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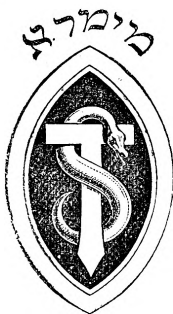
# CHRISTIANITY:

*Viewed in the Light of our Present Knowledge  
and Moral Sense.*

PART III.—THE COSMOS.

By CHARLES BRAY,

AUTHOR OF THE "PHILOSOPHY OF NECESSITY:" "A MANUAL OF ANTHROPOLOGY,  
OR SCIENCE OF MAN;" ETC.



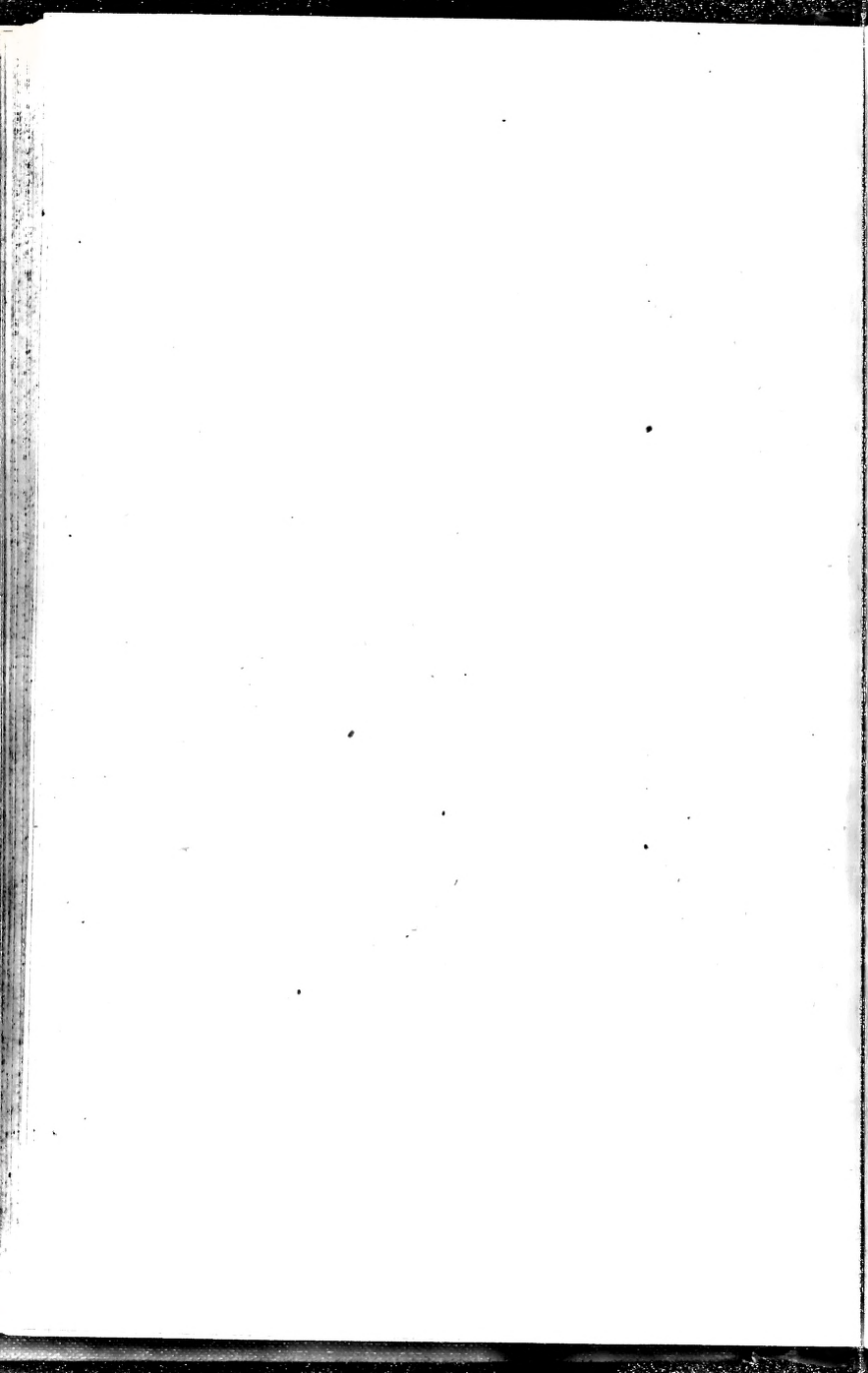
PUBLISHED BY THOMAS SCOTT,

NO. 11, THE TERRACE, FARQUHAR ROAD,

UPPER NORWOOD, LONDON, S.E.

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*Price One Shilling.*



# CHRISTIANITY.

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## PART III.—THE COSMOS.

“A mighty maze, but not without a plan.”—POPE.

“I say, not God Himself can make man's best  
Without best men to help him.”—GEO. ELIOT.

**B**ISHOP BUTLER, in his “Analogy,” aims to show that if there are difficulties in the Christian scheme there are equal difficulties in Nature, but this is scarcely a fair argument, as it might be supposed that the object of a Revelation was to supplement and explain what was not clear to the natural reason. The question is, what do we *now* know of Nature and its intentions? Probably history and science can tell us more of its order and purpose than was known in Bishop Butler's time. Until we know what the purpose of Creation is, we of course cannot say whether the plan adopted to carry it out is wise or not. All seem to agree as to the omniscience of God, without, however, first agreeing as to what his “plan” is, and therefore whether wisdom is shown in carrying it out or not. Our wise men certainly do not agree as to the purpose of creation or of our being's end and aim. By creation, of course, I mean the beginning to be of some special form, and not the making of something out of nothing.

“Intellectual development is the object of individual

life," says Dr J. W. Draper ; Comte, modifying this considerably, only says, "The main agent in the progress of mankind is intellectual development," leaving open in what this progress of mankind consists, that is, what we have to aim at. Bishop Butler says, "It is manifest that nothing can be of consequence to mankind, or any creature, but happiness," and J. S. Mill is of opinion that "The scheme of Nature, regarded in its whole extent, cannot have had for its sole or even principal object the good of human or even sentient beings"—"this happiness is not the sole or principal aim." In the consideration of this subject—of the end and aim of existence—we may safely leave the history of the world till the time when we arrive at the first appearance of sensibility deep down in the earth's strata, some hundred millions of years ago perhaps. Of course life precedes sensibility, but I need not dwell upon the evolution, development, and natural selection which have given rise to life in its various forms. In the scale of being the lower forms are made to support the higher until they culminate in man. They all appear to have had one common base of what has been called protoplasm, and as life has had one base, so has sensibility one base of tissue or nervous matter. In the lowest forms of life this appears to be spread over the whole body, and by the constant and repeated action of external forces upon it, and its reaction upon the forces, separate faculties are formed having widely different functions, but which, in fact, really give to both men and animals all the knowledge of things without them which they are able to acquire. In his address at Belfast, Professor Tyndall describes how the eye is formed. He says, "In the lowest organisms we have a kind of tactual sense diffused over the entire body ; then, through impressions from without and their corresponding adjustments, special portions of the surface become more responsible to stimuli than others. The senses are nascent, the



basis of all of them being that simple tactual sense which the sage Democritus recognised 2300 years ago as their common progenitor. The action of light, in the first instance, appears to be a mere disturbance of the chemical processes in the animal organism, similar to that which occurs in the leaves of plants. By degrees the action becomes localized in a few pigment-cells, more sensitive than the surrounding tissue. The eye is here incipient. At first it is merely capable of revealing difference of light and shade produced by bodies close at hand. Followed as the interception of the light is in almost all cases by the contact of the closely adjacent opaque body, sight in this condition becomes a kind of 'anticipatory touch.' The adjustment continues; a slight bulging out of the epidermis over the pigment-granules supervenes—a lens is incipient, and, through the operation of infinite adjustments, at length reaches the perfection it displays in the hawk and eagle. So of the other senses; they are special differentiations of a tissue which was originally vaguely sensitive all over."

By a similar action on the nervous system and its centre the brain, the faculties of thought and feeling are formed: the senses in the higher animals are merely the instruments by which the brain is communicated with, and by which the forces without are modified, controlled and limited. They are barriers to the too great influx of thought, and the guardians of the mind's healthy action.

In speaking of "light," I hitherto have meant the cause of "light." But light itself is a sensation within ourselves, and not at all to be confounded with the wave motion without, the force of which acting upon the brain sets that in motion and causes the sensation. There is no light in the world without, either in heaven or earth; light is a mode of sensibility, not an object without us. Animals must have been created, therefore, before light could be. The same may be said

of colours ; if the part of the brain upon which the sensation depends is not there, people cannot distinguish colours, they are colour blind, which is not an uncommon thing. The same may be said of everything else which constitutes what we believe to be the world without us. Light is in us, without is only pitch darkness ; so of Individuals or Substances with their attributes of Form, Size, Colour, Order, Position, Solidity, Extension, &c. Thus in man the world is created within him by the action of the brain organs of Individuality, which gives the noun substantive ; Form, Size, Colour, Weight, Order, Number, Locality, give the adjective or quality of the substance ; Eventuality, the verb or the mode of action ; and Comparison, Causality, and Congruity, give the sense of resemblance and difference, of necessary connection, and of adaptation or congruity. Wit is a sense of incongruity, and Humour where that sense is mixed with other feelings. The aggregate of all our thoughts and feelings, the result of the specific action of different parts of the brain, we call the Mind. The Soul is the General Force or Universal Mind out of which these specific faculties are created, and is common to the whole sensitive existence, or rather, we may truly say, common to everything, as—

“ There lives and works  
A Soul in all things, and that soul is God.” \*

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\* Serjeant Cox, in his Inaugural Address to the Psychological Society, defines Mind as “ the term by which we express brain action, and the sensation that action communicates to the conscious self. Soul being the term applied to that conscious self which receives and takes cognizance of those brain actions which to it are sensations.” . . . “ Psychology,” he says, “ intends by soul the definite entity which has the consciousness of individual identity, and which constitutes the individual man.” Now there is no “ conscious self” apart from the aggregate of our ideas and feelings, which we call the mind ; that which “ receives and takes cognizance” of the action of our other faculties are the Reasoning and Reflective Faculties—what we call reflection on consciousness. There is no consciousness apart from brain action, and “ the consciousness of

That the organs above mentioned exist in the brain, and have the functions I have assigned to them, has been established by the careful comparison of function with brain development. Force without, varied in its mode of motion by the structure it passes through, acting through the senses on the brain, creates the world within us in proportion as that brain is more or less perfect and fully developed. We have a feeling also which gives us a belief in the objective reality of the world so created, and another that this ever-varying succession of thoughts and feelings is one and belongs to me, creating the sense of identity or the "Ego." As, however, consciousness or feeling is all that is of any consequence, a *real* world may be too expensive an agent or not necessary to produce it, and our sense of it therefore may be all a delusion, as the Berkeleyans hold. If there is no brain there is no mind or mental action. Each creature, therefore, has a world of its own, according to the extent and susceptibility of its own brain and nervous system.

