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BY

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AFTER DEATH;

OR,

THE DESTINY OF THE SOUL.

CHAPTER I.

“After Death—What?” is a question which has resounded through the consciousness of all Mankind. Whether it be when the chill blast of Reminiscence blows from out the dark cavern of Memory or when we stand impotent and speechless before the awful majesty of the dead. The friends of our childhood, where are they? Dead? The companions that strove with us for the mastery in the classroom or on the play-ground, where are they? Dead?

Our fellow apprentices in the workshop, our fellow toilers at the desk, our fellow travellers over land or sea, our fellow runners in the race of life, our fellow competitors in the fields of Commerce or of Science, where are they? Dead? Call up their faces, whisper their names, make the usual enquiries made by those who have returned to the home of their childhood after the lapse of years, “What is he doing now?” “Where is she now?” and how often the one short word meets us like the stroke of the bell in the old moss-grown tower floating out on the wintry air over village, field, and forest, bidding the listener to the funeral. It is a question that meets us with added poignancy when we catch the last smile, the last words, feel the last grip, start back chilled to the heart when we place the last tribute of a lifetime’s affection, the last kiss, on clay-cold lips, when the hollow sound of falling clods knocks with fearful insistence at the door of our hearts and of our reason. Death—is it the terminus or merely a junction in Life’s road? When we consider humanity’s answer to this as recorded in the World’s oldest literature, such as the *Rig-Veda*, the *S’atapatha Brahmana*, the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, the *Lay of Istar’s Descent to Hades*, or displayed in the ethnic researches of travellers and explorers, we must come to the only conclusion possible that the universal belief of humanity has been from the earliest times until now that Death is not

a terminus but a junction: the traveller still travels on though lost to view.

It is a belief, a hope, a may-be, it can scarcely be called knowledge.

Much depends on the mind and moral atmosphere of the writer or thinker.

The more primitive, the purer the moral atmosphere, the nearer the source, the clearer are the views expressed. This we should expect from what Paul says in his Epistle to the Romans (Chap. i.). That through all the poetry of Rome, whether it be philosophic, lyric, elegaic, or tragic, one long drawn note of despair is heard; that such an one as Catullus should reason, "When the body has died, we must admit that the soul has perished. . . . No one wakes up, upon whom the chill cessation of life has once come"; that Pliny should warn his readers against any hope of a future existence beyond the tomb because the survival of the soul is only a vain dream, the invention of fools, or the desire of the deluded; and that sepulchral inscriptions should either breathe a mournful "Farewell, Farewell!" or else a mocking warning, "While I lived I lived well. My play is now ended—soon yours will be," is only what might be expected seeing that the idea of life was emptied of everything noble and filled with everything debased and debasing, and the philosophy of living such as was well represented by the statue of Sardanapalus at Anchiale (which Paul may have seen, hence 1 Cor. xv. 32), which bore on the pedestal the inscription, "Eat, drink, enjoy thyself. The rest is nothing." Whilst the figure above is snapping its fingers! This is noteworthy, for it emphasises the fact that as man thinks about himself so he thinks about his future. The question "What is man?" precedes "that Thou art mindful of him?" Before we can have right thoughts as to the question "Whither?" we must have right thoughts about the queries "Whence? What?" Man's destination at death depends on his destiny, and his destiny depends on what HE IS. It is certain that if we have low thoughts of man we shall have high thoughts of death, such thoughts as will find a fitting garb in the words with which Sir Walter Raleigh concludes his "History of the World":

"It is therefore," he writes, "Death alone that can make any man suddenly know himself. He tells the proud and insolent that they are but objects, and humbles them at the instant; makes them cry, complain, and repent; yea, even to hate their forepassed happiness. He takes the account of the rich, and proves him a beggar—which hath interest in

149484

nothing, but in the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein their deformity and rottenness; and they acknowledge it.

“O eloquent, just and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised. Thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man; and covered it all over with these two narrow words: *Hic jacet.*”

CHAPTER II.

“What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?” (Ps. viii. 4).

The Biblical account of the Creation is, like its Author, sublime. Beginning with things inanimate it advances steadily onwards and upwards through things animate to the crown and perfection of all things earthly—Man. So the history culminates in one grand climax in the second chapter:

“and man became a living soul.”

A great philosopher has said:

“On Earth there is nothing great but Man;
In Man there is nothing great but Mind,”

for in Man there meet two worlds—the Material and the Spiritual. Mind is neither matter nor a property of matter: matter is not mind nor a property of mind. Both are presented to the consciousness as perfectly distinct entities. The substance of mind we call “spirit.” And just as with the eye of the body we look out upon the material world and survey its wondrous contents, so with the “eye of the understanding” we look within upon the spiritual world and strive to fathom its depths and scale its heights. Not only so, but as our conception of and acquaintance with the material world depend on the state of our bodies so our conception of and acquaintance with the spiritual world depend on the state of our spiritual natures. A blind man’s world is not the world of the man who sees; the deaf man’s world is not the world of the man who hears: and the world of the man armed with the microscope for the examination of the infinitely little, with the telescope for the examination of the infinitely great, with the Röntgen rays,

the Hertzian rays, and the sensitive film of the photographer, is not the world of the naked and untutored savage whom the ordinary event of an eclipse will strike dumb with nameless terror. So the Christian's spiritual world filled with the glory of God and the Redeemer's praise, and peopled with powers and principalities potent for good or evil, is not the spiritual world of the man who, like Nelson, puts his viewing-glass to his blind eye and says he sees—Nothing!

To such an one spiritual beings are but moonshine, and the idea of God and heaven and hell are but the outcome of dreams and visions and terrors of the night. In this connection it is worth reading the words spoken by that great scientist and anatomist, Sir William Turner, as President of the Anthropological Section of the British Association: "Man is also endowed with a spiritual nature. He possesses a conscious responsibility, which enables him to control his animal nature, to exercise a discriminating power over his actions, and which places him on a far higher and altogether different platform from that occupied by the beasts which perish."

Thus Adam by his bodily nature was linked on to the animals and thence to the dust of the earth—"Dust thou art." But by his spiritual nature he was linked on to God. The Child of the Dust was a Son of God (Luke iii. 38).

When God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, it is not said that Adam became a living body, but "man became a living soul." He had entered on the earthly arena, he now entered the spiritual arena. And the same order is observed in the case of his death as in the case of his life. Be it remembered that death in Scripture means a great deal more than it means in everyday speech. The unsaved man is "dead through trespasses and sins" (Eph. ii. 1), although to all ordinary appearing he is very much alive. To me the modern scientific definition of death is peculiarly expressive of the Biblical meaning of the word; and this definition is: "cessation of correspondence with environment." For when sin broke in and destroyed the blessed communion between God and Adam, in that hour Adam died, his bodily death centuries later was but the echo of that tremendous cataclysm which shook the universe to its centre in the soul of Man (Rom. v. 12; viii. 20-22). The loss of correspondence between the two who had hitherto been companions (O, the grace of God!) was seen in the lack of response to the cry which came from the heart of God, "Adam, where art thou?"; more clearly perhaps in his reply when at length sought

out and brought face to face with God, "I heard Thy voice . . . and I hid myself."

And just as bodily death is not cessation of existence, for a dead body is emphatically an existing body, nay, the dissolution of the body is due not to death but to life, the force of living organisms batten in their myriads on their prey, for soak the tissues of a dead body in solutions which are inimical to these microbes, and we have a result that is seen to-day in the existence of bodies many centuries dead, an existence which need only cease with the existence of the world we live in; so spiritual death does not mean that Man's spirit ceases to exist, for though spiritually dead yet he possesses a spiritual nature—the soul, the seat of his personality, the spirit, the seat of his intellectual powers. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him" (1 Cor. ii. 11).

He is therefore a denizen of two worlds, and all the systems of philosophy (or man's answer to "Whence? What? Whither?") which have been constructed or can be constructed, may be divided into four classes from the way in which they deal with this question.

1. Materialism, in which the existence of a Spiritual world is denied.
2. Idealism, in which the existence of a Material world is denied.
3. Scepticism, in which the possibility of the knowledge by man of the existence of either world is denied.
4. Realism, in which both the existence, and the possibility of our knowledge of both worlds are affirmed.

Now these philosophies, or "Man's-view-of-the-universe," are at the bottom of all the theories, whether professing to be founded on Scripture or not, concerning the answer of the question we set out with "After Death—What?" It may appear to the ordinary reader foolish to deny the existence of matter, or the existence of any world at all, but missionaries will bear me out when I say that all the varied and variegated religions of our great Indian dependency are founded on one of these first two classes, whilst nearer home we have lately had sad examples of so-called Christian teaching based on the Materialistic assumption, whilst Christadelphianism is pure Materialism expressed in religious language borrowed from the Bible by its founder, John Thomas, and his disciples. For instance Thomas, in his *Elpis Israel*, p. 30, writes: "These three together, the nitrogen, oxygen, and electricity, constitute the breath and spirit of lives of all God's living souls."

Whilst in his "Twelve Lectures," p. 31, Mr. Roberts asks, "What is that which is not matter? It will not do to say 'spirit,' if we are to take our notions of spirit from the Bible, for the Spirit came upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost like a mighty rushing wind, and made the place shake, showing it to be capable of mechanical momentum, and therefore as much on the list of material forces as light, heat, and electricity. Coming upon Samson it energized his muscles to the snapping of ropes like thread; and, inhaled by the nostrils of man and beast, it gives physical life."

"Christian Science" is based on Idealism, for Mrs. Eddy might take as the keynote of her book the following statement from the *Bhagavat Geeta*, one of the oldest and most sacred books of India: "The fundamental error is, to consider as true that which is only apparent. If you attach any value to appearance you deceive yourself; if you attach it to your actions, you deceive yourself again; for as all is illusion, action itself, when regarded as real, is illusion also.

Nothing exists but the eternal principle; being in itself.

It follows that it is the supreme of wisdom to let things pass; to do what we are compelled to do, but as if we did it not, and without concerning ourselves about the result, interiorly motionless, with our eyes fixed unceasingly upon the absolute principle which alone exists with a true existence."

Scepticism, as defined in the words of David Hume, can scarcely be the basis of any religion; for he says: "Matter is but a collection of impressions. Mind is but a succession of impressions and ideas." If that be true (which it is not) then there can be no God, no World, no Soul, nothing but impressions and ideas, fleeting, evanescent, visionary.

Hence, between Scepticism at one pole and Realism at the other, there stretch Idealism and Materialism, whilst between these two there lie religions and doctrines as to Man's future of every shade, from the pure Materialism of the Djainas, the Sadducees, the Christadelphians, through the modified Materialism of the Conditional Immortalists and those who hold that man has no conscious existence until the Resurrection, who indeed limit true being to the body, passing by divers shades of opinion into that of the Spiritualists, who limit the true exercise of our activities to the spiritual state, through Christian Science, back to the *Yoga Shastra* of Patandjali, and the *Vedas*. The time taken may be measured by millennia, but the basal thoughts are always the same—Matter or Spirit, not (as it should be) Matter AND Spirit. It is of the utmost importance to re-

member this ever-recurring tendency of the human mind to take a one-sided view of things, to lay undue emphasis on one side or the other, for it lies at the bottom of the most modern as well as the most ancient errors. Amidst all these mazes of error how simple and how grand is the Bible in its perfect Realism. It does not set out to prove that there is matter and that there is spirit, it begins in the most simple words, yet with the utmost majesty, to state—

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth . . . And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

And after detailing step by step the creation of all things animate and inanimate the inspired writer goes on—

“And God said, Let us make man IN OUR IMAGE, AFTER OUR LIKENESS. . . So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him.” It is well to remember here the statement of the Lord Jesus when He said, “God is spirit.” And to put instantly away any teaching which would give man no preëminence over the beasts that perish. But someone will immediately say: But Solomon says so (Ecclesiastes iii. 19-21). Would you condemn the Bible? As the Book of Ecclesiastes is a favourite portion of Scripture with those who would belittle man, and reduce him to the level of the brute: alas! man reduces himself often to a level beneath the brute (Isaiah i. 3): I would here quote the trenchant words of Mr. F. W. Grant in answer to Mr. Constable, who quotes this passage in Ecclesiastes. He writes: “This passage has been seized upon by Materialists of course, and is constantly put forth as the stronghold of their doctrine. . . . The argument proves too much, and so proves nothing. If Mr. Constable had but weighed the verse before, which he omits, he might have found reason to question his conclusion. The whole passage is what, Solomon tells us, he ‘said in his heart’ at a certain time (verse 18). It is not divine revelation but human doubt: the questioning of man’s mind when speculating upon the mystery of existence: ‘who knoweth the spirit of man?’ etc. It is the language of a man who ‘had given his heart to search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven’: who had ‘said in his heart’ (Chap. ii. 1), ‘Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth,’ and who had ‘sought in his heart to give himself to wine,’ and ‘to lay hold on folly, that he might see what was good for the sons of men, which they should do under heaven all the days of their life’ (verse 3). This is no Spirit-taught man. In no such path does the Spirit of God lead; and the result is

that, searching out by human wisdom the grave into which all go is an impenetrable mystery: men die as the beast dies. . . . The objection is raised that it ignores the fact of Solomon's God-given wisdom. But it is just the point of Ecclesiastes to show how the wisdom of the wisest failed here, as in the book of Job the perfection of human goodness. The perfect man has to own his vileness before God, and the wisest man the incompetence of mere human wisdom." These words remind me of an incident, with which I close the chapter. Mr. Owen visited Alexander Campbell, to make arrangements for their discussion on the evidences of Christianity. In one of their excursions about the farm they came to Mr. Campbell's family burying-ground, when Mr. Owen stopped, and addressing himself to Mr. Campbell said, "There is one advantage I have over the Christians: I am not afraid to die. Most Christians have fear in death; but if some few items of my business were settled I should be perfectly willing to die at any moment." "Well," answered Mr. Campbell, "you say you have no fear in death; have you any hope in death?" After a solemn pause, "No," said Mr. Owen. "Then," rejoined Mr. Campbell, pointing to an ox standing near, "you are on a level with that brute. He has fed until he is satisfied, and stands in the shade, whisking off the flies, and has neither hope nor fear in death."

How different was it with one of our old Scottish ministers who lay a-dying, some two hundred years ago, with several of his brethren around him, watching his departure. Opening his eyes he said, "Fellow-passengers to glory, how far am I from the City of God?" "Not very far," was the loving answer; and with a sweet smile the good soldier of the Cross departed to be with the Captain of his Salvation. Just as the last words of Christmas Evans, the great Welsh Evangelist, were "Goodbye! drive on."

