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SCIENCE AND IMMORTALITY.

By Rev. T. W. FOWLE.

HE who pretends to have any thing new to say upon so old a subject as the immortality of the soul, must expect to arouse certainly opposition, and probably contempt. Nevertheless, this at least is certain, that the tendency of science, which has powerfully affected every domain of thought in new and unexpected ways, cannot but place the old doctrine of immortality under new and, it may be, unexpected lights, abolishing old arguments, and suggesting new ones that have not yet obtained the consideration they deserve. My object in this paper is to endeavor, by the aid of all-victorious analysis, to throw some little light upon the relations of the belief in immortality with scientific thought; and, at the outset, I wish distinctly and positively to affirm that it is not my intention to construct any argument for the belief against science, but merely to explain the conditions under which, as it seems to me, the question must be debated. Those conditions, though in themselves plain and simple, are, I believe, very imperfectly understood, and much bewildering nonsense is talked upon both sides of the question by men who have not clearly realized the nature of evidence, the amount of proof required, or the sources from which that proof must be derived. I think it possible to lay down a series of propositions with which, in principle at any rate, most reasonable minds would agree, and which would have the effect of defining the area of debate and the true point of conflict. This may sound presumptuous; whether it be really so or not, the event alone can prove.

Now, the first demand of science is for an accurate definition of the object of discussion, that is, that both religious and scientific thinkers should be quite sure that they are discussing the same thing. Immortality is bound up in the minds of religious people with a vast amount of beautiful and endearing associations, which form no part of the hard, dry fact itself. The definition of immortality, viewed scientifically, is, I take it, something of this sort: the existence of a thinking, self-conscious personality after death, that is, after the bodily functions have ceased to operate. This personality may or may not exist forever; it may or may not be responsible for the past; it may or may not be capable of rest, joy, and love; it may or may not be joined to its old body or to a new body. These, and a hundred similar beliefs with which religion has clothed the mere fact of existence after death, form no essential part, I must again affirm, of the fact itself. And throughout the argument, this, and no other than this, will be the sense in which I use the word immortality; because it is the only one that I have a right to expect that the scientific mind will accept.

It may be well, also, before going further, to make it clear to our-

selves in what sense we use the word religion. Men who would be very much ashamed of themselves if they were detected using scientific words inaccurately, do, nevertheless, attribute meanings to the word religion, which it is difficult to hear with patience. I have heard an eminent scientific man upon a public occasion, and in a serious manner, define religion to be duty, making a mere idle play upon the original meaning of the word. Without, however, entering into verbal discussions, it will be, surely, enough to define religion as a practical belief in, and consciousness of, God and immortality; and, as the latter is now absolutely essential to the idea of religion as a motive moral power, and as, moreover, it includes, or at any rate necessitates the belief in the existence of God, we may fairly conclude that, for all practical purposes, and certainly for the purpose of this argument, religion is synonymous with a belief in immortality. And if, for any reason, mankind does at any time cease to believe in its own immortality, then religion will also have ceased to exist as a part of the consciousness of humanity. To clear up, therefore, the relations between immortality and science becomes a matter of the utmost importance. It will be well next to analyze briefly the effect which science has upon the nature of the proofs by which this, like all other facts, must be demonstrated. Let us, for convenience' sake, regard the world as a vast jury, before which the various advocates of many truths, and of still more numerous errors, plead the cause of their respective clients. However much a man may wrap himself up in the consciousness of ascertained truth, and affirm that it makes no matter to him what the many believe, yet Nature is in the long-run too powerful for him, and the instinct of humanity excites him to plead the cause of what he knows to be truth, and to mourn in his heart and be sore vexed if men reject it. Truth is ever generous and hopeful, though at the same time patient and long-suffering; she longs to make converts, but does not deny herself or turn traitress to her convictions if converts refuse to be made. There is a sense, indeed, in which it may be said that truth only becomes actual and vital by becoming subjective through receiving the assent of men. What, then, must the advocate for the fact of the immortality of the soul expect that science will require of him when he pleads before the tribunal of the world for that truth which, because it is dear to himself, he wishes to enforce on others?