The modes of motion which give us the ideas or feelings of heat and light, seem to give the same ideas variously modified to all animals, but how far the other ideas and feelings of many other animals are like our own we at present are ignorant. If we could get a peep into their worlds, no doubt it would teach us much; particularly the vanity of what we call "intellectual development." For all we do know, or can know, is how a certain force without, in its varied modes of motion, acting upon our development, produces within us all the multiplicity of thoughts and feelings that we have. It is the registration and classification of all these varied modes of external motion that constitute science, and yet this kind of knowledge or intellectual development is thought to be the object of man's

individual identity which constitutes the individual man," is as much the result of specific brain action as that of all our other faculties and intuitions, and no more constitutes the soul than any other idea.

existence, as if such kind of knowledge, in fact, told us of the real nature of anything; it is a mere illusion begotten in our brains by we know not what—the stuff that dreams are made of:—

“ We know,  
That knowledge is not happiness, and science  
But an exchange of ignorance for that  
Which is another kind of ignorance.”

Its end and aim appears to be simply to induce action in the direction of the true objects of our being. The ideal world so created, however, by the nice adjustment of force without to force within is a much more wonderful display of power than the creation of the world in six days, according to Moses. What degree of objective reality such a world has, we can never know; it would seem impossible that there could be any resemblance between a thought and a thing, and a thought is all we can know, or of which we can be conscious. The limited relative knowledge that we have seems, however, all that is necessary for the purposes of our being; and each creature has a world of its own in which it struts about and thinks itself of more importance than anything else in the universe.

Professor Tyndall says, in the address already alluded to, “In our day grand generalizations have been reached. The theory of the origin of species is but one of them. Another of still wider grasp and radical significance is the doctrine of the conservation of Energy, the ultimate philosophical issues of which are as yet but dimly seen,” and as it seems to me there is a conspiracy among philosophers, not only that the philosophical issues should be dimly seen, but that they should be hidden altogether, by accepting everywhere motion, which is the mere sign of energy or force, for the thing signified, the force itself. Thus Heat is said to be a mode of motion only, Light also is a mode of motion, so also we are told as a recognised fact that “Electricity is not a fluid, or an entity of any kind, but simply a form of



molecular motion" (*Westminster Review*, July 1875). Others affirm the same of Mind, as we shall see. Dr Tyndall says, however, "Long in advance of all definite experiment upon this subject, the constancy and indestructibility of matter had been affirmed; and all subsequent experience justified the affirmation. Later researches extended the attribute of indestructibility to force." As motion however is inseparable from the thing moving, so force is equally inseparable from the unknown agent of which it is the force. It is no entity in itself, but a mere abstraction; as however it is inseparable from the entity from which it is derived, it is always used by me as one or identical with that entity. Force is not motion, but the unknown cause of motion. Physicists always talk of matter and motion as if they were really *two* indestructible entities, when in fact all there is is matter in motion and the occult agent which causes the motion.

Matter and force in this sense of the term are equally real; in fact force is probably the only reality, as matter is known to us only as force. Professor Huxley accepts this view, for he says, "Every form is force visible; a form of rest is a balance of forces; a form undergoing change is a predominance of one over others." Dr Tyndall thus proceeds, "This idea (the indestructibility of force), applied in the first instance to inorganic, rapidly embraced organic nature. The vegetable world, though drawing almost all its nutriment from invisible sources, was proved incompetent to generate anew either matter or force. The matter is for the most part transmuted gas; its force transformed solar forces. The animal world was proved to be equally uncreative, all its motive energies being referred to the combustion of its food. The activity of each animal as a whole was proved to be the transferred activity of its molecules," that is, the transferred force, not the activity or motion, which could not be transferred.

But we are not to confine this indestructible force to mere bodily activity, it is equally the source of all mental activity. It is the cause, and the sole cause, of all change everywhere. All things would keep their present state, either of rest or motion, without it. The cause of change therefore is not in things themselves, that is, there is no force or originating power in what we call matter; in inanimate nature the force that works is always a pre-existing force, not originated, but transferred. One physical object moves another by giving out to it the force by which it has been itself moved. This is equally true of the organic world and of the world of Mind, for Volition has no exclusive privilege of origination. The "form" that force takes either as a mode of motion or as feeling, depends upon the structure through which it passes; for matter does not originate force, but merely conditions it. Some power, or the mechanical action of light, acting upon the plant separates the carbon from the oxygen, and their coming together again in the human body supplies sufficient force to work the whole system, body and mind. In its various modes of action it shows itself as muscular or mechanical, as vital, and as nervous force. Passing through the brain, and subjected to its molecular action, it becomes mental force, and thus creates the "World" of our intellectual consciousness, the "ego" or sense of personal identity, and of our likes and antipathies, which we call the Moral World. Each idea and feeling is vivid or strong in proportion to the amount of force used in its generation, and this is proportionate to the size and activity of the part of the brain with which each specific idea and feeling is connected. But here Dr Tyndall and physicists generally find a difficulty which to me does not exist. The phenomena of physical nature as well as those of the human mind, it is admitted, have their unsearchable roots in a cosmical life. We can trace the development of a nervous system, and correlate with it the parallel

phenomena of sensation and thought, but we are told that "we try to soar in a vacuum the moment we seek to comprehend the connection between them." Why so? We find conscious force, or mind, in ourselves and all around, constantly passing from the conscious to the automatic or unconscious state, where it still, and quite as well, fulfils the purpose originally aimed at; why then is it more difficult to conceive that physical or unconscious force should, under peculiar conditions, again become conscious? "It is absolutely and for ever inconceivable," says Du Bois Reymond, "that a number of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen atoms should be otherwise than indifferent as to their own position and motion, past, present, or future. It is utterly inconceivable how consciousness should result from their joint action." Why so? Consciousness, or rather unconscious intelligence, passes *into* the atoms where we have automatic action, why therefore should not consciousness pass *out* of them as the result of force submitted to their joint action? It is from the materialistic point of view only from which this is inconceivable, for what do we know of atoms in their real nature or essence? Physicists have already discovered that matter differs from ether only in being another state or mode of motion of the same stuff, and they will discover that ether differs from spirit only in the same manner. This essential difference between physical and mental force is a mere assumption, or rather does not the fact of the change of one into the other prove the contrary, and that nothing can produce mind but mind; that what we call physical force is mind, not conscious but automatic; and that mind is the only thing that exercises, or can exercise force? Mr Lewes tells us ("Problem of Life and Mind"), "that nervous tremor does not *become* a feeling in the sentient organism, it *is* that feeling in the organism. There is identity of existence under diversity of aspects." Strauss says, "If under certain conditions, motion can be trans-



formed into heat, why may it not, under other conditions, be transformed into thought, into sensation, or even into self-conscious reason and will?" That motion is a form of feeling is the grand contention of Mr Lewes, and the demonstration which he offers of this proposition occupies fifty of the most striking pages of his book. But how can motion be anything? Motion is something moving—the mere transference of something from one point in space to another; it has no existence in itself apart from the thing moving; it is a mere *condition*. of something else. Motion in the case Mr Lewes supposes must mean *the brain in motion*, the two cannot be separated, and surely he does not intend to affirm that the brain in motion and feeling are identical, that is, that the brain and feeling are the same. If force or power is an abstraction, so is motion, and neither can be considered, or indeed is *anything*, apart from the agent exercising the power and the thing moving, and to make feeling out of motion alone is to make something out of nothing. Had Mr Lewes said that feeling, and not motion, but the *unknown cause* of motion were one and the same, I must have agreed with him, for it is my view, as before stated, that force, or rather its agent, automatic mind as I regard it, passing through the brain and submitted to its molecular action, changes from the unconscious to the conscious state, or to feeling. Mr Lewes has set himself "the task of disproving and keeping out of science all ontological entities," and this necessity for creating something out of nothing is the legitimate consequence to which it leads.

There is another most important consideration connected with this subject, namely, that as Power or Force is inseparable from its agent or source it cannot be delegated, or lent, or transferred, nor can any individual be "endowed" with power. All power must be the act of the agent, automatically or consciously exercised; and this agent must be the

supreme source of all power; for the law of the persistence of force shows that the power of all other agents or individuals is not their own, but derived. Force is a Unity. It was the doctrine of Democritus, that "all changes are due to the combination and separation of molecules," as Empedocles held that all change resulted from "the love and hate among the atoms," or in other words, from their conscious action. Lucretius also held that "atoms move together by a kind of volition," and this conscious or mental volition has passed in the ages into the automatic state, constituting what we now call the fixed and necessary Laws of Nature. There is no such thing as blind force, each atom has acted intelligently from the first, in a recognizable unvarying order, and at first consciously. There is more unconscious intelligence in the growth of a plant, and of man's body, than has ever yet been shown by man consciously. "The animal world is, so to say, a distillation through the vegetable world from inorganic nature" (Tyndall),

"And the Poet, faithful and far-seeing,  
Sees alike in stars and flowers, a part  
Of the self-same, universal being,  
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart."

LONGFELLOW.

Mr Darwin says, "that every one appears to admit that the body consists of a multitude of organic units, each of which possesses its own proper attributes, and is to a certain extent independent of all others." Upon this the law of Heredity depends, by which we inherit not only any advance made by our parents, but the physical peculiarities and mental idiosyncracies—the red hair and madness as well—the mental states developing too at just the time they first appeared in the parent. Besides we know now that the world has been in great part created by conscious "atoms," and that that creation is still going on. Ehrenberg informs us that the silician stone, the *tripoli*, consists of the shells of dead animalcules so minute that it takes 187 millions

to weigh a grain. What must the creature have been whose home was so small and hard? And what indeed must atoms be? Considerably less than nothing, I should think!

This subject is obscured by the fact that unconscious or physical force is always known to us as a mode of motion, which is not the case when force passes into sensibility; we have no reason to suppose that any mode of motion attends conscious force or mind. Force is thus known to us in two states,—as a mode of motion and *directly* as consciousness. When volition moves the muscles, the force has again passed into the unconscious state. It will be observed that we do not assert the materiality of mind but rather the spirituality of matter.

Life, Herbert Spencer defines to be “a continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations,” and these at least are the conditions of its continued existence; the same precisely may be said of mind. At first we have life, and as it is moulded into all its wonderfully varied forms, the nervous system is moulded also,—“the differentiations of tissue as first vaguely sensitive all over,” and the continued “modification of an organism by its environment”—until we have all the varied modes of mind or sensibility that distinguish the whole animal creation, culminating in man, whose thoughts and feelings produced in the same way as in other animals, differ from them only in degree and not in kind. That the thoughts and minds of other creatures differ from our own only in degree, and not in kind, is the opinion of all our great naturalists. Thus Jules Michelet (“The Insect,” p. 151), after various persevering efforts to get a look at an ant’s face, concludes the chapter by saying, “after watching its movements, its numerous actions indicative of reflection, its acts so much more advanced than those of the larger animals, we are not unwilling to believe that in this head exists a personality. And from the highest to the

lowest in this scale of life, we recognise the identity of the soul."