CHAPTER III.

"May your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire" (1 Thess. v. 23). R.V.

Before entering on a brief exposition of the tripartite nature of man, I would make a few preliminary remarks as to the manner in which we ought to study the Scriptures on this as on all subjects therein contained. Too often we find the pages of papers on this subject strewn with Greek and Hebrew words. Doubtless it is helpful to introduce a

Greek or Hebrew word in the course of the exposition of a passage, but it is more as a symbol to save time and the constant use of the expression "the word translated so-and-so in our version." To see such words as *ruach*, *pneuma*, *psuche*, *nishmath chayim*, etc., reminds one of the Puritan preachers whose audiences were not satisfied (although it was literally Greek and Hebrew to them) unless they used several Greek, Hebrew, and Latin quotations in the course of their sermons; and of the remark of one listener, who bitterly said, "I hear them still at work making the superscription to place upon His Cross." What boots it that one word is rendered in such a way 400 odd times out of a possible 700? To translate the Bible in that fashion is to limit the Spirit as much as by governing the assembly by majorities. I think it a pregnant source of error for men who are ignorant of the sacred tongues to attempt to interpret the Original by concordances. Suppose, for instance, a man wrote a book on "spirits," meaning *ghosts*, and that on reading it one found that he used the word in that sense 500 times, but on the last page he quoted the line about "keeping one's spirits up by pouring spirits down," are we to render the words there "ghosts" because in the previous 500 instances it had that meaning? Certainly not: every one sees at once the absurdity of such a proposal. Unfortunately none of us knows Hebrew and Greek as we do English, or else it would save us many errors as absurd and more dangerous than that. In fact, it is well to remember the two proverbs, "Words are the wise man's counters, but the fool's money"; and "A fool and his money are soon parted." So I do not purpose to adorn these pages with Hebrew and Greek words, nor to make abstruse calculations as to the number of times a certain word is rendered by another word, but by the help of the Holy Spirit, the Author of the Word, to place before my readers examples of the use of the words in plain English, for more often than not it is the context which determines the meaning of the word.

1. BODY. The source of our bodies is the dust. All the constituents of these bodies of ours are to be found in the earth beneath our feet, but it is remarkable that we cannot sustain them or build them up by eating earth. The earth must be presented to us by the hand of life. For instance, the living grain converts the dead clods of the field into waving corn, or wheat or some other grain, so in eating bread, "the staff of life," we are eating what has been prepared for us by vital processes. And the restoration of our bodies to the dust is also the result of living processes, as I

have already remarked. There are then different kinds of life, as the Apostle remarks "all flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds." It is therefore certain that by bodily structure and constitution man differs from the rest of Creation. If he so differs in life, it is reasonable to suppose that he does so in death. And as to death it is to be noticed that it is often not easy to tell when a man is dead. Even doctors have been mistaken here. And mark, it is always a mistake made in favour of death. It is the living who are supposed to be dead, not the dead who are supposed to be living. That is, it is something else that disappears at death other than bodily life, and it is the disappearance apparently of that something that makes us, even the cleverest of us, overlook the presence of bodily life. I would illustrate it thus: I once knew two twin brothers who were so strikingly alike that endless mistakes happened, but those who were intimate friends of BOTH of them never made a mistake as to their several identity. Why? because to us there was something behind which was strangely distinctive—the force of their diverse personality, which is the essence of individuality. That is what disappears at death: it is that which said "I," "Me," in life. It is then we discover that it was not the body we loved, it was the person who inhabited the body. Like a house which looks like being empty because the tenant has gone to some distant room, we knock and ring, no answer; we look in at the windows no one to be seen; we almost think they must be gone, until when we are leaving in despair the tenant appears: so is it in apparent death. But as in a house the tenant has left the agent comes along presently and puts up the bills, so the microbes begin the work of dissolution and we know then the man is dead. Hence the fitness with which this analogy is employed in Scripture: thus we read:

"The life that I now live in the flesh" (Gal. ii. 20).

"If I live in the flesh" (Phil. i. 22).

"Whilst we are at home in the body" (2 Cor. v. 6).

"Willing rather to be absent from the body" (2 Cor. v. 8).

"Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell" (2 Cor. xii. 3).

"As being yourselves also in the body" (Heb. xiii. 3).

"In my flesh shall I see God" (Job xix. 26).

"Knowing that I must put off this my tabernacle" (2 Peter i. 14).

The body then is a house, tabernacle, or temple. "He spake of the temple of His body"—in which the person who

loves and is loved, who fears and is feared, the possessor of a conscious responsibility to a higher and spiritual authority, enabling him to control the appetites and desires of the body, and to exercise a discrimination not only over his own actions but the actions of others, dwells for a season, and from which his departure or (as Peter calls it) "exodus," is known as death. That it may be so, common experience has nothing to assert to the contrary, for have we not seen over and over again certain creatures leave behind them bodies suited for a terrestrial existence and burst forth in others suited for an aërial state. We know also that by disease, accident, or surgical operation we may lose a very considerable portion of our bodies without any alteration to that "self" or "I" of which I have been speaking; nay, we are told that once in seven years we have, bit by bit, cell by cell, molecule by molecule, lost our bodies and found new ones; all this tends to impress us with the fact that what we call "ourselves" is not dependent for its existence upon the body, and that when Death deprives us of these bodies it only deprives us of that through which we held communication with a material world and a material world held communication with us. In other words, at death we have ceased to be in correspondence with our material environment. That is a different thing from **CEASING TO BE**.

Now all who assert that at death we cease to be, either actually or consciously, show themselves biassed by the Materialistic hypothesis to a greater or less extent, for they elevate Matter to such a height that it overshadows Spirit. Can we know nothing but through the body? Can we be nothing except in the body? Let us see.

2. **SOUL.** To me one of the most mysterious moments in the course of human existence is when the soul leaves the body. It was a custom in some parts of the country to leave the window open at the top. I was told that it shortened the dying agony by letting the soul more easily escape! Most of us are Materialists at heart, expecting to detect the presence of "spirit" by senses suited only for the apprehension of "matter." Even then much of what is material is beyond the reach of our senses. In fact, according to the most recent scientific discoveries, we do not even approximately know what "matter" is; we know extension, and we know form, and from these phenomena (together with others of lesser importance) by our reason "matter" is implied. "Soul" being spiritual in its substance then has neither extension nor form: its phenomena from which its presence is implied are life, feeling (by which is meant the

emotions, such as love, etc.), and mind or understanding. And as all the animate creation down to the lowest forms of life have bodies built of "matter," but of different kinds, as we read in 1 Cor. xv. 39, so the life of every creature is dependent on the presence of "spirit," or to use the ordinary term "soul," but as every animal (and animal is derived from "anima," a soul) has a different kind of material body, so it has a different kind of immaterial soul. It may seem foolish to talk of "soul" in, say a minute and microscopical creature in which the material framework is limited to the simplest form, but I would refer to an interesting observation of Cienkowski on the *Vampyrella Spirogyræ*. This is a minute red-tinged cell, devoid of any special limiting membrane. It has no nucleus or internal structure visible. It is a formless dab of protoplasm. But this formless mass of protoplasm will take but one form of food, a particular variety of algæ, the *Spirogyræ*. It throws out projections and so creeps along until it meets with a *Spirogyra*; then it attaches itself to the cellulose coat enclosing one of the cells of the latter, dissolves the coat, sucks in the contents of the cell and travels on to the next. It will not attack any other class of algæ, or even take up any other substance, although tempted in various ways to do so.

Cienkowski adds, "The behaviour of these monads in their search after food and their method of absorbing it, is so remarkable, that one can hardly avoid the conclusion that the acts are those of *conscious* beings."

Take even another more wonderful case, the case of the one-celled *Arcellæ*, observed by Engelmann. They are more complex than the *Vampyrella* because they have a nucleus and a shell. This shell has a convex-concave form. In the middle of the concave side of the shell is an opening from which the pseudopodia (that is, projections of protoplasm thrown out and anon re-absorbed into the general mass of the uni-cellular body) project, appearing as clear protuberances at the edge of the shell. If a drop of water containing *Arcellæ* be placed under the microscope, it often occurs that one of them falls on its back, that is, with the convex side downwards, so that the pseudopodia cannot reach any support. It is then observed that near the edge on one side appear minute bubbles of gas in the protoplasm; consequently this side becomes lighter and floats up so that the animal now rests on the sharp edge of its shell and the pseudopodia can grasp the surface of the glass slide on which they lie. Suppose the drop be placed on a thin glass slide so that it may be observed as a hanging-drop,

at first the *Arcellæ* sink towards the surface of the hanging drop away from the glass. They, then, develop large bubbles of gas in their protoplasm so that they float upwards towards the glass. Should they rise in such a way that their pseudopodia cannot lay hold of the surface of the glass the gas bubbles are diminished on one side and, if necessary, increased on the other, so that, again, the shell is tilted over and the pseudopodia are able to grasp the surface of the glass. When that desirable result is attained the gas bubbles completely disappear. "It cannot be denied," says Engelmann, "that these facts point to *psychical* processes in the protoplasm."

That the Bible is the handiwork of the Creator is shown by this fact (amongst many others) that it endows every living creature with a soul (Gen. i. 21), whereas it is only lately that science has discovered that "psychical" (that is, *soul-ical*) processes are to be found apart from material organisation, for here is "thinking without a brain."

Now, as apart from these "psychical processes" it would be impossible to tell the difference between living and dead protoplasm, it would be correct to say that "life is the PHENOMENAL soul"; in other words, that life is but the permeation of the body by the "soul."

Again, as in man, the psychical processes are personal, that is, it is "I" who feel, think, love, etc., the "soul" is not only the individual life but the seat of the personality; and that being so it is often put for "self"; in fact, "soul" and "self" have one common derivation.

When we turn to our Bibles we find the word used in these various senses both in the Old and New Testaments.

(1) Distinction between body and soul:

Micah vi. 7. "The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul."

Matt. x. 28. "Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul."

(2) Soul as the life-principle in all creatures:

Genesis i. 30. "And to every beast . . . every fowl . . . everything that creepeth . . . wherein there is 'living soul.'"

(3) Soul as the bearer of individuality:

Genesis xvii. 14. "That soul shall be cut off from among his people."

(4) As the basis of personality as well as the bearer of individuality:

Genesis xiv. 21. "Give me the persons" (literally, *souls*).

- Hence such expression are used, as in our own language:
- Leviticus xxiv. 17. "He that killeth any man," literally "a man that shall smite the soul of any man," *i.e.*, "the person of any man."
- Leviticus xxi. 11. "Neither shall he go in to any dead body," literally, "soul," *i.e.*, "dead person."
- (5) As the seat of the emotions, etc.:
- Genesis xlii. 21. "When we saw the anguish of his soul."
- Numbers xxi. 4. "The soul of the people was much discouraged."
- 2 Sam. v. 8. "The blind that are hated of David's soul."
- Isaiah liii. 11. "The travail of His soul."
- Matt. xxvi. 38. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful."
- (6) As the mind as the sentient principle:
- Acts xiv. 22. "Confirming the souls of the disciples."
- Ephes. vi. 6. "Doing the will of God from the heart" (literally *soul*).
- Phil. i. 27. "With one mind (literally *soul*) striving together."
- Phil. ii. 20. "I have no man likeminded" (literally '*like-souled*').
- (7) Standing for "self": so in Hebrew "my soul" is "myself," etc.; and the New Testament usage follows the Old; *e.g.*:
- Phil. ii. 30. "Not regarding his life" (literally *soul*), and meaning "not regarding *himself* to supply your lack." And not only in this but in denoting individuals from the point of view of individual life. So under this heading we must put such passages as:
- Mark iv. 3. "To save life (*soul*) or to kill."
- Luke xii. 22. "Take no thought for your life (*soul*) what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on."
- Mark x. 45. "To give His life (*soul*) a ransom for many."
- Luke xii. 19. "I will say to my soul, Soul . . ."
- Matt. xvi. 24. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny HIMSELF," and compare with the next verse, "For whosoever will save his life (*soul*) shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life (*soul*) for My sake shall find it," where

denying himself and losing his soul are synonymous terms.

These few examples bear out what has been said about "soul," and will help the reader to be on his guard against a base literalism which will allow but one meaning to a word, especially when that meaning is the one which bears out the particular theory the literalist has in his mind at the time.

"Words are the counters of wise men, the money of fools." Deny the image and superscription they have stamped with such care upon what after all is but a "counter" and they become bankrupt in ideas, nay, they will even attempt, like conjurers, to pass counters stamped differently back and front, so that if you like not a "soul" which ceases at death to be, because it is but a concatenation of other things, then here, by a "quick change," is a "soul" for you which "sleeps" after death!

3. SPIRIT. Both in Hebrew and Greek, as well as other languages, the word which stands for "spirit" is derived from what signifies "to breathe," so that the primary meaning of the word is "breath"; hence "wind"; the notion behind which being *air in motion*, therefore the word represents the idea of *viewless activity*. Thus it is easily seen how the word "spirit" represents that which is immaterial or not to be apprehended by the senses, and yet whose unseen presence is known by its activities. In the "Personal Recollections" of Charlotte Elizabeth, the following illustration of what I mean is found. She was interested in a poor deaf-mute whom she was training to speak. On attempting to impress on him the fact of the being of God, he told her that he had been looking everywhere for God but could not find Him. "There was God, No!" Taking up a pair of bellows she blew a puff of air on his hand, which was red with the cold of a winter's day. Highly displeased he told her that she was making his hand cold. Looking at the pipe of the bellows she replied that she could see nothing. "There was wind, NO!" She goes on to say, "He opened his eyes very wide, stared at me, and panted, a deep crimson suffused his whole face, and a soul, a real soul, shone in his strangely altered countenance, while he triumphantly repeated, "God like wind! God like wind!"

Hence "God is Spirit," and the Third Person in the Holy Trinity whom Scripture represents as the immediate actor in both the old and the new creation is preëminently the "Spirit of God" (Genesis i. 2; John iii. 5).

This is not the place to show from the Scriptures that the

"Spirit of God" is a person, although it is the custom with those who deny the spiritual nature of man to deny that glorious fact which shines in such glad fulness from the pages of the Word of God, and to represent the Holy Spirit as only an influence or something more material still. Here is only one fact from Scripture to impress on our minds the truth of the Spirit's Personality. In John xiv. 16 our Lord calls the Spirit "Another Comforter"; in 1 John ii. 1 our Lord is called a "Comforter," or, as the word is translated there, "Advocate." So He referred to the fact of Himself being their Comforter when He spake of "another." Now in the Greek language there are two words for "another," one meaning *another but similar*, and the other *another but different*. It is the former our Lord uses. Therefore as He was a Person so is the Spirit; and we are to think of the Holy Spirit as we do of our Blessed Lord.