The alterations in the minds of men, which the tendency of modern thought has effected in respect of evidence, may be summed up under two heads: First, the nature of the evidence required is altogether altered, and a great many arguments, that would in former days have gone to the jury, are now summarily suppressed. Fact can only be proved by facts, that is, by events, instances, things, which are submitted to experience and observation, and are confirmed by experiment and reason. And, secondly, the minds of the jury are subject to *a priori*, and, on the whole, perfectly reasonable prepossessions before

the trial begins. The existence of changeless law, the regular, natural, and orderly march of life, the numerous cases in which what seemed to be the effect of chance or miracle have been brought within the limits of ascertained causation; all these things predispose the mind against pleadings for the supernatural or the divine. Most true, of course, it is, that there are most powerful prepossessions on the other side as well; but the difference is, that these are as old as man himself, while the former have only been of later times imported into the debate, and, if they have not been originated, have at least received their definite aim and vivid impulse from the results of scientific research.

Now, the first result which flows from these alterations is the somewhat startling one, that all the arguments for immortality derived from natural religion (so called) are, in the estimation of science, absolutely futile. To put this point in the strongest form, all the hopes, wishes, and convictions of all the men that ever lived, could not and cannot convince one single mind that disbelieves in its own immortality. Unless the advocates of religion clearly apprehend this truth, they are, it seems to me, quite disabled from entering into the discussion upon conditions which their opponents, by the very law of this opposition, cannot but demand. It is true, indeed, that this temper of mind is confined at present to a comparatively few persons, as in the last century it belonged to the philosophers and to their immediate followers. But then it is as clear as the day that, as science is getting a more and more practical hold upon men's minds by a thousand avenues, and mastering them by a series of brilliant successes, this temper is rapidly passing from the few into the popular mind; that it is becoming part of the furniture of the human intellect, and is powerfully influencing the very conditions of human nature. Sooner or later we shall have to face a disposition in the minds of men to accept nothing as fact, but what facts can prove, or the senses bear witness to. In vain will witness after witness be called to prove the inalienable prerogative, the intuitional convictions, the universal aspirations, the sentimental longings, the moral necessity, all which have existed in the heart of man since man was. Nor will the science of religion help us in the hour of need. There can be a science of religion exactly as there can be a science of alchemy. All that men have ever thought or believed about the transmutation of metals may be brought together, classified as facts, and form a valuable addition to our knowledge of the history of the human mind, but it would not thereby prove that the transmutation had taken place, or that the desire for it was any thing more than man's childlike strivings after that which could only be really revealed by the methods of natural science. So also the science of religion can prove what men have held, and suggest what they ought to hold. It can show that they have believed certain things to be true, it is utterly powerless to prove that

they are true. It can strengthen the principle of faith in those who do not require positive demonstration for their beliefs; it cannot even cross swords with those, soon to be the majority of thinking men, to whom positive demonstration has become as necessary to their minds as food to their bodies. Nay, they will resent rather than welcome the attempt to put a multitude of hopes and myriads of wishes in the place of one solid fact, and will soon confirm themselves in their opinions, by the obvious argument that these hopes and wishes are peculiar to the childhood of the race, and form only one out of many proofs, that man is liable to perpetual self-deception until he confronts fact and law. Not indeed that they will indulge in the equally unscientific statement that there is no such thing as immortality. The attitude of mind which they will assume will be that of knowing nothing, and of having no reasonable hope of ever discovering any thing, about man's future destiny. And while they will think it good that man, or at any rate that some men, should allow themselves to hope for life after death, yet they will steadily oppose any assertion that these hopes ought to guide men's conduct, influence their motives, or form their character. Now, if this be true, it is difficult to overrate the importance of thoroughly and distinctly realizing it. That the evidence for the truths of natural religion is overwhelming, is one of the statements that are accepted as truisms, at the very moment that science is slowly leavening the human intellect with the conviction that all such evidence is scientifically worthless. Nevertheless the opposite idea has taken firm hold of the religious mind, and forms the basis of many an eloquent refutation of the "presumptuous assurance" and "illogical obstinacy" of modern thought. Men must have smiled to hear themselves alternately refuted and rebuked by controversialists who did not understand the tone of mind against which they were arguing, or who assumed as true the very things which their opponents resolved to know nothing about, either in the way of belief or rejection. It is very certain, however, that this error will not yield to the mere statement that it is an error, and therefore I will go on to examine a little more minutely the various arguments by which men seek to prove the doctrine of immortality. These are mainly fourfold :

1. That it is an original intuition, and arising from this,
2. That it is a universal belief.
3. That it follows necessarily from the existence of God.
4. That it is essential as a motive for human morality.