And now we have come to what appears to me to be the purpose in creation—for I believe in "purpose," or that there is an end and aim in development, equally whether that purpose be accomplished by evolution, or by special creation or adaptation. Every possible space in earth, air, and water, is filled with living creatures, with bodies fitting them to that particular locality. Through these bodies is poured a stream of force, which, by the instrumentality of the brain and nervous system resumes consciousness, but in this case it is that specific consciousness, which constituting the soul of each, guides it to the objects of its being, *i.e.*, the gratification of its wants, and the pleasurable sensibility always attending such gratification. These wants are innumerable, and the aggregate of their pleasures is what we call happiness. Now, whatever may have been the nature of the consciousness which previously existed before it became unconscious or automatic in what we call Natural Law, the present object of existence seems to be that this unconscious force should resume its consciousness in a greatly increased amount of pleasurable sensibility. The worlds are great machines for manufacturing happiness. "Slowly, but surely," says Herbert Spencer, "evolution brings about an increasing amount of happiness," that is, a gradually increasing excess of pleasure over pain in the whole sentient existence by a perfecting of the "correspondence between life and its environment." The objects of creation must be regarded from this general and not from an individual point of view. Nature, in pursuit of her object, does not recognise individuals at all, even if individuality is not purely the creation of our own minds.

Although, as Bishop Butler says, "it is *manifest* that nothing can be of consequence to mankind, or any creature, but happiness," yet, that this is the object nature syste-



matically pursues has been doubted, because the subject has been regarded from the individual and not from the general point of view, and because too much stress has been laid upon the pain or evil attending the working of the necessary machinery. And if the pains have been magnified, the pleasures have been as much underrated ; it has been overlooked how infinitely varied are our wants, and that pleasure attends the gratification of each, and as our very existence depends upon these wants being gratified, happiness must be the natural or normal state. The difference in the power of enjoyment is not accurately measured by the differences in what we call civilization. The Negroes, who take no thought for the morrow, but are always laughing and joking, are probably happier than the lower classes which constitute the great majority of civilized nations. The races, such as the Chinese and Hindu, with whom Civilization, as it is called, has been arrested, are probably as happy as those who have made most progress. Competition, or "devil take the hindmost," does not seem to have done much for the great majority at present. Real Civilization is that in which all our faculties can have the freest play, and this cannot be said to be the condition of the working classes in Europe as yet. It is even questionable whether the great increase of production, as now employed, tends to the increase of happiness.

Nature is not just or merciful in our sense of the word, but mercilessly sweeps away all impediments to its purpose ; not allowing individual interests for a moment to stand in the way of the general good ; and we have storms and earthquakes, and revolutions, and savages everywhere giving place to civilized men, and worn-out civilizations before the young, and vigorous, and progressing. The weak everywhere goes to the wall, that it may make room for the strong, and the frame capable of the most enjoyment. Life is everywhere kept at high pressure ;—ten are born that one

strong one may be preserved. And who has any right to complain? For what *right* has any one to happiness or even to being! The survival of the fittest! and why should we not all stand out of the way to make room for him? But Nature does not say "by your leave," but makes us do it; and why should we make such a screeching. Whatever we have is given to us gratuitously, without any effort or merit on our part, and if it falls short of what we think we deserve, or of what we should like to have, or of what others have, that is no fault or cruelty on the part of Him who has thus generously given us what we have: all cannot be first.

We were nothing before we were born, and if we return to that state we cannot *then* regret it. But it may be said, in man we have not, if we have in other animals, the survival of the fittest, and it is quite true that the present low stage of civilization is not favourable to the highest type of man. Some kind of martyrdom is still reserved for the highest minds, who are not *en rapport* with the self-seeking, and other worldliness, of the world as it now exists. Their time may yet be very far off. In our civilization we have scarcely yet advanced beyond security to life, when the strong man—the soldier—was the fittest, and gone on to the next stage, security to property. We are, however, now in a commercial age, where the fittest is he who knows best how to make and use machinery in production, and to make profits by exchange, whose gospel is political economy, or every one for himself, and money the ruling power.

"From the beginning, pressure of population has been the proximate cause of progress," and it is to his increasing needs, induced by the struggle for existence, that man owes all his development, and therefore all his happiness. Pain, which under its various forms we call evil, is not only the necessary guardian of our organization and the life dependent upon it, but from

the monad to the man, from every inferior organization to every superior, this change from the lower to the higher has been brought about by this evil so much deprecated.

Again, in the painful consequences of our actions we are taught our errors, and duly admonished not to do so again. In America for a few cents, man snares the prairie birds, and swarms of locusts eat up his crops ; in France he catches the little birds as they arrive from their winter trip to Africa, and insects, which only they can destroy, deprive him of his bread and fruit ; and Scotch farmers, now grown wiser, extirpate the crow, and then the cockchafer grub and the wire-worm leave his corn-fields bare ; he leaves his fellow-man to swelter and rot in over-crowded dwellings and underground cellars, and then he prays to be delivered from "plague, pestilence, and famine," and blames his Creator for not making a more perfect world.

In the "Martyrdom of Man" we have the preparation for the Future State of happiness *here*, for the generations that are to come. For I am quite willing to admit that present happiness, if the principal, is not the sole aim of nature ; the "plan" includes the coming races. But if we are made to suffer for those who are to come after us, we have been gainers in an equal degree from those that have gone before.

Natural evils, as they are called, however hard they may seem in passages in the great book of Nature separated from their context, yet push men forward in the progress of improvement.

But one animal dies that another may live—the sustenance of one is made to depend upon the destruction of another. A most beneficent arrangement, as it seems to me. Suppose all animals lived to the end of their natural term of life, who then would there be to bury them ? Besides the world would then be filled with old and worn-out life, instead of the young and vigorous. Man alone fills the graveyards, and it re-



quires a very close and active inspection of our government Graveyard Inspectors to keep things healthy, as it is. In animals, after a young and vigorous life, a thousand wants gratified, and a thousand pleasures in the gratification, one is made beautifully to fit into another, the lower life sustaining the higher, the one in fact passing into the other. In Nature's workshop there are no shavings. Provision is made to clear away all refuse. Everything has to pass through the great crucible to be renewed or purified. An insect world keeps the path clear and clean for the higher order of existence ; and a single blow-fly and her interesting but numerous family, will move a dead horse out of the way sooner than a lion. We may object to the insects, especially in hot countries, but they alone have made the earth habitable, and have kept it so. Mr J. S. Mill questions the benevolence in creation, and thinks the world for this end but a poor bungling contrivance after all ; for if, as he says, there are certain provisions for giving pleasure to animals, there are also certain provisions for giving them pain. The fundamental ordinance of the Creator is an ordinance of death. The condition of existence for the lower animals is mutual destruction. Death by violence preceded the appearance of the Adamites. But Mr Mill seems to forget that death is but a minute against a life-time of enjoyment. If Life and Death always go together, surely life has the best of it in the longer term. The Rev. Frederick Robertson, of Brighton, we are told, contemplating a caterpillar perforated by a dozen maggots, and writhing in anguish, exclaimed, " I have never yet found the argument from the understanding, or a hint of it, which can make it pleasant to believe in a God who had made such a provision as this."

Certainly the higher life everywhere lives upon the lower, and we do not know that any other arrangement is possible, and if we believe in a benevolent God, we must believe it is not possible ; and it is certainly plea-

santer to limit his power than his benevolence ; but Mr Robertson's error, as it seems to me, is in believing that a caterpillar can " writhe in anguish." Whatever the mere muscular contortions, the great probability is that a caterpillar possesses but a very moderate degree of sensibility, and that " anguish " can in no sense be applied to it. Our imaginations play us very false as to the degree of pain all animals are capable of feeling ; even in man, who possesses the highest sensibility, we much deceive ourselves. All feeling, dependent upon the supply of force to the brain, is limited, and pain, which has probably its special organ, is soon exhausted.

" O Life ! no longer a problem,  
But a something to see and enjoy,  
A brightness on stream and meadow,  
A breeze round a dancing boy."

W. M. W. CALL.

I think then we are quite justified in saying with Pope :—

" O happiness ! our being's end and aim !

Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,  
O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool and wise."

The fact is " overlooked," first, because happiness is the natural condition and unhappiness the exception, and also because our faculties have not happiness for their object, although happiness is the result of their legitimate action. The pleasure we have in colour and in music would appear to be the only exceptions to this rule ; for they, as far as we know, have no other purpose to serve in the system but giving us pleasure. The colours of the rainbow, the exquisite beauty of the sunsets, and all the varied coloured charms in nature, are not necessary to our existence. The birds in their world seem to have as much pleasure in colour as do

the females in the human species, and no doubt it constitutes the great delight of the Insects in their world of their own creation—the flowers, and perhaps may be necessary even to *their* existence. Music would appear to be pure pleasure, although it tends to tune the whole system in harmony with this higher law.

“ Oh, that I were  
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,”

says the poet, and so we are ; we are the sound, the music is in us.

But what becomes of the happiness that is “ overlooked ? ” Is it then lost ? Consciousness, whether of pleasures or pains, is of two kinds ; in one case it means mere sensibility, in the other self-consciousness, which simply means reflection on consciousness. The whole brute creation have the first, they are happy, but they are unconscious of it ; that is, they do not reflect upon it. Man also, “ with brute unconscious gaze,” ungratefully overlooks the greater part of his happiness. Still he alone is self-conscious ; the brutes, animal and human, are happy, but do not know they are ; but is the happiness of which they are unconscious lost ? I think not. A pleasurable sensation is not the less a pleasurable sensation because it is unnoticed by the recipient. The consciousness of the aggregate of all such feelings probably constitutes the essence of the Being of God—the happiness so greatly predominating over the pain that the pain is not felt, as, in our own experience, the higher joys completely obliterate mere physical suffering. In this sense only can I admit with Hegel that our Being’s end and aim is self-consciousness ; but this must include not man’s alone, but the whole of sensitive existence. The force, or automatic mind, which is transmuted into pleasurable sensibility, is all-pervading—a Unity.

*God, the Soul, and Immortality.*

Outside the sphere of our immediate consciousness all is only more or less probable conjecture. The important subjects of God, the Soul, and Immortality, upon which Religion is founded, have always hitherto been more questions of feeling than of reasoning. If we cannot accept any of the so-called Supernatural Revelations, how much does Nature reveal to us on these all-important topics? We have Matter and Force, the active and passive principles in Nature, as they are called. But this is a misnomer, as both are equally active,—Force in originating change, Matter in determining the direction *that* change shall take. It is important to point this out, as great error has arisen from the divorce of one from the other, and the giving too great importance to Force which is called the spiritual element, when it is most probable that there can be no action the one without the other. This Force passing through living animal structure becomes conscious, and we may, I think, fairly say *resumes* its consciousness, for that only which is Mind could become Mind. Our mental faculty of Individuality gives unity to certain attributes, and we call it Matter—the material world; our Causality takes cognizance of the Powers that move the world,—the same faculty gives unity to those powers, and we call it God “in whom we live, and move, and have our being.” But it is through the instrumentality of the body that physical or unconscious force becomes conscious—matter and force, body and spirit, necessarily act together.

This matter and force seem infinite. By infinite I mean unbounded—beyond the bounds of our conception, we can know nothing else of infinite. Stars are suns probably with solar systems like ours around them, and the telescope enables us to count in the Milky Way more than eighteen millions of such suns, the number increasing with the power of our instrument.