Again, we read in Scripture of "the spirit of man which is in him" (1 Cor. ii. 11), and of the "spirits of men" (Heb. xii. 2). Note, it says, "the spirit of man" and the "spirits of men," not "the spirit of men." We speak of the "breath of men" not the "breaths of men"; and (2 Chron. i. 11) "the soul of thine enemies"; because it is a common breath they all breathe, a common life they all possess, as elsewhere it is written, "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men" (Acts xvii. 26), but it is not one common spirit they all possess, hence distinctly and always "the spirits of men." Therefore as "soul" is the seat of the personality, "spirit" is the source of the individuality. The force of this we shall presently see. Only note.—Personality is that which makes me to myself different from all others. Individuality is that which makes all others perceive that difference.

We have seen that "spirit" is not to be apprehended by our senses. That may be conveniently summed up in a Law of Psychology: "Knowledge implies a subject possessed of the capacity or power to know, and an object so correlated to this faculty that when the proper conditions are fulfilled knowledge of said object necessarily arises in consequence of that reciprocal relationship." For instance, here is an eye; let a physicist examine its wonderful arrangements for focussing rays of light on the membrane at the back of the little dark chamber, and he will tell you that it is more admirably adapted for such a purpose than the camera of the photographer. Here then is a *faculty* admirably suited for the purpose of dealing with the images formed by rays

of light, but let a man possessed of two of the finest eyes ever known amongst men stand in a room from which every ray of light is excluded, and he is no better than a blind man—the power of knowing and the object to be known must be correlated—brought together properly—or else no knowledge will result. To ask anyone to see with his ear, or hear with his nose, would be to run the risk of being considered a lunatic. Therefore to know “spirit” one must have a *spiritual faculty*.

And that spiritual faculty in the Scriptures is called “the spirit.”

Hence to know the motions and emotions of the soul, the substance of which is “spirit,” one requires a spiritual faculty. This is of the utmost importance to remember, hence I would emphasize it by a quotation from a recent writer, “Suppose that one of Mr. Huxley’s students should insist on examining the nettle without the aid of a microscope, and should declare that he is unable to verify Mr. Huxley’s observations? Mr. Huxley would properly reply that the inner structure and life of the nettle could not be seen by the naked eye, for they are microscopically ‘discerned.’ Common-sense would confirm the justness of this answer, and hold the student disentitled to pronounce any opinion upon the question. Now this is precisely what Paul does in treating the subject of spiritual investigation; he says that such an investigation cannot be conducted without an organ, of which the microscope is a good emblem. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” And again he writes: “Anatomy says it has never found the soul, and adds, ‘Therefore there is no soul.’

The reasoning o’erleaps itself and takes away its own life with rude violence. Has anatomy found genius? Has the surgical knife opened the chamber in which music sings and seen the singer? Or has anatomy laid its finger on imagination and held it up, saying, ‘Behold, the mighty wizard?’ But if there is no soul, simply because anatomy has never found one, then there is no genius, no music, no imagination, no chivalry, no honour, no sympathy, because the surgeon’s knife has failed to come upon them in wounding and hacking the human frame! Anatomise the dead poet and the dead ass, and you will find as much genius in the one as in the other: therefore there is no genius!”

The spirit then is the organ of God-consciousness and Self-consciousness.

1 Cor. ii. 14. "The natural man received not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Cor. ii. 11. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man that is in him?"

Once more, as there is a spiritual world so there is a world of "spirits." By this name are called in Scripture those beings who have no place in this material world. Unlike man they are the inhabitants of one world only, unless in the purpose of God they are permitted to use the bodies of men.

"Are they not all ministering spirits?" (Heb. i. 14).

"Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit." . . . "My name is legion"—the largest division of troops in the Roman Army (300 to 6,600): hence used for an indefinite but great number "for WE are many."

Now, when man is driven from this world of matter by the relentless arm of Death and becomes an inhabitant of the spiritual world, he, too, is known by the name "spirit."

"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." (Luke xxiii. 46).

"Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have" (Luke xxiv. 39).

When we carefully study the question of unseen spirits we find the Bible represents them as conscious beings possessing both individuality and personality. That is in keeping with what we have found "the spirit of man" to be from Scripture. The only conclusion we can therefore come to is that when man becomes a spirit at death he loses neither the consciousness of himself as an existing person nor of others as separate beings knowing him and known by him. That is to say, he retains his personality and individuality. Why? Because neither the one nor the other depended upon the body left behind in the grave.

Men in this life often appear to be what they are not; in that spirit-existence they always are what they appear to be. The body gives no clue to the being it conceals for often the most beautiful in face and figure (for example, Graham of Claverhouse, and, if his portrait speaks truly, Judge Jeffreys,) are the most fiendish in disposition, for it is neither the seat of the personality nor the source of individuality. When once the glory of the Redeemer's nature shone forth, so splendid did it make His body, that ever since it has been called "The Transfiguration." There was in that vision a fact and a power which all the radiance of His garments

and the presence of the patriarchs could not altogether convey. In that glorified face there broke forth a revelation of Deity which appealed to that which is deeper than mere sense-perception, that which confirmed the words from heaven: "This is My beloved Son." The same truth is conveyed as the same essential word is used in Mark xvi. 12, where it is said that the Lord Jesus appeared "in a different form" after His resurrection. The accidents of face, figure, pierced hands and feet, were the same; but an indefinable change had passed over him, as one writer has well said "the characteristic of which was that it prefigured His passing into a condition peculiar and appropriate to His essential spiritual and divine being."

Thus when all the statements directly or indirectly bearing on the subject are weighed in the presence of and leaning on the Author of the Bible and of our Being for guidance "into all truth," we discover that in the world of spirits which men enter at death, far from there being cessation of existence, of knowledge, of consciousness, there will be a keener insight into *what is*; and in a deeper sense will the words "after death, judgment" be found true, for the true blazon of man's being will no longer be obscured by the false heraldry of his bodily appearance.

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

CHAPTER IV.

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matthew x. 28).

"The Immortality of the Soul!" How offensive that phrase seems to be to the promulgators of the various unscriptural and anti-scriptural doctrines concerning the fate of the soul of man at death. They have even coined an adjectival term from it and call those who hold fast to the Bible doctrine "Immortal-Soulists!" It is just another example of how the letter killeth, for it needs not the usual display of (in many cases) second-hand Greek to prove that the words "immortal soul" or "never dying soul" do NOT occur in Scripture, but it requires neither the Englishman's Hebrew and Greek Concordance (in three volumes) nor

Liddell and Scott's Lexicon to prove that the THING IS THERE! For what is the meaning of "immortal?" Of course "not mortal" that is, *not subject to death*—using death in its everyday sense. Now that is just what our Lord says: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to DESTROY both soul and body in hell (Gehenna)." Our Lord emphasises the fact by using a different word when He speaks of the possible final doom of "both body and soul"—a word be it noticed which he uses elsewhere, thus:

Matt. ix. 17. "The wine runneth out, and the bottles *perish*."

Luke xv. 4. "If he *lose* one of them, doth not go after that which *is lost*."

Luke viii. "If she *lose* one piece."

Luke xvii. "And I *perish* with hunger."

Luke xxiv. "He was *lost*, and is found."

It contains no hint of annihilation, no promise of cessation of existence.

But someone will say, Does not Paul write to Timothy (vi. 16) "Who only hath immortality," and if God only has it how can any other being be said to have it? Such an objection would never have occurred to me, but I see that (in all the glory of capitals and italics) it is a favourite quibble with some. It would not have occurred to me, because if that were the meaning of the words, then how am I to interpret the promise of the words "this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. xv. 53), where the favourite objection of such "that it is a different Greek word" will not serve, for it is the same? If God alone is the possessor of immortality so that it is a contradiction of Scripture to say that the soul is immortal, then it does not lessen the contradiction to put the possession of it in the future, or to ascribe the possession to the body of what is denied to the soul. Again, if God only has it in the sense these reasoners put upon the words, what about the glorious spirits that rank upon rank stand before His throne? Are they all mortal? They are not (Luke x. 36). Nay, even, what about Satan and his subservient demons?

In natural science we use tests and much of our knowledge is based on experimental work; can, therefore, this question be put to a test? It can: for in Revelation xix. 20 we read that "the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet . . . These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." And in Rev. xx. 10, it is added "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the

22 The Devil and his Two Lieutenants.

lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet ARE." Now, an acute thinker has written, "The notion of a soul immortal enough to live through death, but not immortal enough to live for ever, is too childish to be entertained beyond the little school of literalists who delight in it. The world outside will be content to believe that which proves its powers to live through death claims its immortality." So we might reason that if the Devil and his two lieutenants survive a thousand years' sojourn in prison and the lake of fire, therefore they are immortal enough to survive anything, for the lake of fire is God's last word in the way of "destruction": He calls it "the second death." But we are not left even to reason, for it is added "and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever," literally "for the ages of the ages." That, in ordinary speech, is immortality, it is the survival of the "second death."

Here pure Materialism, with its doctrine of annihilation, must flee away, abashed before the stern and awful solemnity of the Word. Here semi-materialism with its childish notions of a soul that fades like a flower or sleeps to wake up into non-entity must hide its face ashamed of its puny thoughts of God and His ways.

Someone may interrupt here and say, But and if the soul is not what Conditional Immortalists (against whom much of the argument above is valid) say it is. Suppose it is only a Name for a combination, such for example as a rifle or a watch is, of parts which may exist apart, then when the combination is broken up what the name stands for ceases to exist. What then?

This making the "soul" stand for a combination of "body and spirit," so that at death, when the spirit returns to God and the body returns to the dust, the soul ceases to be, is an ingenious way of escaping the full brunt of the charge of Annihilationism. It occurs in the writings of the Early Fathers, and is more fully developed by Göschel in Herzog's *Encyklopädie*, Article "Seele," whilst lately an attempt has been made to popularize the view in this country by E. W. Bullinger in his tract "The Rich Man and Lazarus." It seems difficult for an English mind to understand, for Bullinger has received a most cordial welcome from a certain class of Conditional Immortalists, who write as if he taught their view of the "soul sleeping." But that he does not is evident from the fact that according to his theory there is no soul to sleep, and from his words "There would be no praising the LORD after *he had ceased to live.*" Nor would there be any singing of praises after

he had ceased to 'have any being'" (Page 5). Perhaps their mistake is excusable, for towards the end of his pamphlet he writes as if there were a soul to sleep: an inconsistency which destroys the value of his argument, but shows how wrong doctrines sooner or later display inconsistencies as walls daubed with untempered mortar display cracks.

Many passages of Scripture might be adduced to prove that the soul is not a mere union of things that are capable of separate existence, but we will only take the passage we began with. According to this theory physical death separating between the spirit and the body destroys the soul. "Hence," says Dr. Bullinger, "souls are destroyed." Consequently who kills a man destroys his soul. That this is not so, is clear from our Lord's words: "Fear not them which kill the body, but ARE NOT ABLE TO KILL THE SOUL."

CHAPTER V.

"The Resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption" (Acts ii. 31).

There being then two natures united in man, the one material, the other spiritual, when death overtakes him, the material nature represented by his body goes to the grave and sees corruption, the spiritual nature, represented by his soul, goes to *hades* or the unseen world. That is the ordinary course of events, which in the case of the Lord Jesus was reversed, as the Apostle Peter tells us above. His soul was not left in *hades*, nor was his flesh left in the grave. The question dealt with in this chapter then is, What do the Scriptures teach us about Hades?

Biblical students are aware that the Hebrew word corresponding to the Greek word "hades" is "sheol."

1. SHEOL. This word is frequently translated in the A.V. "grave," just as *hades* is "hell." But in every case it would be better to render it by itself "sheol," just as similarly "hades" ought to be substituted for "hell" where the Greek word "hades" is so rendered. And for this reason: "sheol" denotes a definite realm of the dead, as one may see by observing its usage. This usage is carefully observed in the ancient versions.

- (1) Observe that in vivid contrast with the upper realm of light and life, Sheol is the under realm of gloom and silence:
- “They go down living into Sheol” (Numb. xvi. 30).
 “The sorrows of Sheol compassed me about”
 (2 Sam. xxii. 6).
 “Let them be silent in Sheol” (Ps. xxxi. 17).
 “I cast him down to Sheol with them that descend into the pit” (Ezekiel xxxi. 16).
- (2) Sheol is where there is no enjoyment of divine things, no memory of God, no praise to Him.
- “For in death there is no remembrance of Thee:
 In Sheol who shall give Thee thanks?” (Ps. vi. 5)
 “For Sheol cannot praise Thee,
 Death cannot celebrate Thee:
 They that go down into the pit (*Sheol*) cannot hope for Thy truth.”
- (3) Yet Sheol is not beyond the knowledge of God.
- “If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there” (Ps. cxxxix. 8).
 “Sheol is naked before Him” (Job xxvi. 6).
 “For a fire is kindled in Mine anger,
 And shall burn unto the lowest Sheol” (Deut. xxxii. 22).
 “Though they dig into Sheol, thence shall Mine hand take them” (Amos ix. 2).
- (4) And it is the place of consciousness and communication (Luke xvi. 31).
- “Sheol from beneath is moved for Thee to meet Thee at Thy coming:
 It stirreth up the dead for thee,
 Even all the chief ones of the earth;
 It hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.
 All they shall speak and say unto thee,
 Art thou also become weak as we?
 Art thou become like unto us?
 Thy pomp is brought down to Sheol”
 (Isaiah xiv. 9-11).
- “The strong amongst the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of Sheol Pharaoh shall see them. and shall be comforted over all his multitude, even Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword, saith the Lord God” (Ezekiel xxi. 31).

- (5) Sheol is a place where all go.
 "The wicked shall be turned into Sheol,
 And all the nations that forget God" (Ps. ix. 17).
 "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol" (Ps.
 xvi. 10).
 "I will go down into Sheol unto my son mourning"
 (Genesis xxxvii. 35).
 "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast?
 can I bring him back again? I shall go to him,
 but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. xii. 23).
- (6) Yet Sheol is divided into two parts (Luke xvi. 26).
 "For great is Thy mercy toward me:
 Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest
 Sheol" (Psalm lxxxvi. 13).
 "For a fire is kindled in Mine anger,
 And shall burn unto the lowest Sheol" (Deut.
 xxxii. 22).