1. I take the statement of this argument from the words of one than whom no man has a better right to be heard on such a subject. Prof. Max Müller, in his preface to the first volume of his "Chips from a German Workshop," writes as follows: "An intuition of God, a sense of human weakness and dependence, a belief in a Divine government of the world, a distinction between good and evil, and a hope of

a better life, these are the radical elements of all religions. . . . Unless they had formed part of the original dowry of the human soul, religion itself would have remained an impossibility." Now, I am not quite sure that I understand in what sense the writer means to assert that these intuitions, which, for practical purposes, may be limited to three, God, sin, and immortality, are part of the original dowry of the human soul. If it is meant that there was a special creation of the human soul, furnished from the beginning with these three intuitions, then science will resolutely refuse to admit the fact. There can be no mistake about the position held by the bulk of scientific men, and little doubt, I should think, as to its reasonableness. If there is any thing that is in ultimate analysis incomprehensible, or any fact that cannot be accounted for by natural causes, then the possibility of special creation and original intuitions must be candidly allowed, but not otherwise. There is just a chance, for instance, that the difference between the brains of the lowest man and the highest animal may ultimately be regarded as a fact inexplicable upon any theory of evolution; more, however, from a lack of evidence than from any other cause. Be this as it may, the possibility of special creation finds a distinct foothold in the acknowledged fact that the connection between thought and the brain of animals, as well as of man, is an ultimate incomprehensibility, a mystery which the law of man's intelligence prevents his ever even attempting or hoping to understand. The famous saying "*cogito ergo sum*," the foundation of all modern metaphysics, may come to be a formula under which religion, philosophy, and science, may all take shelter, and approach each other without ever actually meeting.

But the three intuitions of God, sin, and immortality, can all be accounted for by the growth of human experience, as every one knows who has at all studied the subject. At some period of the world's history, science will answer, an ape-like creature first recognized that it or he had offended against the good of some other creature and so became conscious of sin, or was created as a moral being. Thus much Mr. Darwin has affirmed, but (speaking from memory) I do not think he has called very special attention to that still greater epoch (or was it the same?) in man's history, when this ape-like creature, seeing one of its own species lying dead, recognized as a fact "I shall die." This is what we may term the creation of man as an immortal being, for in the very conflict of the two facts—one, the reflecting being, the self-conscious I; the other, death, the seeming destroyer—lie embedded all man's future spiritual cravings for eternity. And the idea of God would come in the order of Nature, before either of these, to the creature which first reflected upon the source of its own existence, and recognized a "tendency in things which it could not understand." This is, in brief, the scientific account of man's creation, and of the growth of the ideas of natural religion within his mind; and we may remark in passing that it must be a singularly uncandid

and prejudiced mind which does not recognize that the book of Genesis, which, upon any theory, contains man's earliest thoughts about himself, expresses in allegorical fashion exactly the same views.

The same views are also apparently expressed by Prof. Max Müller, in a very beautiful passage in the article on Semitic Monotheism, in the same volume :

“ The primitive intuition of God and the ineradicable feeling of dependence upon God could only have been the result of a primitive revelation in the truest sense of that word. Man, who owed his existence to God, and whose being centred and rested in God, saw and felt God as the only source of his own and all other existence. By the very act of the creation God had revealed Himself. Here He was, manifested in His works in all His majesty and power before the face of those to whom He had given eyes to see and ears to hear, and into whose nostrils He had breathed the breath of life, even the Spirit of God.”

The first impression made by this passage may be, that, in speaking of a “ revelation in the truest sense,” it affords an instance of that hateful habit of using religious words in a non-natural sense. But a little deeper consideration will show that no possible definition of a revelation, accompanied and attested by miracles, can exclude the revelation made by Nature to the first man who thought. In fact, we have here a description of creation, which science, with possibly a little suspiciousness at some of the phrases, may accept, while, at the same time, natural religion is carried to its utmost and highest limits, and along with this a foundation is laid for a truer theory of the miraculous. But, while gladly admitting all this, the fact remains that these intuitions, following upon a revelation in which Nature herself was the miracle, are still plainly only the expressions of man's inward experiences, and that, however old, and venerable, and exalted, they are still only hopes, wishes, and aspirations, which may or may not be true, but which are incapable of proving the actual facts toward which they soar. It is open, therefore, to any man, accustomed to look for positive demonstration, to dismiss them as dreams of the infancy of man, or to relegate them into the prison-house of the incomprehensibilities, or to content himself with a purely natural theory of human life which rejects and dislikes the theological.