“ Though it may take a beam of light a million of years to bring to our view those distant worlds, the end is not yet. Far away in the depths of space we catch the faint gleams of other groups of stars like our own . . . Extending our view from the earth to the solar system, from the solar system to the expanse of stars to which we belong, we behold a series of gigantic nebular creations rising up one after another, and forming greater and greater colonies of worlds. No numbers can express them, for they make the firmament a haze of stars. Uniformity, even though it be uniformity of magnificence, tires at last, and we abandon the survey, for our eyes can only behold a boundless prospect, and conscience tells us our own unspeakable insignificance.” (J. W. Draper’s “Intellectual Development of Europe,” Vol. ii., p. 283). Insignificance indeed! we have but to go a very little way into space to see in our world only a little ant-hill, each one of its pigmy human creatures, however, thinking it can by its prayers turn the Supreme Power that supports the whole from its purposes, and that all creation is of no avail if, in the everlasting change, its little ugly identity is not to be preserved. It is true that the consciousness of a single being is of more importance than a world without consciousness, for a world without consciousness would be practically non-existent.

But the Universe is boundless not only in the infinitely large, but in the infinitely little; it extends equally beyond our sight both ways. There is a conscious world all around us of which we take no thought and of whose existence we are only just beginning to have a suspicion, although it has built our world, and is the most important agent in it even now. Ehrenberg tells us of a creature so small that it takes one hundred and eighty-seven millions to weigh a grain. Each of these creatures had an individuality and a house of its own, and it is these houses or shells that now make the silicious stone,—the tripoli, so hard and sharp that it

is used for polishing metals. No doubt these creatures were high in the scale of being of their class—the animalcules—and so numerous that the aggregate of their pleasurable consciousness may have equalled ours. Herbert Spencer tells us of “molecules each of which contains literally more atoms than the visible universe contains stars,” and by the spectroscope we are able to detect the eighteen-millionth part of a grain of sodium in a room. So that Mr Nicholas Odgers in his “Mystery of Being” may have grounds for his enquiry “Are ultimate Atoms Inhabited Worlds?” May not also the infinitely large and infinitely little lead to the inquiry whether anything occupies space at all? If all is Force, and Force is Mind, space may be, after all, what Kant affirms it to be, a form only of our own thought. We know nothing of the real nature of either matter or spirit, and if the world is all spirit, and extension does not belong to it, it is equally real.

Our world is of almost infinitely slow growth, and if other worlds are like our own—and force seems everywhere the same, everywhere a unity—then we have the body and soul of the Universe, equally self-existent and co-eternal, acting together to produce a higher and higher consciousness of pleasurable sensibility or happiness; possessing a unity not appreciable by us, and thus the object of Being—of all existence, is the development of the Godhead, or if we may say so without irreverence, to create God.

If Life is dependent for its existence on “the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations,” the Soul is not less so. Force within sets the brain in motion, and force without, acting upon the brain through the medium of the senses, produces those specific modes of sensibility which we call Intellect and Feeling, and this relation of thought to a material brain is constant and a fact which every one may observe. So that as Mr J. S. Mill says, “Assuming the mind to

be a distinct substance, its separation from the body would not be, as some have vainly flattered themselves, a liberation from trammels and restoration to freedom, but would simply put a stop to its functions and remand it to unconsciousness, unless and until some other set of conditions supervenes, capable of recalling it into activity, but of the existence of which experience does not give us the smallest indication." ("Essays on Religion," p. 198.) It has taken millions of years to make the organs of body and brain by the continued adjustment of action and reaction, and it is these organs that constitute the Individual, and it is a monstrous assumption to suppose that we can do without them, or that doing without them the individuality can be retained. The waters are raised in invisible vapour from the ocean, they are condensed again upon the mountain tops, and after forming a part of all that lives, again join the parent ocean; no individual drop, however high it may be raised in the scale of existence in a beautiful flower, or a scent, or even in a man's brain, claims to set up an independent existence, but goes back to the ocean to be again distributed in ever-varying new forms; so of the boundless reservoir of unconscious force, it resumes consciousness in part in all the infinitely numerous and varied living animal forms, "at once the *soul* of each and God of all." At death, the body is resolved into its elements to take new forms, and the soul "returns to God who gave it," that is, it again joins the ocean of persistent or indestructible force, to take new consciousness in new and perhaps superior forms. Nothing is lost in either body or mind but the phenomenal forms which are replaced always by something better. Low as we still are, there has certainly been considerable improvement since the early inhabitants of our world. Its highest at one time were the Megalosauri, the Plesiosauri, &c., the enormous crocodiles, sharks, turtles, and toads which domiciled in its river creeks and swamps. It has been only recently



that man has come upon the scene ; the earth, "for countless ages was a dungeon of pestiferous exhalations and a den of wild beasts." Living forms are but of a transitory nature, many have died out never to reappear, however much the great toads, alas ! may complain that an endless life was not given to them. The cerebrum, the only instrument as yet known to us by which the soul manifests itself, has reached its present organization by a continued and unbroken process of development from the lowest animal. At the present, the brain of the civilized man is much larger than the brain of the savage.

The Soul then is immortal, as is everything else that comes from God and goes again to him ; but as to the particular form it took in Dicky Snookes or Tommy Styles, that perhaps is gone forever, however great a loss *they themselves* may think the world has thus had ; in another one hundred thousand years, perhaps, they will not be missed. What then, has man no soul to be damned ! I do not say saved, because salvation, according to the popular creed, is the exception. Is Lazarus after all to be denied the satisfaction of seeing Dives in Hell, considering how many good things the *rich* man had that he had not ! I must say it exceeds the bounds of my patience to hear people selfishly and complacently expatiating upon the absolute necessity and desirableness of another life, and the wickedness of not believing in it, when they at the same time admit that, if not to them, to the many, that other life is to be one of an eternity of misery. To me the claim is monstrous that any brute beast, because he is called a man, is to have the power of bringing into the world any number of immortal souls, whose life, although it begins with him, can never end, but, according to the popular conception, in all probability will be continued in everlasting torment. To me it is some consolation to think that whatever begins in time must end in time, and that the continued existence of the Individual after this life, could it be proved,

does not mean Immortality. But this monstrous faith in absolute evil, is thought even to be virtuous,—for how otherwise are the self-complacency and self-conceit of the “good” to be gratified, or the bad to be “served out,” unless the compensations of another life are provided? There must be a heaven for the good, and a place where we can be *revenged* upon the bad for their wickedness! That their body and soul should take another form and another name, and so have a chance of doing better, would not satisfy the “unco-guide” at all. We have no less authority than his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury (“Good Words,” May 1875) for the assumed fact that “the existence of a soul within the material body, separate from it in nature as something spiritual, and not material, has never been disbelieved, without a degradation both of the intellect and the moral character of man, . . . a spirit mastering and guiding the mere bodily organs.” I thought, on the contrary, that it was now very generally admitted that whatever the nature of mind may be as distinguished from the body, its manifestation was dependent entirely upon its instrument—the brain. A wise writer also on “Natural Religion” (“Macmillan,” Feb. 1875), says, very truly, that “physiology has brought us close to mind, and the old distinction between matter and spirit begins to be slighted as a superstition.”

But a noble-minded lady, one of the most clear and forcible writers of our time, tells us (“Theological Review,” Oct. 1875) that without the hope in individual immortality, “the nobler part of us would dwindle to a vanishing point, and the man return to the ape,” and also that “the God of Truth will have deceived the human race if the soul of a man dies with his body.” It is quite true that we have an instinctive dread of ceasing to be, connected with a part of the brain, which phrenologists call “Love of Life,” and which prevents suicide under difficulties; it is man’s own fault if he diverts and perverts this useful feeling,

and as to the soul dying with the body, whatever has once existed must continue to exist; but everything changes its form, and why should the soul of man claim to be an exception to this general law? The inhabitants of Kamschatka, according to Kotzebue, insult their deities if their wishes are not fulfilled, and the negroes beat their Fetish if their prayers are unanswered; and this most estimable lady thinks that if she is not to be allowed to retain her special form, or, at least, the full memory of what she was only in this grub state, constituting her identity, as she very much wishes to do, why then, God is not the God she took him to be, that's all. Surely, if according to our human estimate, God has been unjust here, that alone is not a sufficient reason for believing that he will be just elsewhere. But we must see that a *succession of beings*, here at least, is infinitely preferable to the continued existence of one. What could we do without the children? What could we do with a world full of only old fogies? What could we do without all those interests and affections to which this succession of being gives rise? Without death there could be no birth; the world would soon be full, and no one could retain his life without murdering all who would otherwise come after him. Murder, perhaps, is a strong term, but the coming race would be put out of existence or prevented coming into it, which is, in effect, the same thing. If the devil offered to renew our life upon these terms, that we should murder the infant that was otherwise destined to take our place, there are but few, I suppose, who would sign the compact. And what is all this for? Why, because some conceited person thinks that, having once come into being, he never ought to go out again, that the Universe could not do without his particular little Identity, and that therefore the whole course of nature, as known to us, must be changed to bring it about. On the present plan, the malformed development of body and brain,

the vicious ways, the bad habits, the narrow prejudices, the ossified ideas, are buried with us, but the good—all that is worth preserving, is retained in the immortality, or at least, continued existence of the race. How absurd then to talk of annihilation, as if anything could ever be destroyed or lost! Myriads of little creatures have built up our material world, have had their day, and have passed away; myriads of men and other creatures have equally created the world of mind, adding thought to thought, and instinct to instinct, till civilised man, "the heir of all the ages," has already added thirty cubic inches more of experience and capacity for enjoyment to his brain.

Is man, it is said, "fated to pass away like the fixed and unprogressive creatures beneath him?" But where are there fixed and unprogressive creatures? Have they not rather passed by the law of evolution and development from the monad to the man?

This selfish craving for continued existence in another world is thought to be a high and ennobling aspiration. Even Hume says, "the doctrine of a Future State is so strong and necessary a security for morals, that we ought never to abandon or neglect it," that is, we are to accept things that may be false because of their supposed good consequences. The Bible tells us more of God's wrath than of his love. We must be held responsible in another life, it is said, for what we have done in a previous state of being. But surely such responsibility could only be of use in the present state of existence or in one exactly like it. That the end and aim of existence should be the elimination of a few souls to happiness in some other sphere, and the many to unhappiness, appears to me the least worthy idea of all, and to me also it seems in the highest degree improbable that provision is to be made for forty millions of naked souls annually in some other world. And what is a naked soul? Carlyle says of Diderot ("Critical and Biographical Essays"), "The dust that was once



his body went to mingle with the common earth, in the church of Saint Roch ; his life, the wondrous manifold Force that was in him, that was He,—returned to Eternity, and *is* there, and continues there." No doubt ; still all the specific faculties which constituted the "He," and even the sensibility, were dependent for their existence, and for their mode of manifestation upon the Dust, and were calculated only for preserving his being, and promoting his activity *here*. The relation between the soul and the body is an elaborate adjustment between that which is around us, and that which is within us. Surely such souls, if they retained their Individuality, would be rather thick upon the ground wherever they might go to ; we should have to resume the questions of the schoolmen as to how many angels or souls could stand upon the point of a needle at once : besides it has taken millions of years at least to prepare the subsistence of man in this world, and we know of no provision made for those countless souls elsewhere. Such a state would be essentially the creation of a world out of nothing, without any regard to the conditions which it has taken such countless centuries to bring about here. As far as space is concerned, no doubt it may be said that there must be plenty of room in an infinite universe, but why reserve any of it for such pigmies ! Besides where do the forty million souls come from that are annually required for the new births in this world,—waiting, we are told, to be born, and at what stage of gestation do they join the body ? Do *they* come from some other world ? If so, they have certainly lost their Identity. Would not also the "organic units" of which each body is composed according to Darwin, each of which possesses its own proper attributes, require separate souls ? and have the Australian and Papuan savages immortal souls ?