And in this connection it is interesting to note how the great Hebraist, Ewald, translates the oft-quoted words of Balaam: "Let me (literally *my soul*) die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his" He gives them thus:

"O that my soul may die as the righteous,
 That my after world may be as Israel's!"

There are other indications in the Old Testament of an existence after death. For instance, 1 Samuel xxviii. 12-20, where we are told how Samuel appears to Saul, and after giving him a succinct history of his career ends by telling him that "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me." Samuel could hardly say that if he were a nonentity, as he would be if such doctrines as those mentioned in Chapter iv. were correct, for he had been dead for some time. Not only so, but Saul was following a course when he consulted the Witch of Endor which was based on a belief in a conscious, independent existence after death. Everywhere throughout the Old Testament "seeking to the dead" is recognised as a possible procedure on the part of man, and is denounced by God.

"But when they say unto you, Seek ye unto necromancers and unto the wizards, who chirp and mutter. Should not a people seek unto its God? In behalf of the living should it seek unto the dead?" (Isaiah viii. 19. Roth. Tr.).

I need not remark, unless it were for a critic who actually (scarcely believable as it may seem) made the objection in all gravity, that I quite understand that it is the necromancers and wizards who "chirp and mutter" and *not* "the dead."

26 Some D.D.'s and the Traditional View.

I do not confound the calling on the dead with the response the dead are supposed to give in return for the "chirping and muttering."

I would here say that after some years' study of the literature put forth by divers Doctors of Divinity and lesser lights on behalf of these unscriptural and anti-scriptural views, I begin to wonder if they are all honest in their attempts (which never succeed) at overthrowing the scriptural, the orthodox, (or if they like the name better) the "traditional" view. So many "false issues" are raised, so many ingenious quibbles, intended to mislead the simple, are invented, so many equivocations constructed, that the honest controversialist appears lost in the special pleader who forgets everything in his determination to prove his point, to carry the day. I dare to give this as my honest opinion before God, after years of study, which lately has become closer and keener. Perhaps it is the result of the occupation to which God has called me, the study of men and diseases, that I come to the matter with an unbiassed mind, a mind willing to look at matters from a new standpoint, well aware of the fact that we have read God's writing in the human frame wrongly more than once and that we have had to rewrite our answers to physiological, biological, pathological puzzles again and again, and therefore prepared to view the possibility that we have read God's writing in the Bible wrongly as to this matter of the existence of the soul after death and throughout eternity. Thus with a mind prepared I have read and read, only to come back, with thankfulness to God, to the old reading of the Scripture statements on this momentous subject. That is why I feel at liberty to give this criticism, which may perhaps seem hard to some who have not passed through my experience, on the matter, manner, and methods of the opposers of what they are pleased to call "the traditional view," but which I, from my heart and with all my heart, call "the scriptural view."

To give an example of what I mean by "raising a false issue," take a very common taunt cast at the holders of the scriptural view.

"The common view that dead people are really more alive than living ones."

That is what is said: but what it means if it were taken literally, word by word, is more than can be told. It is said to be the "common view," but most will think it a very uncommon view: for it is sheer nonsense, and that is only "common" within the walls of lunatic asylums. If, however, what is meant is that the spiritual part of a man sur-

vives the stroke of death, then that is the view which our Lord Jesus Christ gives of the subject when the Sadducees sought to overthrow Him in argument and failed.

Nay, more, in the case of the patriarchs He speaks of such a survival as life—"God IS not the God of the dead, but of the living." In His eyes they were not dead: their bodies long dead had mouldered into dust: but they themselves were alive. Looked at from the Materialist's point of view they were dead. As one of our own poets has written:

"Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O! that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall. . . ."

But, looked at from the divine standpoint, they lived, "for all live unto Him." Hence they are "living ones," indeed, and the absurdity of the statement quoted is made visible, for how can they be "really more alive than they are?" It is the Sadducean taint that makes the construction of such a taunt possible, and the absurdity of it invisible to the makers.

Before proceeding in the next chapter to deal with Hades, the N.T. equivalent to Sheol, it is well for us to consider what we may reasonably expect to find. Whatever the teaching will be, it will be an advance on the teaching of the Old Testament. It is well to look this fact straight in the face, for much of the erroneous doctrine taught concerning Hades arises from the neglecting to recognise this fact. Hence the statements of the New are read in the waning light of the Old, instead of the statements in the Old being read in the glowing, rosy light of the New Testament. And this is done not only in the question before us concerning the future, but often in the case of the present life, for often good men treat their fellows, who differ from them in what after all are minor points, as if they were Israel and their fellows the Canaanites, or perhaps the Children of Gibeon.

It is well to recognise that in the Bible there is a progress in doctrine, as our Lord Himself said to His disciples:

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: . . . for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you" (John xvi. 12-14).

As Dr. Bernard has well written: "The reality of this progress is very visible; and more especially so when we regard the New Testament as the last stage of that progressive teaching which is carried on through the Scriptures as a whole. Glance from the first words to the last, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'—'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.' How much lies between these two!

. . . The course of teaching which carries us from the one to the other is progressive throughout, but with different rates of progress in the two great stages which divide it. In the Old Testament the progress is protracted, interrupted, often languid, sometimes so dubious as to seem like retrogression Yet through it all the doctrine grows, and the revelation draws nearer to the great disclosure. Then there is entire suspension. We turn the vacant page which represents the silence of 400 years—and we are in the New Testament. Now again there is progress, but rapid and unbroken. Our steps before were centuries; now they are but years A swift course of events, the period of one human life, a few contemporary writers have given us all the gospel we need to know under our present dispensation, all that we shall ever know till Jesus comes again." Bearing this in mind it must be apparent to all Biblical students that godly men in the Old Testament dispensations had their hopes, rewards, joys, prosperities, largely connected with the earth. Numberless scriptures could be quoted in support of this statement. Take, for instance, the prayer of Jabez: "Oh, that Thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast." "And God granted him that which he requested" (1 Chron. iv. 10).

Israel was God's earthly people just as the Church is God's heavenly people. Their worship was a worship on earth in an earthly temple; their reward was "long life in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." With the Israelite, death (except in fulness of days and honour) argued the Divine displeasure. It was so in the case of Aaron, of Moses, and of those "with whom God was not well pleased."

Praise with them was an earthly thing: knowledge with them was connected with the land, the city, the temple. Yea, the very presence of God was connected by them with the earth, for did not the Shekinah blaze in the unseeing darkness behind the veil in yonder house of God on Zion's hill? Did not the palace crowning the rugged ascent of David's mount contain the throne on which the Holy One, the Messiah, was to sit judging the people in righteousness?

Did not the pilgrim, when first the sight of that fretted roof and those glittering pinnacles burst on his eyes, break out in song: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem" (Psalm cxxii. 1-4). And, again, "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it" (Psalm cxxxii. 13-14). To be exiled on earth was terrible: how terrible may be seen in "a Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah" (the 63rd). "O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary."

But to be driven into a still further exile by the relentless and mighty arm of Death was more terrible. What the contemplation of death is to the man *now* who has lived for Time, and whose all is here on earth, so in a nobler way the contemplation of death was to the Israelite. It drove him away from the haunts and homes of his kindred; it exiled him from the city where was the temple in which the Lord God of Israel delighted to dwell; and the veil was unlifted, the dark valley was unlit. Understanding these things, can we wonder at Hezekiah's feelings when he moaned: "For Sheol cannot praise Thee, Death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known Thy truth?" (Isaiah xxxviii. 18-19). The last clause expresses a noble form of tradition; and the whole is dispensationally correct, for, as we have seen, the Israelite viewed his passage through death into Sheol as a passage from light into darkness, from the known into the unknown, from the seen into the unseen. What a difference now, when what was hidden "is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

Just as the traveller, viewing from some eminence the landscape which stretches from his feet to the purple mountains sleeping in the distant horizon, sees drawn across the country, as if by a giant pencil, dark lines. If he be unacquainted with the locality he will hardly guess that these lines represent hidden valleys, where dwell in low, thatched cots the toilers amidst those uplands, where is played many a long-drawn tragedy of humble life, and where at last the

weary lie down to rest under the shadow of some moss-grown tower. As one of our own poets has said:

“And thence the moorland spreads: long bar on bar,
And fold in quiet fold, with no sign seen
Of deep, warm vales and homesteads hid between.”

Thus the patriarch Job gazing down the long years sees nothing beyond the dark line Death draws across his path, until his eye catches that bright Figure standing out in all the glorious light of resurrection, and he exclaims (Job xix. 25-27): “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.” And as, gazing down the vista of Time, prophets, psalmists, patriarchs, beheld the glories of a coming Messiah, they saw not the long centuries that would separate His sufferings from His glories, even so looking along the plane of their earthly lives they could see nothing beyond the tomb, until their eyes caught a glimpse of the bright millennial day, when “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake . . . to everlasting life . . . and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Dan. xii. 2-3). Truly, such an one could say: “As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness” (Psalm xvii. 15). For an Old Testament believer to say, “Absent from the body, present with the Lord” would be as great an anachronism as for a New Testament saint to say, “Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.”

We should expect such an attitude in an intenser form in the Book of Ecclesiastes since its writer is emphatically the Preacher of this present life, and his motto, the words oft repeated, “under the sun.” For him, truly, “there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol whither thou goest.” “There is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event to all . . . after they go to the dead . . . for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.” And what more true if our knowledge is bounded by “the works that are done under the sun?” When we consider who the writer was, are we not forcibly reminded of Dr. Johnson’s remark to David Garrick when he was being taken round to see all the

wonders and devices of that great man's residence and grounds, "David, man," said he, tapping his host on the shoulder, "these are the things that make death terrible"? This man's wisdom was wisdom concerning all things done "under the sun"; his devices were concerning things "under the sun"; and his works, and wisdom, and knowledge, and devices—all "under the sun," just bring him to this: "Be not righteous overmuch!" And yet this is the writer from whom they quote most frequently, who would have us believe that we "cease to have any being" because "the dead know not anything."

No; Shoel in the Old Testament was an unknown country, just as Africa was before such intrepid explorers as Dr. Livingstone and Fred Arnot, by their journeys across its interior, cast some light upon what was truly "Darkest Africa." And I consider it to be another proof of the "God-breathed" nature of these Old Testament Books, on which it is so fashionable in these dark days for Christianised sceptics to cast doubt, that their writers were prevented peopling the unseen world of Shoel with creatures of their own imagination, as the ancient geographers did the countries of the interior of which they knew nothing.

CHAPTER VI.

"I . . . have the keys of Hades and of Death" (Rev. i. 18).

One of the many ways in which the teachers of errors seek to cover their admission that there is an "intermediate state" whilst they yield to the pressure of Scripture, is to declare that the Bible recognises three conditions: "before death," "during or in death" (that is, say they, the period between decease and resurrection), and "after death."

Now these are expressions which may be used in regard to the BODY, as the above quoted saying of our Lord intimates—whilst the body is under the power of Death the spirit is in that of Hades whither the soul goes at death: and the symbols of that two-fold power are in the hands of Him, of Whom it was said, "His soul was not left in Hades, neither did His flesh see corruption." And because of Whom the believer can shout even now in triumph, "O Hades, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. xv. 55). It is thus interesting to observe the order in which the words occur in the other passages in Revelation:

vi. 8. "His name . . . was Death, and Hades followed with him."

xx. 13. "Death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them."

xx. 14. "Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire." It is clearly evident that the two are linked together, the former being the place of the material part of man, the latter being the place of the spiritual part of man: so at the resurrection the one yields up his body, the other his soul: and the Second Death consists in the eternal re-union of these two, for the emblems of separation are cast into the lake of fire. Well might the words "Abandon hope all ye that enter here!" be written over the dread portal of such a place in letters of living fire, waxing and waning through the endless night of Eternity, for even the vain hope of a possible death is taken away. Never more shall Death guard the body whilst Hades receives the soul. There is another portal. 'Tis open now, and the traveller along this life's highway approaching may read in evergreen letters above, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." And as he looks and reads and wonders the Man at the Gate utters afresh in tenderest tones the old, old invitation: "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Do you mark His hands and His feet? They are pierced: you may now see the places where the nails went through. Do you not hear that sob that bursts as it were from a broken heart? It is because so many pass on—to that other portal. Oh, not you, surely, not you!

Besides, Matt. xi. 23; xvi. 18; Luke x. 15; the word occurs once more in Luke xvi. 23; "in Hades he lift up his eyes." In this incident, which our Lord relates, there is a vivid description of Hades given in language we can understand, where physical acts are put for spiritual perceptions. That is to say, "lifting up the eyes" is put for perceiving, "crying" for communicating: so we ourselves talk of "Love being blind," of the "soul crying out," and of the "heart being hardened." Demand a literal interpretation of these expressions of our Lord, or else cast away the parable which contains them as a figment of the imagination which makes dead men speak and the angels carry the ulcerated corpse of Lazarus to its "dumping place" in Abraham's bosom, unless you suppose our Lord was repeating a silly tale of the Pharisees to cast ridicule upon them: these are the alternatives set before us, "the horns of a dilemma," upon one of which we must be empaled. But to take our Lord's expressions literally is to treat His words in the spirit of priestism,

which depends for its vitality on the literal interpretation of His words concerning the loaf, "This is My body."

And if these are to be taken literally what are we to say about "I am the true vine, ye are the branches?" or "I am the door?" And when God speaks of Himself in the Old Testament as "being grieved to the heart," as hearing, seeing, coming down, as stretching out His right arm, are we to take these expressions literally and ascribe to the Almighty a heart, eyes, ears, etc.?

When the Apostle Paul writes "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened" (Eph. i. 18), are we to understand that he ascribes the possession of eyes to the mind? And when the Apostle James says "the tongue is a fire" are we to take his words literally? Or when the Apostle Peter bids his readers "gird up the loins of your mind" (1 Pet. i. 13), are we to suppose that he teaches that the mind has loins? Every honest mind must see that these expressions are not to be taken literally: and, if so, why make an exception of our Lord's account of Hades? It is somewhat remarkable that the writer of a book on *The figures of speech of the Bible* insists on our taking every word of our Lord's account of the rich man and Lazarus literally, thus making nonsense of it, or else accepting his view that it is "another example from the traditions of the Pharisees"; whilst he goes on to say "A parable of this kind need not be true in itself, or in fact, though it MUST BE BELIEVED TO BE TRUE BY THE HEARERS, IF NOT BY THE SPEAKER."

