the majority of orthodox interpreters assume, or is he thinking merely of his recovery from his malady? I

venture (omitting all philological disquisition) to maintain, that the answer to this question would perhaps have occasioned as much perplexity to Job, as to his commentators. Does he know himself what will become of that body of his, withered to a skeleton? Can he say whether the eating leprosy will finish its work of destruction, or whether God will arrest this devouring fire? He cannot; and consequently he cannot say positively beforehand what will be the method of his redemption. One thing only he knows, that whether it be by the way of healing or by means of the Resurrection, he shall live again. For his Redeemer lives; he knows Him; it is his God. Yes, Job shall live, for his God, like the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, is not a God of the dead but of the living.

“Job’s assurance has reference neither to the method, nor to the place, nor to the hour, but merely to the thing itself. It makes no attempt, after having uttered itself, to discover the means and ways by which God will bring this to pass.

“This glorious conviction is certainly not the same thing as the dogma of personal perpetuity of existence; but who will deny that it is the pith and substance of all living belief in this truth? It may be left to later revelations to develop further the thought which lies at the bottom of these words and to give it clearer expression, but they can add nothing to the shout of victory with which Job bids defiance to the leprosy or to death.

“It must be acknowledged, then, that the author kept strictly within the limits of the revelation vouchsafed to his own age, and yet nevertheless fully met all the requirements of the problem. He has succeeded in throwing a clear light on the mystery of suffering Innocence, without on the one side availing himself of the fact of sin committed, or the dogma of a future life, and without on the other side doing the smallest violence to the righteousness of God. The glance into the Sanctuary of God, which the Prologue gives, has fully satisfied him. If we were here in the field

of speculation, this solution would appear to us a masterpiece."

## LECTURE III. p. 88.

It is perhaps hardly correct to say that Chrysostom has attempted a solution of the problem. He goes so far as to assert that the Jews before our Lord did not know the very name of Gehenna, or the resurrection, that till then they had never heard, either from their prophets, or from any one else, of the resurrection, or of the kingdom of heaven. In particular he denies that Job had any knowledge of these truths. (*Homilies on St Matthew*, x. p. 142 A); xxxiii. (al. xxxiv.) p. 386 D; xxxvi. (al. xxxvii.) p. 412 A (ed. Bened.). Comp. x. p. 145 D, and xvi. p. 210 A. However, in another place (*Serm. on Genesis*, tom. iv. p. 194), he admits that, though the promises of the Old Testament were earthly, still the saints under that dispensation hoped for heavenly blessedness. Augustine, on the other hand, maintains that there was a preparation made by Moses, and others of the sacred writers, for the revelation of these truths, but that in them the doctrine of a future life is but darkly and enigmatically expressed. (*De Gestis Pelagii*, c. v. § 14, 15; *contra Faustum lib. xv.* and *Epist.* 140; *De Civ. Dei*, x. 24, 25). So also Theodoret (*In Deuteronom.*) *Quæst.* 34; and Bernard, *Serm. xxx. in Cant.*). These Fathers find a reason for the reticence of the Old Testament in the fact that the Jewish nation was too rude and ignorant, to be capable of receiving truths so lofty; and they maintain that the veil was raised little by little, till at last it was wholly taken away by the Gospel. Leibnitz (*Preface to his Théodicée*) takes the same view.

Bossuet writes (*Diss. de Psalmis*, I 8): Sane confitemur futuri sæculi felicitatem non perspicuis disertisque verbis, sed sub figurarum involucris, pro Veteris Testamenti ratione, a



sancto Davide, fuisse adumbratam." And later he suggests an explanation (*Ib.* 10): "Quin igitur, inquires, sanctus David hæc futuri sæculi bona exponebat planis disertisque verbis? Nempe quia hæc parce commemoranda erant, quæ crassioribus ingeniis risui, aut etiam offendiculo futura essent: quippe cum in mortuorum animabus, more gentilium, nihil nisi impios cultus, falsos deos scilicet ex hominibus consecratos, aut placandis manibus inferias, ac divinationes umbrarumque citationes, sive, ut vocant, necromantias, aliaque perinde inania, imo etiam noxia et infanda, cogitarent. Itaque animarum ac futuri sæculi arcana crasso adhuc populo tecta sub figuris, quibus et perfecti doceri, nec rudiores gravari possent." So again, in his *Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle*, (Part II. ch. 19): "Durant les temps qui ont précédé Jésus-Christ, ce que l'âme connaissait de sa dignité et de son immortalité l'induisait le plus souvent à erreur. Le culte des hommes morts faisait presque tout le fond de l'idolâtrie.....C'est pourquoi la loi de Moïse ne donnait à l'homme qu'une première notion de la nature de l'âme et de sa félicité...C'est un des caractères du peuple nouveau, de poser pour fondement de la religion la foi de la vie future, et ce devait être le fruit de la venue du Messie."

## LECTURE IV. pp. 96 and 114.

NITZSCH takes substantially the same view of the Christian scheme:

"Die blosse Fortdauer und Unsterblichkeit der Seele, oder die blosse Befreiung von der irdischen Behausung erfüllt die christliche Hoffnung nicht; denn die Vollendung des Einzelnen ist selbst in keiner Weise vollkommen, solange das Ganze der Schöpfung und der Kirche nicht mit ihm und er mit dem Ganzen vollendet ist. Der Christ

wartet einer *Erlösung des Leibes* Rom. viii. 23. Demnach hoffen die Christen Auferstehung der Todten, und Christi Auferstehung ist das geschichtliche, die Gabe des heiligen Geistes, des Geistes der Herrlichkeit, das innere Unterpfand derselben. 1 Cor. xv. 20, Rom. viii. 11, der Leib aber der Auferstandnen nicht der verwesete, noch der verwesliche. Natur und Leib hegen ein grosses, tiefes Geheimniss. Die Natur selbst soll frei werden von der Eitelkeit und Vergänglichkeit, der sie unterworfen ist. Das Hervorgehen aus dem Grabe ist nur das Bild oder die theilweise Erscheinung einer verklärenden Wiedergeburt oder Verwandlung unsers Einzellebens, in welcher wir dem verklärten Leibe des Erlösers ähnlich werden, nachdem wir in der Zeit das Bild des irdischen Adams getragen haben. Phil. iii. 21, 1 Cor. xv. 35—50."

*System der Christlichen Lehre*, p. 372 (4te Ausgabe).

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