The North American Indian places a dog's head in the tomb with its late master, that it may show him the way to this new world, but it would seem difficult

to miss it as there must be much company always on the road. A leading spiritualist, an educated professional man, Mr Newton Crosland, tells us that "all the spirits have been imperative in requiring us to address our prayers to the one Divine Mediator." They assert, he says, "that all devout prayers are taken up to him and answered; and that there is an angel always in attendance upon every human being, to receive and *soar up* with any prayer that is sufficiently true and earnest." The spirits, however, appear to have thrown no light upon how these petitions are all delivered at once, to a Mediator who wishes to receive them all personally, but it must make the road to the celestial regions easy to find, so many angels being always on the way and so worthily occupied! The fact is that however desirable, and pious, and religious, it may be thought to be, to believe in another world, there is no practical belief in it, and no one wants to go; all want to stop here even though it be in pain and poverty: besides many feel, although they may not express it, that with the exception of themselves and a few of their friends and relations, and of the best sort of folks, all the rest of this world are only fit, like the leaves of autumn, to make the manure for the richer growth of the coming human spring.

What then are the destinies of the Cosmos, or rather we must say of our World? "A time must come," says Strauss, "when the earth will be no longer inhabited; nay, when we shall have ceased to exist as a planet. Then all which in the course of her development was produced, and in a manner accomplished by her—all living and rational beings, and all their productions, all political organizations, all works of art and science—will not only necessarily have vanished from existence without a trace, but even the memory of them will survive in no mind, as the history of the earth must necessarily perish with her. . . . Either the earth has missed her aim here—no result

has been produced by her protracted existence, or this aim did not consist in something which was intended to endure, but has been attained at every moment of her development." Prebendary Row, commenting upon this, in an address to the Victoria Institute, says, "surely this is a dark prospect which this philosophy unfolds. Man, as an individual, and as a race, shall pass into eternal silence; and no trace of him or his work shall remain in any mind. Still, if this is the inevitable destiny of the future, let us face it boldly and honestly; and not imitate the ancient philosopher, who wished, if the doctrine of man's immortality were not true, that no one should undeceive him while he lived. No; if this philosophy is true, the most cultivated intellects, the greatest moral elevation, and the lowest baseness of wickedness, shall alike rest in peaceful, but eternal silence."

This "peaceful but eternal silence" for the wicked, who already, from the very nature of wickedness, must have had the worst of it in this world, appears to be utterly abhorrent to the clerical mind. No, they shall all be held responsible for what they have done in the present state of being; although it can then answer no possible purpose; "they shall drink the wine of the wrath of God, and they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." No doubt, they also hope to be present with the holy angels; without this, life to them will have been an utter failure—not worth having! The Indians tie their enemy of a hostile tribe to a tree, and slowly burn him to death with firebrands; to them this is the most delightful of all recreations, and this idea of burning the enemies of God must be a "survival" from some such source. It is astonishing the tenacity, however, with which the orthodox mind still clings to it, 10,000 clergymen having not long since proclaimed themselves



to be believers in the eternity of punishment. It is supposed to have the effect of restraining the wicked, and I suppose of inducing the love of God at the same time, as we are told that is the first and greatest commandment. Neither will they allow of any possible mitigation. Christ is reported to have said (Mark ix. 48, 49) speaking of hell fire—"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." *Divines* tell us that this "salting with fire" is to have the same preservative influence as the salt upon the sacrifice, lest souls should get used to it, or be destroyed by it, in the course of eternity. For myself I am quite willing to accept what is to them a still more horrible alternative, "that each man shall enjoy life as he best can, and sleep for ever the sleep of unconsciousness," rather than that any one, much less countless millions, should awake to such a fate.

Hume says, with truth, "I shall venture to affirm, that there never was a popular religion which represented the state of departed souls in such a light, as would render it eligible for human kind, that there should be such a state," and it is rather a singular fact that while the Christian world places the chief good of man in the Immortality of the Soul, the great majority of the human race—the Buddhists in India and China—are anxious above all things to divest themselves of such individual responsibility at all costs. Surely this is wiser. The Immortality of the Individual Soul is a most awful idea to contemplate, considering the uncertainty that attends the Future State. Perfection in another and a better world may not be for all, and looking at it from an unselfish point of view, it would be better that we should give up our Individuality, and be as we were before we were born, without consciousness, than that any should continue to exist in an undesirable state to all eternity.

But however much we may think of our own Individuality and our special Identity, it is very evident the Supreme Power cares little for the Individual as such. Of course the happiness of the whole is made up of individuals, and the general plan works for the general good, that is, "makes for righteousness," which I suppose is the cant phrase for the right—for honesty, integrity, benevolence, and all the other virtues, but we find no evidence for that special Providence which looks after individual sparrows and individual men, and which constitutes the Father in Heaven of Christianity. Such aid is certainly very pleasant for weak people—indeed for us all—to think of in our extreme need, but if such aid were to be had, it would most certainly be a curse rather than a blessing, inasmuch as it would weaken those springs to action upon which our well-being and very existence depend.

Let us take an illustration from Tennyson's "Queen Mary," which, in my opinion, like the whole Drama, has more of History than of Poetry in it:—

“HOWARD.

O Paget, Paget!

I have seen heretics of the poorer sort  
Expectant of the rack from day to day,  
To whom the fire were welcome, lying chained  
In breathless dungeons over steaming sewers,  
Fed with rank bread that crawled upon the tongue,  
And putrid water, every drop a worm,  
Until they died of rotted limbs; and then  
Cast on the dunghill naked, and become  
Hideously alive again from head to heel;  
Made even the carrion-nosing mongrel vomit  
With hate and horror.”

Multiply such cases by millions, and what can we then think of a Special Providence? Think of the nine million poor creatures burnt for the imaginary crime of witchcraft, and the same number of a higher type burnt or tortured to death for an equally imaginary crime by the Inquisition. Think of the Crusades, and of

the millions who thus perished. In the first Crusade, on the capture of Jerusalem, we read, "the brains of young children were dashed out against the wall; infants were pitched over the battlements; every woman that could be seized was violated; men were roasted at fires; some were ripped up to see if they had swallowed gold; the Jews were driven into their Synagogue and there burnt; a massacre of nearly 70,000 persons took place; and the Pope's legate was seen 'partaking in the triumph'" (J. W. Draper, "Intellectual Development of Europe," vol. ii., p. 22). Think of the sixty years' persecution of the Huguenots in France, being a perpetuation of the horrors of St Bartholomew during the whole of that time. Yes, all these things were done in the name of God and of Religion! I think we cannot but agree with J. S. Mill, that "the notion of a Providential Government by an Omnipotent Being for the good of his creatures must be entirely dismissed." ("Essays on Religion," p. 243).

Let us take a more modern instance, one that has just occurred. In the *Sydney Morning Herald* we read:—"Further information from Fiji conveys still darker accounts of the plague which has recently passed over the new colony. A resident of long standing, writing to a Victorian contemporary, says:—'The death-rate is not yet made up, but the probability is that forty thousand Fijians died during the four months' plague. The native population of Fiji is now about one-third only of what it was when I landed here twenty-five years ago.'" The accounts given of the magnitude of the disaster are less harrowing than those of the sufferings of the victims. 'Very few died of the measles, the majority dying of subsequent disease in the form of dysentery, congestion of the lungs, &c. Want of nourishment or starvation carried off thousands.' It is interesting to read of the different mental effects produced by the tortures of disease. It is not

surprising to find that 'some made fruitless appeals to their ancient gods. Some inland tribes, who had only recently embraced Christianity, considered that the disease was conveyed by their religious teachers, and they dismissed them, and then abandoned their new religion. Among these some were for killing the teachers, but wiser counsels prevailed. It is said that one tribe buried alive the teacher's wife and child—whose husband and father had died of the plague—to stop infection.' But while some in their distress fell back on their former superstitions, the greater number are said to have borne their calamity with fortitude, and to have suffered and died under the influences of Christianity."

He must be a bold man who could teach the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man under such circumstances. It is true the interests of the whole of humanity would be better served by peopling these beautiful islands with a civilized than with a savage race; and now that Her Britannic Majesty had just taken possession, the savages were better out of the way, but how about justice and mercy and the *eternal* principles of morality!

At the destruction of Tyre, by Alexander *the Great*, "a countless multitude were massacred, two thousand persons were crucified" (Draper, vol. i. p. 76). My only hope and consolation is that pain, as I have said before, is limited, if the malevolence of man is not. When I read of these things, and think of man as a little lower than the angels! I am obliged to believe rather that "the missing link" will never be found; the monkeys have hidden it lest we should claim any relationship. When I ask what devil first invented this horrible mode of death by crucifixion, I am told by the Christian that God himself, for his own glory, ordained such a mode of death for his own Son, to save the world, not then created, from the fires of Hell, not then lighted!

The saddest thing to me is the Christian's Cross—



the emblem, it is said, of his salvation. And I am more sad over its moral significance than its physical. That people can look at that cross and think only of their own salvation, purchased by the death of an innocent person, and that this subversion of the whole moral world has been directly ordained by God, is the saddest sight the world has yet seen. No doubt in truth it is merely a "survival" in this nineteenth century of the savage idea of propitiation by human sacrifice. The idea is at utter variance with the moral sense of the present day. Admitting that we have all done wrong, is there any one willing to accept pardon on condition that an innocent person should bear the penalty? Self-sacrifice may be all very well, but justice is the only thing that can save the world. Every day it becomes more evident that Justice is a much higher virtue than Benevolence. The interests of Morality require as nice a scale as the physical manipulations of Chemistry, and this will be felt more and more as the world advances. Nothing could prove the Christian scheme of redemption to be true, as the interests of the whole world are adverse, and make for right and justice.

I cannot therefore accept the Christian idea of God either as a special Providence or as being willing to save the world by the sacrifice of an innocent person for the guilty.

Neither can I accept the Theist God—a Being outside and apart from the Universe, governing the world with Intelligence and Feelings similar to our own—a man without limit. Our Intelligence is simply the mode of thought which certain limited outside forces have impressed upon our nervous system, and our Feelings are certain Pains and Pleasures, Likes and Antipathies that we have in relation to each other, and which cannot for a moment be supposed to belong to God. God is Love, it is said; but Love is only one of these feelings intended to induce a certain line of con-

duct of sensitive creatures towards each other. It is a mental attraction, but repulsions are equally necessary. In a world in which death is as natural as life something more than love is required to put us in harmony with it.

The Being of God is a great mystery; it presents an enigma which many think altogether insoluble. Our acutest thinkers are able to throw very little light upon the subject, and that only of a negative kind. "The Deity," says Sir William Hamilton, "is not an object of immediate contemplation; as existing, and in Himself, He is beyond our reach; we can know Him only mediately through His works, and are only warranted in assuming His existence as a certain kind of cause necessary to account for a certain state of things, of whose reality our faculties are supposed to inform us."