A Christadelphian writer argues in a similar manner, "it upsets the belief it is quoted to prove, and substitutes the tradition of the Pharisees, which Jesus was parabolically using. If a literal narrative, it clashes with the popular theory of the death state in the following particulars. We read, verse 21, that the beggar died, and was carried*—not his immaterial soul, but he, his bodily self—by the Angels into Abraham's bosom." Whilst another writer argues, "Fact it cannot be. Otherwise you have the extraordinary thought of angels carrying a dead man, a loathsome corpse, to the bosom of Abraham." Yet another says, if this

* Thus these writers with their coarse touch remove the delicate bloom of historicity from the Word. The omission of any reference to the burial of the beggar is a touch of the highest historical value, for in those days the bodies of such were not buried but carried away to be consumed in the ever-blazing pyres in the Valley of Hinnom. Such doubtless would have been the fate of our Lord's body if the influential Joseph of Arimathæa had not begged it of Pilate.

parable "could be truly shown to teach their views (*i.e.*, the ordinary scriptural view of existence after death), the only effect would be that of establishing a contradiction between one part of Scripture and another, or of affording reason to think that this parable of Lazarus, despite the authority of manuscripts, formed no part of the original Gospel of St. Luke." Here we have evidence from their own pens that rather than read the narrative of our Lord in the way in which we read other portions of Scripture, and thus understand it to bear out the teachings as we have seen of the rest of Scripture, they would have us believe that in it our Saviour taught what He did not believe, that it was merely a "take off" of the Pharisees, * or that it must be cut out of the Bible as with the penknife of Jehoiakim.

Such are the straits the Bible brings men into when they try to make it speak as they would—they contradict themselves, they become like the child whose toy will not do what he wishes, they seek to destroy it, and they finally talk foolishness.

In this narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, our Lord draws aside the curtain which hides the unseen world from us, and shows us that Hades is a place of bliss and of torment, of consciousness and of recognition, of memory and regret, of hopes and fears, of desires only expressed to be frustrated. In fact, a place where the powers of personality and individuality are displayed, such as we have seen to survive the stroke of death.

It only remains to be remarked that the place of bliss in the unseen world was to the pious Jew "Abraham's bosom," whilst to all to whom Jesus is greater than Abraham it is "Paradise." The key to its meaning at once is found if we compare.

"Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" and "the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

Many have been the attempts to explain away the meaning of our Lord's words to the Malefactor. One way is to interpret *semeron* ("to-day") "this day" meaning "the day of which you spoke," *i.e.*, the day of My coming in power. But *semeron* will not yield this meaning (see Liddell and Scott's Lexicon).

* A view no one would put forward if they were really acquainted with the Rabbinical literature of the day, as the eminent scholar Weber assures us that there is an absolute difference in our Lord's story from any of those dealing with the same subject amongst the Jews of His time. See his *System der altsyn. paläst. Theologie*, p. 327.

The Strange Doctrine of John Thomas. 35

Constable vacillates between this and what he calls "synchronism." According to this theory the robber, falling asleep before the last half-hour of the day expired, loses consciousness of time, because "to the sleeper in death's arms there is no time," and so "the last half hour the penitent thief will spend with his king in His kingdom, for it is there he takes up the thread of time once more." Does time depend on our consciousness of it? It would appear so from this argument. Then if I fall asleep half-an-hour before midnight on the last day of the year when I wake in the morning of the first day of the new year I have still half-an-hour of the old year at my disposal? Alas, no! the passage of time is inexorable, and my consciousness or unconsciousness of it makes no difference.

John Thomas (the founder of Christadelphianism) has a reading equally strange. "'To-day' is a Scripture term, and must be explained by the Scripture use of it. In the sacred writings, then, the term is used to express a period of over 2,000 years. This use of it occurs in David, as it is written, 'To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, lest ye enter not into my rest.' The Apostle, commenting on this passage about 1,000 years after it was written, says: 'Exhort one another whilst it is called to-day Thus it was called to-day when David wrote, and to-day when Paul commented on it This to-day is, however, limited both to Jew and Gentile; and in defining this limitation Paul tells us that to-day means 'after so long a time' If, then, we substitute the Apostle's definition for the word 'to-day' in Christ's reply to the thief, it will read thus: 'Verily I say unto thee, after so long a time thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.'" Yet he is afraid that this is not a satisfactory explanation and proceeds to give other and contradictory interpretations of the passage.

The oldest way by which the force of this passage is minimized is that known as the "comma method." To understand this method thoroughly it may be necessary for me to mention that the oldest and therefore most valuable manuscripts are written in capital letters without any divisions between the words. To write in English as it is written in these very ancient manuscripts we should have to do thus:

VERILYISAYUNTOTHEETODAYSHALTTHOU
BEWITHMEINPARADISE.

Hence these manuscripts are called "uncial." Fortunately the Greek language does not depend on its sense like our own upon *punctuation* or the *order* of the words. For

instance, there is the story told of the inspector who fell out with the mayor, going to the school one day with him and writing the following passage on the board as a headline, "The Mayor says the Inspector is a Tyrant." The children stared: the mayor smiled. But the process was reversed when the inspector with two strokes of his pencil made it read thus: "The Mayor, says the Inspector, is a Tyrant." Then there is the order of the words: "John struck Richard" means the opposite of "Richard struck John." It would not be so in Greek: there the order gives the *emphasis* not the sense. Remembering these three points we are ready to tackle the "comma theory." In our own English Bibles the passage runs thus:

"Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

Now alter the punctuation by shifting the comma one word forwards:

"Verily, I say unto thee to-day, shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

This does not alter the meaning to any great extent: it only takes away the mark of immediate time and permits those who care to do so to argue without the absurdity of it being immediately visible that paradise is the renewed earth.

In the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus the words are transposed so that they read "To-day I say unto thee, with Me . . ." But not until the fifth century do we find the "comma method" mentioned—*but not approved*.

As to the remark by some writers (not of authority) that the Greek favours this "comma method," it is to be observed (1) that all to whom Greek was a living language sustained the usual reading. Theophylact speaks strongly of any who suggest the "comma method"—they "do violence to the words." (2) The foremost defender of this old theory surrenders this position by saying it is a Hebrew idiom and not to be judged by the canons of Greek, and gives over forty references to the Old Testament Scriptures in support of his contention. Would it be believed that the phrase does not occur in one of the places referred to! Nowhere in the Hebrew Scriptures do the words occur "Verily I say unto thee to-day." Over and over again our Lord says "Verily I say unto thee" or "you." Never does He add the word "to-day" to His favourite introductory phrase. Nay, more, our Lord does not seem to have thought in Hebrew. In His most awful moments He uses the familiar Aramaic, for He quotes the opening words of the twenty-second Psalm not in the original Hebrew in which they were written

but in the familiar country dialect of His childhood. So that the suggestion that we should add "to-day" to the opening phrase because it is a Hebrew idiom, is met on the two grounds that it has not been proved to be a Hebrew idiom, the words occurring nowhere else, and that it does not appear that our Lord used Hebrew, seeing that He quotes the Old Testament Scriptures from the Septuagint version and in His deepest agony in the familiar Syriac.

Turning to our versions we find that all (except Rotherham, against whom we may put the noble version of the great Reformer, Martin Luther) put the comma where it ought to be placed—after *thee* and before *to-day*. That is to say, the Authorised and Revised Versions, Martin Luther's German Bible, the Twentieth Century New Testament, Ferrar Fenton's and Smith's Translations, agree in placing the comma between "thee" and "to-day."*

What then makes Paradise? Our quotation from the Book of Revelation answers—"the Tree of Life." Of whom is this an emblem? There can be but one answer—the Lord Jesus Christ. I love to quote to myself the words of the great Anselm in his magnificent Forty-second Oration: "Credo, Domine, credo certe quod ubi tu vis, et ubi tu es, ibi paradiso est: et esse tecum hoc est esse in paradiso." "I believe, O Lord, I believe most surely that where Thou goest, and where Thou art, there is paradise. And to be with Thee—that is to be in paradise." Something of the great Orator's sublimity of thought was contained in the answer of the poor little ragged street Arab, who lay dying in the garret, to the infidel who came to see him. The poor little chap was very ignorant, but at some Sunday School (God bless all true Sunday Schools!) he had learned to trust in and to love Jesus. To him this infidel enters, and to buttress his own miserable position he sought to insinuate doubts into the dying lad's mind. At last he said, "Suppose, sonny, you went to 'eaven and 'e wern't there, wot would ye do then?" "Go and look fur Him" was the quick response. "But suppose," and here the atheist's voice sank to a tragic whisper, "suppose 'e wor gone to Hell, wot then?" The little chap turned a beaming and triumphant countenance and looking on the man's lowering face cried, "Ah! I see ye don't unnerstand; for why? cos where Jesus is that's Heaven." To be with Abraham, the Father of the

* Readers may be interested in learning that Ostervald's French Version, amongst others, is very emphatic on the point. So in this matter of rendering a disputed passage the Versions in the *three greatest languages* of the Modern World are agreed.

Faithful, the Friend of God, was what cheered the true Israelite looking forward to the gloom and silence of Sheol, and so he called it "Abraham's bosom."

To the believer the glory of the unseen state is to be with Christ, and so he calls it "Paradise." And to this dying robber who, having espoused the cause of this rejected king, had cut himself off from the sustaining sympathy of his comrade, the chief priests and elders, and the boisterous crowd, what a glorious prospect was opened up to him in the simple words "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." It was a promise sealed by the Master's oath, "Verily I say unto thee," which doubtless proved through the agonising hours that followed a real anæsthetic. How "to-day" and "with Me" and "Paradise" would ring through his soul like a peal of bells rung for some great victory.

To them that love the Lord Jesus, to be with Him is Paradise. So Paradise is Hades, but all Hades is not Paradise; just as Abraham's bosom was Hades, but there was a part of Hades which certainly was not Abraham's bosom. We saw that Sheol in the Old Testament was similarly differentiated. The Apostle Paul, in relating visions and revelations of the Lord states that he was "caught up as far as the third heaven . . . into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words." It is to be noted in connection with this that the Apostle emphatically declares "whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell." Now, if the body is the man, if on the separation of the spirit from the body "he ceased to have any being," if in the separate condition the soul (that which says "I") "sleeps," then the Apostle could have no doubt, for he saw ("visions") and he heard ("revelations"). It is, in fact, a clear statement by the Apostle that he was conscious, and that that consciousness was independent of the body. Had the theory been true that there is no conscious existence apart from the body then the Apostle could not possibly have used such language.

Whilst I am writing the following is brought to my notice:

"2 Cor. xiii. 2-3 teaches nothing whatever about the spirit after death. Paul was alive; and it is impossible, as well as absurd, to take what is said of a living person and interpret it of a dead person. Paul did not know, he says: and if he did not know, we are sure that no one else can know anything about it. John, too, was alive, when he heard voices and words and saw visions of the future dispensation. We know far too little of these things to be able to build a

doctrine upon a passage like this one; especially a doctrine 'repugnant' to many other passages which are perfectly clear, and have no mystery about them; and a doctrine which causes divisions among Brethren. Even Professor Gausson, in his powerful work on plenary inspiration, says 'we must refer this verse to Paul, not to God,' for, he asks, 'Can it be supposed that the Holy Ghost knew not how this miracle was performed?' We reply, that though the Holy Ghost was not ignorant of it, Paul was, and that the Holy Ghost desired that PAUL SHOULD TELL US OF HIS IGNORANCE.'"

Now note, our writer is perfectly clear on the following:

- (1) Paul did not know.
- (2) What Paul did not know, we do not know.
- (3) This ignorance has the seal of the Holy Spirit.
- (4) We are not to build a doctrine on a passage like this one.
- (5) The doctrine that is built on this passage is repugnant to many other passages of Scripture.
- (6) This doctrine divides Brethren (the capital B is his not mine).

What did Paul not know? That depends upon what he did know—"I KNEW a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of [*choris*, apart from: "*without* Me ye can do nothing"] the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth)." That is, after fourteen years' consideration Paul could not tell whether he was in the body or apart from the body when he had "visions and revelations of the Lord." What he could not decide was, whether he was embodied or disembodied at the time. Twice over he assures us he knew not. He had weighed the matter, he had considered the "pro's and con's," and there was just as much evidence for his being in the DISEMBODIED state as for the EMBODIED. And the Holy Spirit puts the seal of His approval on Paul's record of his ignorance. Now, according to this writer, the doctrine repugnant to Scripture is the doctrine of a conscious, disembodied state. It is a doctrine, according to him, repugnant to MANY other passages of Scripture: if that be so (which it is not) it is a doctrine repugnant to the mind of the Holy Spirit. Was Paul so ignorant of the Scriptures that he considered as equally possible his being in the body (which was the natural assumption) and his being in a state repugnant to many passages of Scripture? Did the Holy Spirit so approve what was contrary to His mind as revealed elsewhere that He inspired the Apostle's record of

the fact that he considered the possibility of his being disembodied was equal to what we look upon as a certainty—being embodied? We are compelled to answer these questions in the affirmative if we accept the teaching of those who deny the possibility of consciousness in the disembodied state, not to speak of the teaching of those who deny the possibility of being in the disembodied state altogether!

There is nothing mysterious about the passage, and Paul teaches in it in the simplest way possible what he says elsewhere "knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." It is this knowledge that makes him ignorant as to his state when he received visions and revelations of the Lord. In either case it was a miracle. Naturally as he had already written, being with the Lord meant being out of the body: had he been then out of the body? If so, his return was a miracle: it was a resurrection, for absence from the body means physical death. So some understand that this took place outside Lystra, where his friends had drawn him after the inhabitants had stoned him, "supposing he had been dead. Howbeit as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up" (Acts xiv. 19-20).

On the other hand, if he had never left his body (as one would naturally suppose, seeing he was in it all these fourteen years that followed), then to receive visions and revelations of the Lord was a miracle, for he had also written "at home in the body . . . absent from the Lord." And all these fourteen years Paul never solved that problem. The Holy Spirit, also, set His seal of approval upon Paul's quandary, for He inspired him to record it for our edification and support when some "wiser than the ancients" would come along to divide the Gordian knot with the Materialist's sword; for, certainly, if the Apostle Paul had known half as much as our writer the matter would have cost him not a moment's thought, for then he would have learned that "there is no other way of being 'with Christ,' except by His Return and our Ascension for which we wait." As to the "false issue" raised at the beginning of the paragraph about "a dead person," it is clear that the passage, teaching what it does about the consciousness of the disembodied spirit, must teach "about the spirit after death," for how else do we become disembodied? I think the writer is mistaken about "Brethren." Doubtless (from what he says in another place) the wish is father to the thought, but (to quote the Apostle again) "there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among

you” and “shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” If such already has happened, then has come the time when men shall arise amongst those who have stood fast for the truth all these years “speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” But I trust that “Brethren” know their Bibles too well to be divided by heresies which their fathers and forefathers rejected as being contrary both to Revelation and to Reason.