It is Professor Mansel's opinion that "to speak of an Absolute and Infinite Person, is simply to use language in which, however true it may be in a superhuman sense, no mode of human thought can possibly attach itself."

The author of "The Philosophy of the Unconscious" tells us of an unconscious Absolute which acting in all atoms and organisms as an universal soul, determines the contents of creation and the evolution of the universe by a "clairvoyant wisdom superior to all consciousness."

An American writer also throws equal light upon the subject when he tells us of "One whose Spiritual Majesty is enthroned for ever in the gateways of Eternity"!

Professor Tyndall more recently says: "When I attempt to give the Power which I see manifested in the universe an objective form, personal or otherwise, it slips away from me, declining all intellectual manifestation. I dare not, save poetically, use the pronoun 'He' regarding it; I dare not call it a 'mind;' I

refuse to call it even a 'cause.' Its mystery overshadows me, but it remains a mystery, while the objective frames, which my neighbours try to make it fit, simply distort and desecrate it."—*Fortnightly*, November 1875.

Others consider themselves *obliged* to rest in general sympathy with the majesty, the beauty, the beneficence and goodness that are IN EXISTENCE, animate or inanimate. We are obliged, I think, to believe that God is everything or nothing. That there is not God and Nature, but that God and Nature are one. In the union of God and Nature, Materialism and Absolute Idealism meet, and in this identity of the Real and the Ideal we have the body and soul of God. A personal God is not necessarily a magnified man—a personality is that which has unity in any form. Power cannot be delegated. All Power therefore is God's Power, originally consciously exercised in every act or change; but this, through continued action, has passed in the ages into constant unvarying Law. Nothing therefore can be supernatural. The connection between cause and effect is not a necessary one, but one of Will, dissolvable at pleasure, unconscious for the most part, but quite capable of again becoming conscious where conscious action is required. The "Missing Link" will probably be found here. But if this power of interference with Law were often exercised, which man by his prayers supposes that it is, both instinct and reason which are based upon the uniformity of Nature's action, upon the invariability of her Law, would become useless for our guidance. Our well-being therefore, and indeed very existence, are dependent upon the same effects following the same causes everywhere, and at all times.

Putting aside the fear that men have always had of this hidden Power, and the superstitions based upon it, and the hopes to turn it to their own advantage, we can only judge of its nature from what it does; and that knowledge is confined to a mere speck in a limitless universe. We speak of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and

Goodness, but we know nothing of Infinite. People believe all sorts of impossibilities and contradictions, because they say everything is possible to God. He, it is believed, can create something out of nothing, and with Him a thing may be, and may not be, at the same time. Our bodies may be made of the same atoms as hundreds of others before us, and yet we shall all rise again with the same bodies, because nothing is impossible to God. If God were Almighty, why an age of crocodiles and great toads? why may not the higher race of man have begun at once? if He were perfect, why create at all? or if He could have prevented all the evil in the world, and yet have produced the same amount of happiness, He must be the greatest criminal in the universe. He does not create by fiat: and God said, "let there be," &c., may be very sublime, but it is great nonsense. All creation is a growth, and we suppose therefore necessarily so, and "not God Himself can make man's best, without best men to help Him," which is simply saying that He works under "conditions," not of anything external to Himself, but of His own essential nature. All is constant and ever-varying change. Life and death appear to be the law of the universe as well as of this world, and this applies equally to inanimate and to animate bodies. Worlds are born out of nebulous matter, pass through certain changes of youth and old age, and again are resolved into nebulous matter. This world when used up, by the mere stoppage of its motion, will become again an invisible gas. Without talking of Infinite, of which a finite nature can know nothing, there is quite enough of power and beauty in the world to excite both awe and wonder. Things go on in constant cycles, with each cycle a visible improvement—progress is the law. The water rises from the sea, and forming the circulatory system of the world and the life of plants, again returns to it to be again distributed. Plants absorb the carbon from the atmosphere, and animals



again distribute it, and thus the growth of a plant and the respiration of an animal are dependent upon each other.

But there is more than this. Sun power, that is, the mechanical action of Light, divorces the carbon from the oxygen in the plant, and upon their re-union in the body this force is restored. Under the law of the Persistence of Force exactly the same power that it took to separate them is restored upon their coming together again; supplying force enough to work the whole machine—body and mind. Body and mind are constantly changing, are in perpetual flux; each atom of the body returns to the earth, each thought and feeling returns to the general reservoir of force or mind from which it originally came. The plant returns to the earth in winter to rise in new beauty in the spring; the body returns to the earth in its winter to return in fresh, young, and vigorous life, in the rising generation, and the world is thus created afresh every year, and in every generation, in renewed and improved beauty. Talk of annihilation! Not a particle is lost of either mind or body; the body takes new forms, and all that is worth retaining in mind is retained in the mind of Humanity.

“ Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,  
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground;  
Another race the following spring supplies,  
They fall successive and successive rise;  
So generations in their course decay,  
So flourish these when those have passed away.”

Men are always passing away, but mankind is always increasing. All the present forms of Life in the world must have lived in some form or other many times before.

This doctrine is not new; it is as old as the hills. It is the doctrine of the Vedas, of Brahma, and also more especially of Buddha, as I have already pointed out: the Persistence of Force furnishing only the modern

scientific proof of its truth. In its more modern form, it appeared as Averrhoism or philosophical Islamism in the twelfth century; and at one time, as Draper shows us, was very nearly becoming the creed of Christendom. "This system supposes that, at the death of an individual, the intelligent principle or soul no longer possesses a separate existence, but returns to or is absorbed in the universal mind, the active intelligence, the mundane soul, which is God; from whom, indeed, it had originally emanated or issued forth; . . . and thus of all human souls, there remains at last but one—the aggregate of them all. It was the opinion of Averrhoes that the transition from the individual to the universal is instantaneous at death; but the Buddhists maintain that human personality continues in a declining manner for a certain term before nonentity or Nirwana is attained" ("Religion and Science," p. 139). "Ask a Hindu," says the Rev. Mr Hobson, M.A. ("Induism and its Relations to Christianity"), "what is the chief end and aim of man's existence, and he will answer, 'Liberation.' Ask him what he means by Liberation, and he will say, to cut short the 84. . . . By the 84, he means the eighty-four hundred thousand of new transmigrations or births, to which all are appointed. The only way to cut short this series of successive births is to attain the full knowledge of the soul's real identity with God."

It was an essential condition of the theory of Averrhoes that there is a soul of humanity, through their relations with which individual souls are capable of forming universal ideas, for such Averrhoes asserted, is the necessary consequence of the emanation theory (Draper, "Intellectual Development," Vol. ii., p. 188). Mesmerism and Clairvoyance will probably furnish the modern scientific proof of this theory, and it is of the partial glimpses of its truth, mixed with much imposture, that spiritualists are now making such a superstitious use.

Dr Draper says, "Philosophy has never proposed but two hypotheses to explain the system of the world: first, a personal God existing apart, and a human soul called into existence or created, and henceforth immortal; second, an impersonal intelligence, or indeterminate God, and a soul emerging from and returning to Him. As to the origin of beings, there are two opposite opinions: first, that they are created from nothing; second, that they come by development from pre-existing forms. The theory of creation belongs to the first of the hypotheses, that of evolution to the last.

"Philosophy among the Arabs took the same direction that it did in China, in India, and, indeed, throughout the East. Its whole spirit depended on the admission of the indestructibility of matter and force. It saw an analogy between the gathering of the material of which the body of man consists from the vast store of matter in nature, and its final restoration to that store, and the emanation of the spirit of man from the Universal Intellect, the Divinity, and its final re-absorption" ("Science and Religion," p. 140).

The late Vatican Council anathematised these Averrhoist doctrines. "Notwithstanding that stigma," says Dr Draper, "it is to be borne in mind that these opinions are held to be true by a majority of the human race."

The Universe then is God, and God is the Universe. This is not Atheism, for with Bacon, "I had rather believe all the fables in the legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind." "A little philosophy," he says, "might make a man an Atheist; but a great deal will show him universal mind." Matter and Spirit constitute the body and mind of God. These are inseparable, that is each necessary to the other's action, both in the universal and the individual. We must recollect that we know nothing but our own consciousness, and that that tells

us nothing of the essential nature of either body or mind ; both one and the other are to us equally transcendental.

As to the Personality of God, the Christian Deity has three persons ; but as we understand Personality, it implies limitation, and we cannot see therefore how, in that sense, either as One Person or Three, it can apply to the All in All. It is true that we can see that Force and Matter are One throughout the Universe—probably the same stuff, the same in essence. As the World exists in our Thought, so the Universe may exist in the mind of God, and extension may not belong to thought. Here, then, is Unity and Personality. We are a manifestation of the power of God ; and if it were possible that such power could be withdrawn, the Universe would disappear with it. We can speak, of course, only of remote probabilities, but the most subtle minds are of opinion that nothing exists out of the mind of God. “All permanent existence is in the Divine mind,” says Berkeley ; and Hegel considered that by his philosophy he had demonstrated, that the essence of the world, and all things in it, was Thought. As everything ultimately resolves itself into Force and Force is Mind, this view has high probability.\* The

\* It is as easy to jump out of our own skin as out of our own forms of thought, yet we cannot but feel a little curious as to what lies beyond. It is difficult to believe in a Universe without Space, and yet its existence, except as a form of thought, implies a contradiction, as it is infinite at both ends—infinately small and infinitely large. There are worlds, we are told, so far off that their light takes millions of years to reach this earth, and if we got there, we should be no nearer the confines of space than before ; and there are molecules composed, it is said, of as many atoms as there are stars in the firmament. It seems much easier to believe that these things have only an Ideal existence, that is, exist only in thought. Still all change objectively represents a mode of motion, and motion implies space, but motion does not appear to belong to thought, only succession, and thought is all we know. So again, if anything exists besides myself, there must be *somewhere* where it exists, and that implies space,—but *not* if it has only an Ideal existence, or existence in thought.

It can have an existence to us at any rate only in thought, for



consciousness of this world then, is the consciousness of God, its happiness is His happiness, and the individuality and the "Ego" a mere unit of sensibility. By the slow process of growth in the world, we have the elimination of a higher consciousness than previously existed, and happiness is created out of unconscious force or automatic mind. Evolution, development, natural selection, variation, excess of reproduction, and transmission by inheritance, are simply the manner of God's working—the necessary action of His Being and attributes; and so far as we are able to understand it, most wonderful it is. The blue sky and the blue sea, the light and shade, the harmonies of colour and of sound, and all the beauties the highest poetry can

as Hume says—"Let us fix our ideas out of ourselves as much as possible; let us chase our imaginations to the heavens, or to the utmost limit of the universe, we never really advance a step beyond ourselves, nor can perceive any kind of existence but those perceptions which have appeared in that narrow compass." Whatever kinds of existence in fact may exist besides ourselves we have no knowledge that they are essentially different from these perceptions. These perceptions, that is, thoughts and feelings, are in reality the only things of any consequence. A universe without perception would be the same as no universe at all, and on reflection it is perhaps easier to believe in these wonderful atoms and molecules, and worlds on worlds, as the relations of thought to thought than as anything else. It is difficult also to believe in the distances in which bodies are said to act on one another without anything to connect them. Space is that in which anything exists, and Extension need not belong to it, and certainly does not belong to the only thing we know—thought. The attributes of Spinoza's universal "Substance" are Thought and Extension, but between thought and extension it is impossible to conceive of any kind of identity or similarity, and therefore of any kind of unity. An ideal existence or existence only in thought does not imply an unreal existence, for thought or mind may be the only real existence. G. H. Lewes says, "This manifestation of all modes of Existence by no means obliterates the distinction of modes nor the necessity of understanding the special characters of each. Mind remains Mind, and is essentially opposed to Matter, in spite of their identity in the Absolute, just as Pain is not Pleasure, nor Colour either Heat or Taste, in spite of their identity in Feeling. The logical distinctions represent real differentiations, but not distinct existents. If we represent the One in the Many, we do not thereby refuse to admit the Many in the One."—"Problems of Life and Mind," vol. ii., p. 504.)

picture, are the world as it exists in the mind of man, most wonderfully created out of the varying modes of motion without him: and we may turn immediately to another world, no doubt equally wonderful, although less understood—the Insect World. Flowers, which man, in his pride and conceit, thinks made only for his peculiar delectation and delight, are the objective world of the insect, actually made as much by the insect as our world has been made by us. Darwin has shown us that almost the whole make and colouring of flowers can be explained only on the supposition that the relationship between the insects and the flowers is one of reciprocal advantage—the flower was made for the insect, and the insect for the flower—each has made the other. Man boasts of his machinery and of his superior powers, but could he have made the flowers? The senses and organs of insects differ so widely from our own, that it is only very little peeps that we can get into their minds and into their modes of viewing things. It is true that in the Ant and in the Bee, we see more perfect modes of working than our own, and that intellectually in some things, if not in power of feeling, they excel us. Birds have also their world, and we should do well to learn their language; it would be of much more service than Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. The good that is to come from comparative physiology and psychology is immense; but that is not to be attained by vivisection; we cannot judge of function in a delicate instrument like the nervous system under abnormal conditions.

What then is the part that man has to play? The object of creation is certainly not the elimination of a small number of individual human souls to be perfected in some other world, but to increase the sum of enjoyment in this. It is man's duty to do all he can to promote this object wherever sensibility exists. As far as he individually is concerned he may best further its object by the development and cultivation

of all his higher powers, and thus raise himself in the scale of creation, that is in capacity for enjoyment.\* It has been the universal practice of the Christian Religion to decry and to degrade the body, to separate the soul from the body, and to try to cultivate one at the expense of the other; but no such separation of the two is possible in nature, and as Dr H. Maudsley says, "This absolute and unholy barrier between psychical and physical nature must be broken down." The mind can only act through the brain, and the perfection with which it acts is always in proportion to the perfection of the instrument through which it acts. This perfection depends upon the harmonious action and co-operation of the whole nervous system, every part must be brought into use, and if any part is allowed to fall into disuse it must be to the injury of the whole. This requires the adequate exercise of all the natural functions of the body in their legitimate spheres, and that again necessitates man's knowledge of, and obedience to, all the laws of nature in every department. Man must act in harmony with nature or she will crush him in spite of all his prayers. The degree of his well-being and the amount of his enjoyment will depend entirely upon his moving smoothly along with nature in her modes of working. Morality concerns only one set of these laws, and they are not in the least more important than the physical laws. Both are equally God's laws. The distinctions between right and wrong are not immutable and eternal, but have relation to man's mutable condition. The function of conscience is first the preservation of the family, then of the tribe, then of the nation, and from the nation it is transferred to the community at large; and lastly, it includes the good of the whole animal creation. Morality is the relation of man to man, and regards simply the rules and regulations by which men may live together in

\* See my "Education of the Feelings," fourth edition. Longmans and Co.

the most happy manner possible. And "Morality," as Herbert Spencer says, "is essentially one with physical truth. It is a kind of transcendental physiology." ("Social Statics.")

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CONCLUSION.

I HAVE left little room for Religion in its ordinarily accepted sense. The Religion of Pre-historic Man and of Savage Races, as we have seen, is based on sleep and dreams, on pain, disease, and death. In this way the belief in spirits, souls, mysterious and invisible beings, is originally engendered and religions founded, until we arrive at the horrible conception of our orthodox Deity. In Western Africa no man approaches the king except on his knees with an appearance of fear, and as man first conceived the Deity as a being like himself in form, character, and attributes, only wiser and more powerful, so he approached Him in the same way. It is difficult to find in the past in what is called religion anything but slavish fear or intense selfishness—a doing good, not because it is good or right, but from the fear of punishment or the hope of reward. All the higher feelings seem smothered in the wish to get into heaven—to secure *our own* salvation. Religion as ordinarily practised is but another kind of magic or witchcraft by which it is hoped and expected to get things by words instead of work; it is an address to a Being, supposed to have inordinate Self-esteem and Love of Approbation, and by flattery to serve our own purpose and get something for ourselves. Our later religious developments could not have been but for the earlier; they are properly "survivals" of the past, coming down from uncivilized and savage men. Worship originally meant deprecation—don't hurt me,—and it still retains that significance joined to its logical consequence, propitiation.



"The central principle of Judaism," says Douglas Campbell ("The Gospel of the World's Divine Order," p. 161), "is a God-King speaking by Moses through the ages, and giving earthly power, peace, and plenty to his elect so long as they call on his name alone, and bring offerings to no other altar but his."

"The central principle of modern orthodoxy is that Jesus, the son of Mary and Joseph, a man who by the law of Moses was put to death for blasphemy, is God Almighty, and that he punishes by eternal torment in hell-fire those who reject this dogma and its preachers."

"The central principle of Common Sense is that God is alike to all—that each rational being is God's, and that we know Him and obey Him and obtain His aid by learning and keeping His rational laws or the order He hath established in Nature and in our own souls."

There is a large class of people, however, to whom religion is not a mere conventional form of "other-worldliness," with whom it is almost purely subjective, taking its colour almost entirely from their own minds. Forgetting or ignoring creeds and dogmas, it consists of the very best they are able to conceive, and no more resembles its origin than the orthodox devils and angels of the present day resemble the bats and owls from which, Herbert Spencer says, they were derived.\* The views I have given of God and Christianity, although taken from the Bible itself, and in the very words of Scripture, will appear, it is too probable, to this class as only a blasphemous caricature. They worship the Bible and reverence Christianity as the highest

\* "With moths of many kinds, it is the habit of the larva to bury itself in the earth, and after a time there is found near the chrysalis case a winged creature. Why, then, should not the winged creature found along with the human body which has been buried in a cave, be concluded to have come out of it? . . . Creatures commonly found in caves which have been used for burials, hence come to be taken for the new shapes assumed by departed souls. Bats and owls (found in such caves), are conceived to be winged spirits; and from them arise the traditional ideas of devils and angels." ("The Principles of Sociology," pp. 357-373.)

good. I shall be very sorry to hurt the sincere religious feelings of any such good person, but is there nothing to be said on the side of people who, like myself, feel that a gross libel has been committed against our Creator, and that our God has been made into a devil to frighten naughty children and wicked people. I am quite aware that with the great majority of good people religion means all that is good in a wicked and selfish world; it means a preparation for eternal happiness in another and a better world; a re-union with the dear departed; endless increasing knowledge and progress to the individual; and it may well be asked if you take this away what can you give in the place of it? I should answer, the Truth, if we can find it, and surely this endless happiness to *individuals* may be purchased too dearly if it is to be accompanied by endless misery to a greater or equal number. Hear what Father Newman offers to all without the pale of his own church, and to a great many within:—"I say nothing," he says, "of that unutterable region of woe, the prison of the impenitent, which is to last to eternity, coeval with Him henceforth, as if in rivalry with his blessed Heaven. I say nothing of this, for God cannot be touched with evil, and all the sins of these reprobate souls *cannot impair His everlasting felicity*" ("Parochial Sermons," vi. 396). "This last statement is of course a truism," says Lord Lyttelton, who may fairly be said to represent the English Church ("On the Future State of Souls," *Contemporary Review*, June 1873). "I see the perfect consistency of the doctrine with reason," says his lordship, "when the indestructibility of man's free-will is admitted;" as if it were reasonable to suppose that any wise and good being could leave any of his creatures "free" to damn themselves to all eternity, and be happy in so doing. In a tract *lately* issued by the Christian Knowledge Society, called "The Second Death," we are told "the second death will be 'gloom without a gleam,' and not one drop of

water will be given to cool the tongue . . . With the unsaved there shall be nothing *but* crying, nothing but pain," &c. The Rev. J. Llewelyn Davis objected to this as opposed to modern Anglican doctrine, but it is the doctrine of the church, and Maurice for protesting against it was dismissed from King's College ; and in the Arches Court, July 16th, 1875, Sir R. Phillimore said the Rev. F. Cook was perfectly right in refusing the sacrament of the Holy Communion to Mr Jenkins for avowing his disbelief in the personality of the devil, and in the eternity of punishment. This judgment I find has been reversed (Feb. 16, 1876) on appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, but on purely technical grounds, and the Vicar is ordered to pay the costs in both courts.

I am sure that all minds not twisted and perverted by ages of ignorance and superstition, must feel that Immortality to man would be a most fearful gift, if attended by the possibility of such consequences. For myself, I would willingly give up heaven rather than one should be left out. No doubt, between ourselves and the highest, many states of being may be *imagined* preferable to our own, but it is our place to be satisfied with that which has been assigned to us, and which we find, *in fact*, is not the continuous existence of individuals, but a stream of life flowing on continuously—a change of life from one body to another. I do not see that the butterfly would be the least the better for having a vivid recollection of when it was a great ravenous grub. It passes through its changes, has one short moment of nectar and love, and dies, leaving plenty of butterflies to come after it ; and who knows the difference between one and the other ? The butterfly itself does not certainly. Let those to whom their dreams of a life to come are necessary to their enjoyment, continue to enjoy them ; if they are mistaken they will never find it out, and if any one gives up such hope after this life, he can never regret it. If

we had never been born we should never have regretted it, and if we return to what we were before we were born, we equally cannot regret it, for we shall never know it, and we shall have the satisfaction of feeling now that if we are not to continue to enjoy ourselves, some one else will, and that Hell, except such as we each make for ourselves here, will be empty. We each have our portion of enjoyment, great in proportion as we are good, that is, as our bodies and minds are in harmony with people and things around us; "death emancipates the afflicted and the weary, opening the door to eternal rest" to all.

But, it is said, can we do without the religious sanction to Morality—without future rewards and punishments? Morality and religion are by no means the same things, or bear any direct relationship to each other, for there is no conceivable wickedness that has not been practised, as a sacred religious duty, by one nation or another in the world's history; to this Christianity forms no exception, {and it is singular that the most devout also insist most devoutly upon the eternity of punishment. If happiness is to be eternal, they say, so must punishment be. No doubt the hope of heaven is a strong motive to good conduct, but the natural rewards to goodness would be quite enough, for every deviation from "the right" is followed by pain of some kind, and it becomes gradually to be recognized that pain always attends the disregard of national law, and that by obedience to it, pain may be ultimately avoided, and we may have the consolation of discarding the grossly libellous supposition that God ever created a devil, or any creature which He knew would ever become one.