CHAPTER VII.

“I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord . . . whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth” (2 Cor. xii. 1-3).

That the personality is not inherent in the body, we have already seen, but I would refer to a striking saying of our Redeemer’s:

“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up . . . But He spake of the temple of His body” (John ii. 19-21).

When this is attentively studied, it will be found a very remarkable passage. It will not yield its richness of meaning to the superficial reader, but to the student in the school of God the Holy Spirit, who not only lays hold of it but is laid hold of by it, there will come an unveiling of the Glory of the Redeemer which will never be forgotten by him. The shrine of the Shekinah of old spake in all its beauties of His body, and as all the beauties of form and colour are dependent on the Light and the wholeness of that faculty which is prepared for the perception of Light, so we understand what is written:

“And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.”

“He hath no form nor comeliness;

And when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.”

And just because they were blind: “in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”: they demolished that “temple of His body,” but Him they could not destroy. And it was He who was to “raise up” that demolished temple, to dwell in it to all eternity. That is to say that as

the temple of old was but a dark, lifeless shrine without the Presence of the Glory, yet was necessary to that Presence, so the body without Him Who said in the article of death "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" was dead, yet He had not ceased to be, although the angel said "Come see the place where the Lord lay," for He said "in three days I WILL RAISE IT UP." I find that one has well said "Here it is scarcely possible even to equivocate. For it was one who spake of His own body, who said He would raise it up. They cannot say it was the Father speaking of 'His own body,' and therefore their constant manœuvre fails them here. If Jesus, then, raised up his own body, there must have been One not buried in that tomb of Joseph, One surviving death, to raise it up. Death is not, then, extinction, for Jesus truly 'died.' That 'the Lord lay' in Joseph's tomb is truth, but not the whole truth. Insisted on as such, it becomes fatal and soul-destroying error."

Here is to be noticed in passing another point of which they take full advantage. Sometimes the person is identified with his body, sometimes with his spirit. Here the angel said "Come see the place where *the Lord lay*": whilst elsewhere it is called (eight times) "the body of Jesus." Just as of Stephen, who died saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," it is said "and devout men carried *Stephen* to his burial, and made great lamentation *over him*." This explains the phrase of which so much is made, "he fell asleep."

It is always when the man is identified with his body that he is said to "sleep." It is a mode of speech found not only in Greek outside the New Testament, but in other languages. But nowhere in the Bible is the spiritual part or soul of man said to sleep. Take for instance:

John xi. 11. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth"—but it is spoken in regard to his resurrection "but I go that I may awake him out of sleep."

Matt. xxvii. 52. "Many bodies of the saints which slept arose."

1 Cor. vii. 39. "If her husband be dead (asleep) she is at liberty . . ."

Acts xiii. 36. "David . . . fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption."

1 Cor. xi. 30. "For this cause many are weak among you, and many sleep."

1 Cor. xv. 20. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

In these, as in other passages, sleeping is connected with the death of the body. It is used to indicate the end of

physical relations, it is connected with bodily frailties and ailments as the climax of them: and wherever death is a matter of regret or something to be delivered from by the resurrection of the body, there the expression is used. In fact, to use a physical term in connection with that which is immaterial and super-sensuous is to display a deeply-seated materialistic bias.

Nay, more than that, the Scriptures teach what modern psychological research is beginning to discover that the mind is sleepless, that never do we lose self-consciousness in sleep, and that there are various facts established by observation which relegate sleep to the bodily sphere entirely. (See Appendix).

The Scriptures teach this:

Matt. i. 20. "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying . . ."

Matt. ii. 12. "Being warned* of God in a dream."

Acts xii. 6-11. "Peter was sleeping . . . And when Peter was come to himself"—literally *when he had become present to himself*. It is not said that he awoke until he stood outside the prison and the angel had left him.

Acts xxvii. 23. "For there stood by me this night the angel of God."

These are but a few instances in which during sleep there had been intercourse with the unseen and spiritual world. Whilst the body is sleeping the person is holding high intercourse with heavenly visitants. Shut off from the material world by the sinking of our senses into the depths of sleep, the spiritual nature receives messages and impressions from the great world of spirits, nay, from the Father of spirits Himself, that are never vouchsafed to us in what we call (oh! the irony of it) "our waking moments."

But see how this doctrine that the soul sleeps, that it is unconscious after death until the resurrection, is self-contradictory! For instance, take that form of it in which we are told that the soul is but a union of parts, so that when the body and spirit are separated the soul ceases to be, just as when the works of a watch are taken from its case the watch ceases to be, what is the conclusion of the whole matter? This: "Thus we may well believe it will be with

* "Being warned"—the Greek verb here used means to give a response to one who asks or consults: hence, in the passive, as here, to receive an answer. The wise men had sought counsel of God in their waking, anxious moments, with the result that they received in the night (as Wycliffe phrases it) an "answer taken in sleep."

those who fall asleep in Christ. As to chronology and the actual duration of time, it will be till His coming. But as to experience, it will be practically instantaneous, however long the interval may be." But sleep implies a sleeper; unconsciousness implies a being who is capable of consciousness; and experience implies a being capable of feeling, for all states being but modes of existence, imply existence and deny non-existence. So in this form of the argument we have two mutually destructive members: the first, that the person ceases to be at death: the second, that that person who has ceased to be has entered into a state in which he experiences a "practically instantaneous" change!

Now in all languages sleep has been taken as the image and likeness of Death: but not death in all its forms, only when death has been peaceful, and the dead has lain as if wrapped in "an infant's slumber, light." So in the Bible the phrase is only used of believers, or of that little girl of whom He said—"Talyetha dimkhath"—the maiden sleepeth. Here again the forcing a literal meaning upon such expressions not only displays a materialistic bias but ends in absurdity.

All languages have the same peculiar, sometimes paradoxical sayings, and so to take the expression "the maiden sleepeth" literally (as they did) is to DENY that she was dead, for a sleeping person is NOT a dead one. Why then insist on it being taken literally as regards the soul, when it is only used metaphorically as regards the body? Why press so far in regard to our spiritual nature an expression which if pressed equally far in regard to our physical nature would contradict what was meant to be said? That is to say, that when the theory of the "sleep of the soul" is worked out on its makers' lines, granting for the moment their suppositions (which are false) to be true, it ends in a palpable contradiction, it ends in a cul-de-sac from which there is no way of exit except by retracing our steps and reforming our premises.

Speaking of the vision which Paul had at Troas of a "man of Macedonia," Henry Melvill said, "There is not one who does not consider that sleep is a sort of image of death. The heathen spake of death as a sleep; and Scripture, from the very first, made use of the figure. But the metaphor has not been carried to its proper extent. I do indeed think that God designed sleep as the standing image of death. But I think also that God hereby meant to fix their thoughts, not only on their dying, but on their rising from the dead. Why, when every morning calls us from our

beds, strung with new energy, and, as it were, freshened into a new life—why are we to speak of sleep as though it imaged our death, but not also our resurrection?

“But our condition whilst asleep furnishes notices of our condition whilst we lie amongst the dead. In sleep it is not the whole man, it is only the earthly part that falleth asleep. The bodily senses and faculties are suspended from their usual exercise; but the mind is more than commonly active. What flights will the soul take when we are asleep! (See Appendix.) It may be well doubted whether the soul is ever inactive: we do not always remember our dreams; but, probably, we always dream. And what ought we to gather from this? Surely, that the soul shall be active while the body lies dead.

“Neither is this all. Such passages of Scripture as this teach us that while the body is asleep the soul may be receiving instruction. It is every way observable that God should have made such frequent use of visions and dreams in the communicating intimations of His will. He might have given these intimations through many other modes; for nothing can be more vague or uncertain than a dream. And it may have been that in thus frequently employing dreams, and employing them more frequently whilst there was less distinct information as to Man's state after death. God's purpose was to direct attention to the capacity of the soul for receiving instruction, yet not through the organs of the body, but whilst these organs might be closed and unable to discharge their ordinary offices. The separate state shall not be a state of dull inactivity or low attainment: that state is imaged by sleep; and as if to tell me what the righteous may expect in that state, God hath come to His servants in visions of the night, and taught them in sleep what they had vainly striven to discover when awake. And now I am not to give room to any fears that, whilst the flesh is slumbering in the grave, the soul will not be admitted into acquaintance with portions of God's will which it may vainly have endeavoured to ascertain whilst on earth; enough that Paul, whilst awake, had meditated to preach in Asia, and assayed to go into Bithynia, seeking fruitlessly to determine what God's will might be, and yet that Paul in sleep, which is the image of death, was thoroughly instructed in regard of that will—there stood by him in a vision, ‘a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately . . . assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us’” (Acts xvi. 9-10).

CHAPTER VIII.

"Verily, verily, if a man keep My saying, he shall never see death" (John viii. 51).

"The phrase," writes Dr. Vincent, "'thorein thanaton,' *to see death*, occurs only here in the New Testament. The double negative signifies *in no wise, by no means*. 'Theorese,' *see*, denoting *steady protracted vision*, is purposely used, because the promise contemplates the entire course of the believer's life in Christ. It is not, *shall not die for ever*, but *shall live eternally*. Upon this life, which is essentially the negation and contradiction of death, the believer enters from the moment of his union with Christ, and moves along its entire course, in time no less than in eternity, seeing only life, and with his back turned on death."

I quote this from Dr. Vincent (who is one of our greatest authorities on Greek, especially on the Greek of the New Testament) for this reason: One of the favourite ways in which defenders of erroneous doctrines act is to put on a great show of learning. For instance, in "Bible *versus* Tradition," whose writers appeal to Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, and what not, this sentence concerning Stephen's dying words occurs, "the grammar of the text charges the saying, 'Lord Jesus receive my spirit,' upon the wicked Jews, and afterwards records what Stephen said and did." Now the fact is, the words "calling upon and saying" are in the singular number, and so could not apply to any but Stephen himself! Now I happened to see this concerning the words quoted above, "*For ever*, is therefore a legitimate translation of 'eis ton aiona,' and on this rendering John viii. 51 would read 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep My saying, he shall not see death for ever,' which puts a very different complexion on our Lord's remark," which is the only true saying in the whole quotation; so "different" that one would not have recognised the remark to be the Lord's at all! And yet does not the writer see that he is granting the power of perception to the dead—"he shall not SEE death for ever?" If he attempts to shuffle and explain that that is not what he means then he must accept the only other meaning of his own translation, "he shall not see death FOR EVER," that is *at all*. That brings me to the question of "Eternal Life." As Dr. Vincent says it is a life upon which "the believer enters from the moment of his union with Christ." Therefore it is neither ordinary life nor existence, for they were living and existing before they

were brought into “union with Christ.” It is more than ordinary life, just as ordinary life is more than mere existence. Its antithesis is not physical death, but that death which is separation from God, and the exposure to His wrath. It is that death which our Redeemer endured on the Cross before He died, before He “gave up the ghost.” His emergence from that death was signalised by His great cry, “My God; My God, why forsookest Thou Me?”

Therefore, it is written, “He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not SEE life: but the wrath of God ABIDETH on him” (John iii. 36). “Menei-*abideth*. The present tense. As the believer hath life, so the unbeliever hath wrath abiding on him. He lives continually in an economy which is alienated from God, and which, in itself, must habitually be the subject of God’s displeasure and indignation.” Therefore “life in Christ only” is true when we give the scriptural meaning to the word “life.” Just as the man who has not “life in Christ” to-day yet lives and exists, so after death he lives (in the sense already stated) and exists, although without that life, for the present tense of the “abideth” is as awful in its significance, as the present tense of the “hath everlasting life” is blessed. It is also Scriptural to use the word “only” of the life the believer hath, for he can obtain that life *only* through union with the Saviour: but to argue that none else has life is absurd on the face of it. That this is not seen at once is because we are all naturally prone to commit the “Fallacy of Equivocation,” that is, to use the same word in two entirely different senses: life derived from Christ, and life derived from Adam: as if it meant the same in both instances. I remember reading an American poem about a miser who on Christmas Eve wrote to a poor widow to “remit” her rent, as times were hard and money scarce, and thinking to save time went over on the morning to collect the rent personally. To his astonishment he was overwhelmed with thanks, not remembering that “remit” was like a finger-post pointing down two very different roads, one of which led to “remittance,” and the other to “remission!” So never thinking that the poor of whom he wrote so feelingly meant him, the widow read it as “remission,” and with tears thanked him for *remitting* her rent, a thing he never thought of. So “life” in the Scriptures stands at another meeting-place where two roads part: one leading through Christ to Glory, the other through death to the darkness which never lightens, to the worm which never dies, to the weeping and wailing which never cease.

CHAPTER IX.

"As long as I am in this tabernacle . . . knowing shortly that I must put off this my tabernacle . . . after my decease" (2 Pet. i. 13-15).

The Apostle Paul (2 Cor. v. 1-4) has the same mixture of metaphors which Peter makes in this passage—*building* and *clothing*. Peter's use of the word *tabernacle* here reminds us of what he said on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Let us make three tabernacles," that is, *a frail tent*, erected for the night. And as on the same occasion the change in our Lord's raiment was especially noticed so Peter uses a word connected with the putting off of raiment. Compare Paul's *clothed, unclothed, clothed upon*. Not only so but with him "decease" is "exodus," the term used by Luke, "They spake of His decease," occurring only once elsewhere (Heb. xi. 22) in the literal sense of the departing of Israel out of Egypt.

Paul also uses a similar phrase (Phil. i. 23-24), "for I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to ABIDE IN THE FLESH is more needful for you."