There is no fear for the interests of Morality. Natural Law everywhere makes for righteousness, and it is by Natural Law we are governed, which is as supreme in the department of mind as of matter. Pains and plea-



asures—that Revelation given equally to all God's creatures—and the Responsibility to which they immediately and directly subject us, are quite sufficient to insure good conduct in the long-run. As the progress of the species depends upon the principle of Natural Selection, so Moral Progress is evolved from our Pains and Pleasures, which are equally the springs and principles of action in the universe with heat or cold, attraction or repulsion. Moral laws are simply the rules and regulations by which we can all live together most happily, and we must become more and more moral as we get increasing knowledge of this fact. Civilization depends upon Science and not upon Religion; and Morality depends upon the law of man's nature to seek his own well-being, and it will thus be assured whether he has a creed or no creed. It is never our interest to do ill, and that is a short-sighted and erroneous calculation that appears to make it so. It is the place of moralists to show this, and instead of putting Responsibility off indefinitely to some other world, to bring it directly and immediately home to every one. As it is now generally recognized that "honesty is the best policy," it is their duty to show with equal clearness the interest we all have in Truth, Justice, Mercy, and that the happiness we are able to give to others, even the brutes, is reflected upon ourselves. To preach "goodness" as the supreme purpose of our being, or that "righteousness is the high and ultimate end of all that exists," or that "the culture of the idea of perfection in the soul" is what we have to strive after, tells us very little, for what are goodness, righteousness, and perfection? What was the supreme end before man so recently came upon the scene? neither intellect nor goodness, I suppose, in our sense of the term. But "every virtue," says Walsingham, "gives a man a degree of felicity in some kind. Honesty gives a man a good report; justice, estimation; prudence, respect; courtesy and liberality, affection; temperance gives health; fortitude, a quiet mind, not

to be moved by any adversity." To demonstrate clearly these consequences of our actions—that virtue is always our greatest good here, will be much better than the promise of happiness in some far distant world, in some far distant time.

But if there is no better land for which, it is said, this earth is only a preparation, what have we then? We have to make a Heaven here, for ourselves and for those that are to come. We have to learn all the various modes of motion around us, and to put ourselves into harmonious action with them, the perfection of our well-being depending upon our moving together. It gets less difficult to do this every day as our knowledge of Science, *i.e.*, of the "order of Nature" increases. There are many actions which, technically speaking, cannot be called either moral or immoral, and which are still right or wrong, and these science alone can teach. What it took Pythagoras twenty-two years of travel to acquire, a student may now learn by the study of a single book.. We require equally the labours of "the illustrious author of the great work on the cockchafer," M. Strauss, with the M. Strauss who gave us the "Life of Jesus," and his confessions on the "Old Faith and the New." Everything we actually require has been put within our reach, to be attained by our own efforts, and our health and well-being depend upon our making those efforts. If this is so, then prayer is needless and even irreligious.\* If we have not, in this sense, a Heavenly Father, we have Nature, the Mighty Mother, careful of her children, but who enjoins them, for their own sake, to work out their own salvation by the discharge of their daily duties, and by the careful study and practice

\* It is singular how reading the Bible and saying prayers have come to be considered virtues in themselves without any reference to their effects. The poor shivering, sleepy child is always asked by the proper mother or nurse, have you said your prayers? and I recollect a very good woman, while lamenting her sins, only wishing she were half as good as her husband, who, if he came home ever so drunk, always said his prayers.

of the means appointed. This was the religion of Socrates. He says:—"The best man, and the most beloved by the gods, is he who, as a husbandman, performs well the duties of husbandry—as a surgeon, those of medical art—in political life, his duty towards the commonwealth. But the man who does nothing well is neither useful nor agreeable to the gods." "This," says Mr Grote, "is the Socratic view of human life: to look at it as an assemblage of realities and practical details—to translate the large words of the moral vocabulary into those homely particulars to which at bottom they refer—to take account of acts, not of dispositions apart from act (in contradiction to the ordinary flow of the moral sympathies)—to enforce upon every one, that what he chiefly required, was teaching and practice as preparations for act; and that therefore ignorance, especially ignorance mistaking itself for knowledge, was his capital deficiency. The religion of Socrates, as well as his ethics, had reference to practical human ends; nor had any man ever less of that transcendentalism in his mind, which his scholar Plato exhibits in such abundance."—*History of Greece.*

"When shall the churches' Sabbath bells," says Douglas Campbell, "ringing gladness and joy, call us to a higher, purer worship, in which the book of God—not Moses' or Paul's writings, but this all-glorious world and man—shall be explained to the intellect and affections by men accomplished in literature and science, and who are therefore true religious teachers? The men, or church, that, instead of preaching the cross and its sad doctrines, shall bring to the pulpit the prism, the flower, and the rock—the works of the poet, the historian, and the philosopher,—with the wisdom, beauty, and mercy they disclose,—and the correction and instruction in righteousness they give,—will take rank with the people's leaders and best benefactors, as the beginners of a new era of intellectual and religious improvement, and of social joy and life."

It is to be hoped that this is the Church of the Future towards which we may all look, and that we shall not press forward disestablishment and disendowment until it is prepared to take some such form. At present, although a beginning has been made, the labourers in this vineyard are few, and we may have some time still to wait, but there are other things for which we may have to wait longer still. Thus it must be generally recognized that mind is equally a part of nature with matter, and although acting consciously and voluntarily yet acts equally according to law; the free-will, of which we are conscious being an intuition founded merely on the fact of our physical power or freedom to act in accordance with the will. No act therefore under the then existing circumstances could have been other than it was. When this is clearly understood lamentations over the past, which now cause so much useless misery, must cease. "Repentance whereby we forsake sin," there may be, but no remorse. "To the past we must look for lessons—not reproach." "Not Heaven itself upon the past has power," (Dryden). When also the gross superstition that an eternity of happiness or misery may depend upon a death-bed repentance—upon a few hours or even minutes at the end of our lives, has been got rid of, medical men will discover that it is their duty to smooth the way to the tomb, and instead of directing all their efforts to the prolongation of life for a few hours or days in pain, they will ensure our going out of life with as little pain as we came into it. Death is, or rather should be, "a sleep rather than a sensation; a suspension of our faculties rather than a conflict with them: instead of a time of suffering, a time of deepening unconsciousness." ("Life, &c., by L. H. Grindon," p. 258.)

With increased knowledge the fear of the Great Unknown is turned to reverence and awe; we find nowhere blind force, for cause and effect is probably not an eternal necessary sequence, but one established



and upheld for good—an infinitely judicious contrivance for the production of the largest amount of pleasurable sensibility—the greatest happiness of the greatest number; and although this is not reconcilable with man's idea of justice, yet we may suppose that as it is all that is done, it is all that can be done. The only way in which we can *serve* God is, not by prayer and sacrifice, but by increasing the amount of happiness in this world, in which increased happiness, as *universal* mind underlies all sensibility, it seems to me He is a direct participator. We began with the worship of nature, and we shall probably end there; for nature is God and God is nature, all "is but the varied God." To the first men, the unseen, the unknown cause of motion or action was a spirit, and it gradually became the spirit. The Hindoo, we are told, has three hundred and thirty millions of divinities; he worships every development of "Force" in any one of its details. All power to him is God's power:—

"A motion and a spirit that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought."

WORDSWORTH.

Light is not a vibratory motion without, but exists only in us, and the beauty of a setting-sun is the direct action of God upon our minds—of the union of His mind with ours—a mode in fact of His existence; "a presence that disturbs us with the joy of elevated thoughts," and makes us feel that if there is cause for wonder and worship anywhere it is in this creation of the world within us, and our absorption into His Being: God thus becoming conscious in humanity. As an individual I am grateful for the share of enjoyment awarded to me, and I accept the inevitable, especially in the limited term allotted to me for such enjoyment. I feel raised in contemplation of myself as part of the Great All, and patiently await His fiat, when "the dust shall return to the earth as it was," and "the spirit shall return to the God who gave it."

The question now frequently arises as to how far it is desirable for every one to state their honest convictions, to speak the truth, as far as they know, on all these momentous questions, not only with reference to the offence that may be given to the sincere and deep religious convictions of others, but with reference to the good of the world at large supposed to depend upon the maintenance of the old faith, or at least of so much that is good in it. There are those whose honest conviction it is that the Church can best be reformed from within, and who therefore stay there, although they cannot subscribe to all its formularies. Among the highest minds of this class perhaps we may mention Dean Stanley. On Sunday morning, May 9th, 1875, at Christ Church, Marylebone, he said:—"The great truth, that God spoke not always in one fashion or form, but 'in sundry times and in divers manners,' has been gradually accepted by the English Church. The rigid scholastic theories of Thomas Aquinas, of Calvin, and of Luther, have given way to a more spiritual and lofty conception of Christian redemption. The wider and larger view of Biblical inspiration, which was not long ago denounced by eleven thousand clergy, is now tacitly if not openly accepted, and it is no longer heresy to say that the Bible contains poetry as well as prose, that its history is to be read with the same knowledge of time and place as other history, and that the true value of its records does not depend on the accuracy of its geology, astronomy, or chronology. The Authorised Version, whose manifold errors amidst all its grace and dignity it seemed for so long a point of religious honour to refuse either to acknowledge or justify, is now undergoing the revision which Christian truthfulness and scientific honesty alike required, and which has produced also the inestimable benefit of bringing together Churchmen and Nonconformists in a common religious work." Every well-informed person who has examined the subject now knows that the Old Testament certainly

contains "poetry as well as prose," and also that "the Christian Scriptures are the slow and natural growth of the age which succeeded the birth of Christ," selected from the large mass of such traditions by men no better qualified for the task than we are ourselves, and that therefore Dean Stanley is perfectly right in the view he takes of the Bible and Inspiration, but how such views can be reconciled with the Church's Creeds and Thirty-nine Articles we do not ourselves so clearly see.

On the other hand, Mr Moncure D. Conway, at a meeting of the Liberal Social Union, May 2d, 1875, said:—"There are certain great moral facts, constituting, it might be said, a new morality, which are not recognized by the Churches. He believed in the great duty of inflexible honesty of mind and speech, perfect openness and candour of utterance, not to speak to the people with a double tongue, not to speak to the world one thing, and to hold another in our families and our studies. This duty of occupying a public position, exactly representing the mind and character, is not yet insisted upon, and thousands of the great authorities of the country are giving their influence to a system in which they do not really believe. The great new commandment of the nineteenth century is to be honest and veracious in action and speech, and to promulgate among the people greater reverence for the order, wisdom, and, on the whole, beneficence of nature, with faith in the progress of humanity, and the wonderful discoveries of the human mind."

I hold entirely with Mr Conway. It is not a question of what may be considered "essential" to believe, but what really is true. There will be enough of unreasoning people, with honest conviction, to support the old temple while the new one is building, and it is the duty of everyone therefore, so far as he knows how, "to speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth," and to take upon himself the small martyrdom, which, by so doing, is sure to await him.