One would think that these passages were quite clear in their meaning, but as the words of Paul clearly show that after death he knew that he would be (not in the grave) but with Christ and conscious of all the blessings and glories which these two words "with Christ" signify, they have been subjected to much rough handling at the hands of those whose theories they utterly overturn. That we may not be ignorant of their devices let us see what they try to do with these simple words. But first let me say that the Greek is simple and clear, that the MSS. do not show any alternative readings, that translators are unanimous as to the meaning of the words—and here I would remark that no ordinary translation will suit these false teachers. Their books are crammed with new translations. It matters not that they do not know the singular from the plural of a Greek adjective, or the difference between the verb "dexai" and the adjective "dexia," not to speak of other errors, yet they fear not to contradict men who have given their lives to the study of the Original Tongues. It is remarkable to note the cause of their unanimity in thus attempting what they are not fitted for. What is their reason for all these new renderings? It is just because they think the makers of authorised and recognised versions are under the bondage of "traditional" beliefs! As one writes, "The translators designedly

covered up the truth." But if that were so, we would expect Rotherham (who is certainly not under the influence of "traditional beliefs") in his well-known version to side with them. That the truth of what I am saying may be clearly seen I will give the passage as it is translated by Rotherham, by Ferrar Fenton, and in the "Twentieth Century" version, so that these renderings may be compared with the Authorised and Revised Versions; then I will give Bullinger's version, with remarks by Roberts the Christadelphian, and Ellis and Read, who may represent the Seventh Day Adventist and Annihilation School. It is well for us to see clearly who are on the side of the simple truth and who are not. The line of partition is here clear. There is no time for paltering. Remember there is Christian Charity, there is also a false liberality: let us be charitable towards all men, but let us not exhibit a liberality which would make us bankrupts as regards the Truth of God.

Rotherham.—"I am held in constraint however, by reason of the two,—

Having the coveting to be released and to be with Christ,

For it were far better!

But to abide still in the flesh is more needful for your sake."

Twentieth Century.—"I am sorely perplexed either way! My own desire is to depart and be with Christ, for this would be by far the better. But for your sakes it may be more needful that I should stay here still."

Ferrar Fenton.—"Now I am possessed by the two, having the desire to be freed and to be with Christ, by far the better; but to remain in the body is most essential for you."

Bullinger.—"For I am being pressed out of the two, having the earnest desire for the return and to be with Christ, far, far better but to remain in the flesh is more needful for you." I have given it as it is printed in his "Church Epistles."

Now the Christadelphian and Seventh Day Adventists support this strange rendering strongly, saying "But there was a third thing that Paul possessed an earnest desire for": and that was "having a desire for the Returning and being with Christ." As anyone with the slightest acquaintance with Greek will observe the error made, and it would be needless to point it out to those unacquainted with the language, I will not labour the point. Suffice it to say that including the A.V. and R.V. I have called five competent

witnesses, certain of whom are NOT biased by "traditional views," who all agree as to the rendering. As to the remarkable rendering given last I prefer to add nothing more. I might go on in a similar manner to show that his rendering of 2 Cor. v. 1-4 is quite as unwarrantable, yet as it is a rendering required by the exigencies of the case we should find it with the same supporters—and with them *alone*.

Here is another example of how Scripture is meddled with and mutilated. I give it that the accusation I bring against these writers may be proved "up to the hilt," even at the risk of repetition. One writes:

"These words are part of the Apostles' prayer. They ask that the Lord would show which 'of these two (Barsabas or Matthias) thou hast chosen,' (1) to take the (vacant) place in this ministry, even apostleship (from which place Judas fell away); (2) the one chosen was to 'go to his own (appointed) place.' Here note (1) that the R.V. rightly reads 'place' instead of 'part' in the first clause, and (2) that the two requests are 'to take' and 'to go.' The sentence 'from which Judas fell away,' is parenthetical."

Now, all this is condemned by the rules of grammar and etymology. It is wrong grammatically: it is false etymologically. These pages are not written for the grammarian, but I may be permitted to point out the etymological error. The word translated "go" is linked on to a word meaning "journey," hence the force of this word is "depart" not "come."

Matt. xxv. 41. "*Depart* from Me, ye cursed."

John xvi. 7. "But if I *depart*, I will send him."

Acts i. 11. "As ye have seen him *go* into heaven."

From this it will be readily seen that the word is not used of the one to be chosen to take part in "*this* ministry."

To a writer who "is a law to himself," grammatical and etymological considerations are of small moment, nor do I lay so much stress upon them in this case where I am not primarily writing for those who are learned in the construction of that most beautiful and exact of all languages—the Greek, acquaintance with which alone is a liberal education. But I do lay stress on the fact that in no translation by competent and trustworthy men is such a rendering to be found. In addition to the renderings given in the Authorised and Revised Versions, I subjoin the following:

Rotherham.—"To take the place of this ministry and apostleship,

From which Judas went aside to his way unto his own place."

Ferrar Fenton.—“To receive the position of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas went astray, so as to sink to his proper position.”

Twentieth Century.—“To take his place in this work and apostleship, which Judas has deserted to go—to his proper place.”

Twofold New Testament.—“To take the place of this service and apostleship, which Judas forfeited to go to his own place.”

Here then are all these men of diverse views, some of whom do not hesitate elsewhere to give renderings which are possible but not probable, unanimous in their rendering of the passage before us. Does anyone ask why this writer violates grammar and sense to give such an interpretation as he has done? The key to the answer is to be found in the substance of two sermons on the passage preached by Bishop Bull—proving that “the soul subsists after death in a place of abode prepared for it by God, till the Resurrection: and that this middle state of happiness or misery is allotted by God to every man immediately after death.” Apparently in the writer’s eyes this is a legitimate doctrine to draw from the passage—as it stands: therefore the passage **MUST BE ALTERED**. Hence the attempt! But all these attempts are but confessions on their makers’ part that, **AS IT STANDS**, the Bible is **AGAINST THEM!** So desperate do they become sometimes that they even talk of the Scriptures having “been amended by some officious copyist.”

Hear what Mr. Edward White says:

“I cannot conceal my conviction that the path of duty and of wisdom in dealing with such documents as the gospels demands this practical conclusion: If they offer to us any statements of Christ’s doctrine, by excess or defect conspicuously disagreeing with the facts, or with the plain sense of His teaching as recorded by the same or other historians, resolutely to refuse to allow such exceptional misreports or omissions to interfere with the truth which has been learned by a wider survey of the evidence.”

Having formed their own conclusions as to what the Scriptures should say they then proceed to misrepresent them by their “translations” or to destroy them altogether. Thank God, those who are willing to accept what the Word says and have no determined notions as to what it should say, have no need for peculiar renderings or determined readings of the Scriptures. As one has well said “these passages still stand, after all the attempts to evade them, to convert them

into mere figures of speech, or to retranslate them in such a manner that they shall flatly contradict their originals."

These with the other passages referred to, tell us that it is the believer's happy privilege at death to pass from a beautiful world, yet a world of sorrow, sin and shame, to enter into the presence of the Lord, there, with other glorious spirits who have gone on before, to enjoy the unbroken felicity of unrestrained communion with Him and each other.

I have seen many death-beds, but nothing equals the home-going of the Christian. Time after time as the cart of life jolts along more slowly and more heavily, as the grey shadows cast by that unseen figure at the bed-head fall thicker, as the clammy cold creeps higher and higher, as the features grow more and more rigid, as the watchers stay their sobs and almost hold their breath, suddenly the weary, heavy laden eyelids lift, and over the face a heavenly smile, into the eyes a glance of recognition, just like when the sun is going down the dark clouds roll away and there comes a glint of sunshine that lights up with ruddy splendour the dark and jagged peak and is reflected back in merry twinkles from the windows of the house you call home. What has happened? what sight has been seen? I have asked myself. Perhaps the answer comes in the words once breathed into my ear by clay-cold lips, lips I thought would never speak again, "Jesus—Saviour." He is not so far away: Stephen saw Him and recognised Him: Paul heard Him speak. How far off do you recognise an unexpected face, hear a strange voice articulate distinctly? It is our materialistic notions which cling to us and hide from us the glorious spiritual world that lies around us—not far off, as we were taught, beyond the stars, for astronomers have put that place far, far away, but close near us, a breath, a gasp, a sigh, and we are there with our Redeemer, with the redeemed. According to our old version, made in 1611, "hades" was rendered by the word "hell." That is a curious word now to apply to a place of such bliss and glory, nor need we, for believers may call it Paradise, but when we study its etymology we find a certain fitness in it. It is connected with many words, *hull*, *hall*, *hole*, because it originally means *that which is covered over*, therefore the word *heal* comes from it, for a wound is healed when it is once more covered with skin, or in Old English "helled over." And so the links are gradually forged until we arrive at "holy." There are more lessons in this curious etymological study than one can find room for here. There

is, however, this one—here we have an instance of Degeneration: the word has steadily gone to the bad. So it is with individuals; where there is not regeneration there is degeneration: not saved this year? then you will be further away next year. So it is with Christians: where there is not progress there is degeneration: not more whole-hearted and separated from the world this year? then there is a weakening of the spiritual fibres of the spiritual man—a physical analogy here in “fatty degeneration of the heart!” And I sorely fear that it is in some kind of a secret degeneration like this in believers that we find the explanation of the growth and spread of what after all are old, old heresies, which troubled but did not flourish in the church in more stalwart days! When there was not that fleshly ease in Zion which is so productive of that common disease amongst believers to-day—spiritual ‘fatty degeneration of the heart!’

CHAPTER X.

“For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life” (2 Cor. v. 4).

In conclusion it is well to sum up in the simplest way possible the different ways in which the question “After Death—What?” with which we began, has been answered by those who profess to take the Bible as their guide.

1. There are those who link man's conscious existence on to his body, and declare that between decease and resurrection there is no conscious existence for him. This state of unconsciousness they arbitrarily choose to call “sleep.” These then do not deny the existence of man in a spiritual state after death. What they deny is “conscious existence.” To deny any existence is to contradict the plain statement of Scripture: to convert resurrection into re-creation; and to bring the newly-created man to the bar of justice to answer for sins he never committed—the sins of a man who long years before became non-existent because he died! This they do not do. It is left for more advanced teachers to declare that “there would be no praising the Lord after He had ceased to ‘live.’ Nor would there be any singing of praises after he had ceased to ‘HAVE ANY BEING.’”

Yet both parties unite in teaching that when the wicked

are cast into the lake of fire there is an end to them. Their favourite way of proving this is to declare that "everlasting punishment" is not "everlasting punishing."

They might with as much reason declare that "eternal life" is not "eternal living!" People who are taken in by this method of playing with words as conjurers play with cards and coins, are too credulous for anything. In another sphere they are the people who provide "thimble-riggers" with a means of livelihood.

This theory is very old, for Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History mentions a small sect of Christians in Arabia who held that the soul remained unconscious from death to the resurrection.

This theory is materialistic in its philosophy because Annihilation is its great central factor. Doubtless its teachers deny this, but as a rule guilty people do the same—with such "Not Guilty" is a favourite if a futile plea. To teach that the existent becomes the non-existent and yet deny Annihilation is an argument which is atheistic in its essence. For atheists admit the existence of the world yet deny that there was a Cause that brought it out of non-existence into existence: that is, they deny Creation. Now if Creation is bringing into existence that which did not previously exist, Annihilation is the reverse process—it is the bringing that which is existent to non-existence; and both argue the Divine, for both are beyond all power but the power of God. So as the answer of Topsy to the question *Who made you?* was "Spose I growed," the answer of those who ignorantly affirm the existent becoming non-existent, whilst denying Annihilation, might be summed up in the words "Spose I withered." By denying that they teach Annihilation they ascribe to man a greater gift than that of immortality, for they ascribe to him the power of withering away into nothing. But if they deny that they teach this, and affirm that they teach that it is God who destroys man, they commit themselves and plead guilty to the name of "Annihilationists." Herein lies their self-deception. They speak of man becoming non-existent as if it were the most natural thing in the world. They forget the analogy of the great natural Law of the Conservation of Energy: that force as well as matter is indestructible. It is no answer to this to say that God CAN annihilate; the question is WILL He? And the answer to this is, that neither in the Word nor in the World is there any indication of His doing so or of His intention to do so. From the moment, millions of years ago, when at His fiat the heaven and the earth

sprang into being, many things have happened. For instance, there was the Fall of celestial beings through which apparently this earth became desolate and empty. The First of Genesis recounts a "Palingenesis," a regeneration, not a re-creation. And the Earth carries hid in her bosom the same record of her past. When the Fall of Man took place there was not an annihilation, the ground was cursed, and by-and-by the earth was drowned. And so Peter says: "This they wilfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, PERISHED: but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored with fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men . . . in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the heavenly bodies shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be discovered . . . by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the heavenly bodies shall melt with fervent heat. But, according to His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter. iii. 5-13; R.V. marg.). There is no hint here of annihilation; even that strong word "perished," of which so much is made, is here seen NOT to mean annihilation.

Now, if in the material world there is no sign of annihilation—and again, I repeat that "cessation of existence" implies "annihilation," as surely as effect implies cause—why should we import it into a higher world, the world of spirits? We have already seen that the Scriptures declare that spiritual beings are immortal, and although it is true that man is made "a little lower than the angels," yet that must have been in respect of his mortal part, and so it may be equally well read "a little while lower than the angels," for he was originally made *in the image and after the likeness of God*. It is to empty these words of all their gracious significance and to make man lower than the dust from which his physical frame sprang, to say that at death he ceases to be—whether that death be the first or second.

No, there was something then imparted to man which he has never lost. If he were so easily annihilated that the breath of death could blow out his flickering lamp of life for ever, why did not sin (which is stronger than death) do so? To argue that it could but did not because of the purpose of God in sustaining him alive is of a piece with their other statement that the wicked dead are made anew at the resur-

rection, in order that they being judged may be hurled into the lake of fire to meet with more or less immediate annihilation. Used in the hand of some to defend God against the charge of cruelty brought against Him by whom?—some of His guilty ungrateful creatures! it blackens His character and depicts Him as cruel as some poor African's Mumbo Jumbo. To look round on this world and see the appalling woes and terrific tyrannies with which it abounds; to contemplate the frightful consequences of the Law of Heredity (“unto the third and fourth generation”): to listen to the heart-shaking groanings that arise continuously from its seething multitudes; to give heed to accounts brought from distant parts, such as, China, India, and Africa in which we envisage crimes unmentionable, horrors unspeakable, and miseries continuous and heart-rending: to do this, and then to turn to history and there learn that this has been for years, for centuries, for millennia: to the Bible and there read of Calvary where culminates all the injustice, all the cruelty, all the oppression, all the selfishness of the Human Race—remembering all this, I say, and then to be told that man is altogether mortal, that the slightest movement of Death's dart against him and he, poor, puny antagonist, disappears for ever like ‘the snowflake on the river,’ is to lay all these things at the door of God. And when the human mind refuses to stop at that terrific postulate and insists on knowing Why? to be told that it is the result of Christ's Death on the Cross, is to be confronted with a statement which is unbelievable. That the great God should sustain the Human Race and all that is wrapped up in these two words, from day to day, from year to year, from century to century, from millennium to millennium; and that He should do so from no necessity begotten of what HE IS, but in order that He may do so, His only Son, His co-equal in the splendours of the Godhead, had to be devoted to the Death of the Cross at the hands of Humanity, whose very power springs from an existence which would have been a non-existence but for the (to them) transcendent Crime of Calvary, is to libel the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Compare this with the orthodox doctrine of everlasting punishment, based not only upon the Divine revelation as to the nature of the punishment, but upon the Divine revelation as to what He is Who punishes and what they are who are punished, and you will be amazed at the madness of the teachers of such God-dishonouring tenets, the credulity of their disciples and the blindness of those who abandon orthodoxy for such a belief.

The words "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him" must mean something. God is not the unconditioned Being, Whom some who taunt us with limiting His power, think Him to be. He is not only limited by what He is, but He is also limited by the relationships He has entered into with His creatures. The eternal Law of Righteousness on the one hand, and the gracious relationship into which He called man out of nothing on the other—for whereas in the Second of Genesis He is represented as "forming man of the dust of the ground (*yahtsar—to form as a potter*)," in the First we are told that He created (*bara—to form out of nothing*) him—are limitations which He CANNOT pass, just as we are told that He "CANNOT lie." Having called man into existence in this manner, when he sinned to cut the Gordian knot by annihilating him was as great an impossibility to the Almighty God as to forgive him without the sacrifice of His Son. This is the teaching of the whole Bible, and it is upon this rock that "Conditional Immortality" strikes to split and go to pieces irretrievably.

II.—We come next to *Restorationism* or *Universalism*. Here we are taught that ALL are saved. Early in the history of the Christian Church do we meet with this doctrine. Clement lays stress on the corrective nature of punishment, of the perfect love of God, and the power of moral freedom; whilst Origen teaches more clearly the recovery of every rational creature, Satan and demons not excluded. This, a favourite doctrine with many, strikes on a similar rock to that upon which we have seen *Conditional Immortality* go to pieces. The latter fails to account for the permanence of human *being*, whilst *Universalism* fails to account for the permanence of human *character*. One of the most terrible things the Lord Jesus said, is "but woe unto that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! good were it for him if that man had not been born." Nothing is clearer in the Bible than the FIXATIVE POWER OF SIN. Nothing that man can do is efficacious in getting rid of the character formed by the habit of sinning. This is a change which everywhere in the Bible is recognised as stupendous. Easier far is it for an Ethiopian to change his colour or the leopard his spots. Nothing else than the Almighty power of God is equal to the task, and that power is exercised through the Holy Spirit in the New Birth.

And the Scripture is urgent in its appeals to men to undergo this change now, and decisive in its limitation of the Grace of God to the present.

It reveals the will of God that "My Spirit shall not always strive with man" and consequently that "behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Everywhere we see men and women listening listlessly to the most touching appeals to embrace the Offer of God, to accept the Safety He places within their reach; turning deaf ears to the fearful warnings of a judgment coming slowly but surely. Everywhere we see the cumulative effects of sin, every new sin increasing tenfold the action of past sins in blunting the conscience, in hardening the heart, in degrading the soul, until its miserable victims revile the Christ of God, scoff at the Freedom of God, and do despite to their only hope, the Spirit of God, the Redeemer's Representative. If then this occurs now, what hope can there reasonably be of their repentance when the Great Division is made, and they are cast out from the presence of God and the company of His saints? As the former doctrine takes a low view of man, so this one takes a low view of sin and its tremendous power in forming and fixing the character of him who sins.

III.—Then there are those who speak of *Probation after Death*. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory and others wrote much concerning the opportunities which lost souls (especially such as had not had the Gospel presented to them during their earthly life) would be given of accepting that offer which either they had rejected or had not had. Much of what has already been said applies to this suggestion. They who seek to teach it bring forward the two famous passages in Peter's First Epistle on the *Preaching to the Spirits in Prison* (iii. 18-22) and the *Preaching of the Gospel to the Dead* (iv. 6). And as these passages may be used to upset the faith of some of God's dear children I will here, by the help of His Spirit, attempt to point out the difficulties in the interpretation of these famous passages and the way out of them by a clear and simple explanation. Before doing so let me ask my readers to carefully notice that whilst Universalists and Probationists agree partially, they unite in disagreeing violently with Conditional Immortalists. And when one reads their literature one sees very clearly that whilst the arguments of the two parties are conclusive against each other, they fail altogether when addressed against the orthodox view based on the teaching of Scripture taken simply by itself, apart from the additions or subtractions these antagonists would make. Truth to tell, if they were allowed to make them, the position of each would be unassailable.

In such a case the Bible would be no longer the Word of God, for it would flatly contradict itself.

Perhaps it is as well, for sake of clearness and continuity, to introduce the fourth and last class to the reader.

IV.—*The Christian Agnostic*: the man who deliberately closes his eyes and declares that the Bible teaches nothing comprehensible about man's state after death. Having long ago cut away his moorings to what it is so fashionable to call the "Traditional View," he has perhaps been each of the foregoing in turn, and having discovered the power of the arguments of each against the other, he has lashed his helm amidships to await the passing of the strife of tongues, determined to wait for further light until he reaches that shore where billows beat no more. But there are few minds that are content to know this only—that they know nothing.

For myself I would say that having studied each in turn and found the arguments weak in defence, yet powerful when turned against the contrary views, through the grace of God I have found rest in the common sense and plain interpretation of Scripture, and joy in the fact that what is that to me is also the "traditional view."

Turning back, after this slight notice of the last remaining attitude of mind towards the Scriptures on this important question, to the two passages in Peter's First Epistle, let us take the first one.

"Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh but quickened in the spirit; in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." *R.V.*

Taking first the *data* for exegesis note: the definitions "in flesh" and "in spirit" (for there is no article) are antithetical phrases. Thus they express the distinct spheres or forms of existence to which the two acts belong. He was "put to death" in the sphere of the flesh or "fleshly-wise": He was "made alive" (not *kept alive*) in the sphere of the spirit or "spirit-wise." That being clear we go on to notice that it is not "by which" but "IN which"; that is, "in which spiritual form of existence," that which has been the seat and subject of the making alive, not (as some would have us understand) the disembodied soul. To proceed, we find that the verb for "preaching" here used is the one regularly used to express the preaching the gospel or kingdom of God: some would take it as expressing a vague form

of proclamation or manifestation of Himself, but that cannot be. "Spirits"—the term is used of the departed, of the disembodied beings we call "the dead." These are said to have been "disobedient." That word is not only a participle but a participle wanting the article. That grammatical construction in Greek signifies that this conduct made them "spirits in prison," that their character was the character of the disobedient, that the date of the preaching was coincident with the date of the disobedience. The preaching was addressed to them WHEN they were disobedient. Finally it has to be noticed that the subject of the leading verbs in these two verses is CHRIST—not the quickened Christ, not the disembodied Christ, but Christ Himself.

Now laying to heart these facts we are ready for such a paraphrase as the following, made by a modern writer of repute:

"Be content to suffer. There is blessing in so doing, provided you suffer for well-doing and not for ill-doing. Look to your Lord's example—how he did good to the most unworthy and died for the unjust. Think what the issue of injurious suffering was to Him; if He suffered even unto death as regards the mortal side of His being, He was raised as regards the spiritual to a new life with new powers. Look back on the remote past, ere He had appeared in the flesh. Reflect how then, too, He acted in this gracious way, how He went and preached to the guilty generation of the Flood, making known to those grossest of wrong-doers, by the spectacle of the ark a-building, the word of His servant Noah, and the varied warnings of the time, His will to save them. And consider that He has still the same graciousness of will—of which baptism is the figure; that He can still save oppressed righteous ones as He saved the believing souls of Noah's house; that all the more can He now save such, seeing that in His exalted life He has all the powers of heaven subject to Him."

Now against this interpretation that it was through the powers belonging to Him in *His spiritual state of existence*—and here we must remember the way in which He appeared to Abraham, to Moses, to Joshua, and others—that He went and preached by Noah, that "preacher of righteousness," we have various views. The Fathers held that between His death and resurrection He went and preached to the souls of Old Testament saints. Calvin held that "spirits in prison" meant "spirits on the watch-tower in expectation of Christ." Dr. John Brown and the saintly Leighton taught that it was His preaching by His Spirit

“Preaching of the Gospel to the Dead.” 61

through His servants to men who are prisoners of sin and law. The Lutheran theologians favour the view that it was a triumphal or judicial manifestation of Christ between death and resurrection to the world of the dead. Dean Plumptre and others, that “the love which does not will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, proclaims evermore to the spirits in prison, as during the hours of the descent into Hades, the glad tidings of reconciliation.”

Now all these interpretations and many more of the same kind are very wide of the mark, for they forget that the preaching was confined to a certain class—“*those disobedient in the days of Noah, who were now in prison.*”

Upon the same fact splits the explanation of the rationalist Baur and others, that the “spirits in prison” were angels. They give heed to the old wives’ tales of the Rabbis, who connect the obscure statement in Genesis vi. 1-4 with angels. A statement on their part, which has not only no foundation in fact but is opposed to our Lord’s own words concerning the nature of angels. And if it were possible it could not satisfy the description, for the trespass took place BEFORE “the days of Noah, *while* the ark was a-building.”

Passing on we read “For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live unto God in the spirit.” R.V.

Take first these *data*: the leading verb meaning *to bring good tidings* is in the distinct past. The preaching here mentioned is one definitely accomplished and completed. It is neither a thing of the present nor a process to be continued. That sweeps away all hope of building upon this passage a Hades or Probation Ministry. The meaning of the words “dead” and “judged” must be taken literally—dead persons, not persons spiritually dead, and literal judgment not discipline, chastisement, or penance. In Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians we are taught that physical death was the judgment of sin in the believer—“For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. But if we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged.” Here then the Apostle warns his believing brethren “that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot,” having already admonished them to the effect “that ye no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.” Some had already done so and had suffered the doom of sin in the flesh, but by means of the glad good news preached to them

the consequences had gone no further, they now "live according to God in the spirit." In the bosom of this passage, accounted mysterious by many, lies hid the gladsome tidings that death delivers the believer from the contact with sin. To-day the best have to say "in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." We are not delivered from the presence of sin yet, though we should know deliverance from its power as well as its penalty. All, all is of grace: free, frank, sovereign grace! We shall be delivered from the presence of sin by the presence of Christ. But many, like Peter (who knew from his Master's lips that it should be so), have passed away before His Coming, have even died because as believers they have been unfaithful to their Lord; what about them? Glorious Gospel! Peter tells us here that the portal of Death leads us forth from the presence of sin, just as Paul tells us elsewhere that it leads us into the presence of HIM, Who is all our Desire, and all our Delight!

"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
And, 'midst the brotherhood on high,
To be at home with God.

It is not death to close
The eye long dimmed by tears,
And wake, in glorious repose,
To spend eternal years.

It is not death to bear
The wrench that sets us free
From dungeon chains, to breathe the air
Of boundless liberty.

It is not death to fling
Aside this sinful dust,
And rise on strong, exulting wing,
To live among the just.

Jesus, Thou Prince of Life,
Thy chosen cannot die!
Like Thee, they conquer in the strife,
To reign with Thee on high."

APPENDIX.

To illustrate Henry Melvill's remarkable expression "What flights will the soul take when we are asleep!" I append two instances of experiences which have been verified by trustworthy scientific observers.

I do so with all the more confidence, as when I read them to my esteemed friend, the Editor of "The Witness," he replied that a similar occurrence to No. 2 had happened within his own knowledge.

Instance 1. *Canon Warburton's Dream.*

The Close,

Winchester, July 16th, 1883.

"Somewhere about the year 1848 I went up from Oxford to stay a day or two with my brother, Acton Warburton, then a barrister, living at 10, Fish Street, Lincoln's Inn.

"When I got to his chambers I found a note on the table apologising for his absence, and saying that he had gone to a dance somewhere in the West End, and intended to be home soon after one o'clock. Instead of going to bed, I dozed in the armchair, but started up wide awake exactly at one, ejaculating 'He's down!' and seeing him coming out of a drawing-room into a brightly illuminated landing; catching his feet in the edge of the top stair, and falling headlong, just saving himself by his elbows and hands. (The house was one which I had never seen, nor did I know where it was.) Thinking very little of the matter, I fell a-doze again for half-an-hour, and was awakened by my brother suddenly coming in and saying, 'Oh, there you are! I have just had as narrow an escape of breaking my neck as I ever had in my life. Coming out of the ball-room, I caught my foot, and tumbled full length down the stairs.'

"That is all. It may have been only a dream, but I always thought it must have been something more."

W. WARBURTON.

Instance 2. *Dream of R. V. Boyle.*

3, Stanhope Terrace, London, W.

"In India, early on the morning of November 2nd, 1868 (which would be about 10 to 11 p.m., November 1st, in England), I had so clear and striking a dream or vision (repeated a second time after a short waking interval), that, on

rising as usual between 6 and 7 o'clock, I felt impelled to write an entry in my diary, which is now before me.

"At the time referred to my wife and I were in Simla, in the Himalayas, the summer seat of the Governor-General, and my father-in-law and mother-in-law were living in Brighton. We had not heard of or from them either for weeks, nor had I been recently speaking or thinking of them, for there was no reason for anxiety regarding them.

"It seemed in my dream that I stood at the open door of a bedroom in a house in Brighton, and that before me, by candle-light, I saw my father-in-law lying pale upon his bed, while my mother-in-law passed silently across the room in attendance on him. On waking, however, the nature of the impression left upon me unmistakably was that my father-in-law was dead. I at once noted down the dream, after which I broke the news of what I felt to be a revelation to my wife, when we thought over again and again all that could bear upon the matter, without being able to assign any reason for my being so strongly and thoroughly impressed. The telegraph from England to Simla had been open for some time, but now there was an interruption, which lasted for about a fortnight longer, and on the 17th (fifteen days after my dream) I was neither unprepared nor surprised to receive a telegram from England, saying that my father-in-law had died in Brighton on November 1st. Subsequent letters showed that the death occurred on the night of the 1st."

Corroborated by (1) Mrs Boyle: (2) Extracts from Diary:
(3) Obituary Notice in the "Times" for 4th Nov., 1868.

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