2. But when we come to inquire how far these primary intuitions have been universal, and whether they can be fairly called ineradicable, we are met by some very startling facts. The dictum *δ πᾶσι δόκει τοῦτ' εἶναι φάμεν* is so reasonable in itself that no serious attempt would be made to question a belief that even approached to being universal, even if it could not be shown to be part of the original furniture of the mind. But the real difficulty lies in finding (apart from morals) any beliefs of which this universality can be predicated, and assuredly the immortality of the soul is not one of them. The mind of man at its lowest seems incapable of grasping the idea, and the

mind of man at its highest has striven to emancipate itself from it altogether. The evidence for this statement lies within the reach of all, but I will just adduce three names whose very juxtaposition, by the sense of incongruous oddity stirred up, may make their joint testimony the more important. I mean Moses, Buddha, and Julius Cæsar, all of whom, though widely separated in time, race, and character, representing absolutely different types of human nature, approaching the subject from widely different points of view, do, nevertheless, agree in this, that the consciousness of immortality formed no part of the furniture of their minds.

Moses lived one of the most exalted lives, whether regarded from the religious or political side, that has ever been lived on earth, and yet, as is well known, there is not a shadow of a trace to prove that he was moved by the hope of a reward after death, or that the idea of existence after death was ever consciously presented to his mind. He may be, on the whole, claimed by modern science (the miraculous element being by it excluded) as an example of those who perform the greatest practical duties, and are content to stand before the mystery of the Unknowable without inquiry and without alarm, so far as the doctrine of man's immortality is concerned. Here is another of those strange links that unite the earliest thinker and legislator with so much of the spirit of modern thought and law. Buddha, on the contrary (or his disciples, if it be true that his original teaching is lost to us), cannot be quoted as one who did not realize the possibility of life after death, nor is any scheme of philosophy that is practically Pantheistic inconsistent with immortality, if we limit the word to the bare idea of existing somehow after death. But I rather quote him as one of those who show that the very consciousness of undying personal life, the existence of a self-reflecting ego, which gives all its shape and force to the desire for life after death, may come to be regarded as a positive evil, and painless extinction be maintained as the ultimate hope and destiny of man. And the case of Julius Cæsar is, in some respects, stronger still. He is one of the world's crowning intellects, and he lived at a time when men such as he were the heirs of all the ages, the possessors of the treasures of thought in which, for generations past, the greatest men had elaborated doctrines concerning religion, duty, and life. And he represents the views of those whom the truest voice of science now repudiates as running into unscientific extremes. With him non-existence after death was a matter of practical belief. It colored his opinions upon politics, as really as Cromwell's religion affected his. He spoke against the infliction of the penalty of death upon the conspirators in Catiline's case, because death was a refuge from sorrows, because it solved all mortal miseries and left place for neither care nor joy. And Cato expressly applauded his sentiments, though with a touch of reaction from popular theology, which sounds strangely modern. To this, then, all the original

intuitions of the human mind, all the glowing aspirations enshrined in Greek poetry, legend, and art, all the natural theology contained in the works of Socrates and Plato, had come at last. Will any reasonable man affirm that an age, which breathes the very air of materialism, and whose children suck in the notions of changeless law with their mother's milk, will arrive at any thing better if it has no facts upon which to rely as proofs that its hopes are not unfounded? And how can that be called a truth of human nature, or be allowed to exercise a real influence upon men's minds, which is capable of being either entirely suppressed, or earnestly striven against, or contemptuously rejected?

3. The remaining two arguments need not detain us long; indeed, I should not have mentioned them, were it not that very eminent divines have based the belief in immortality upon the existence of God or the necessities of man. Let it once be granted that we are the creatures of a personal, loving, and sustaining God, concerning whom it is possible to form adequate conceptions, and then doubts as to our immortality would be vain indeed. But the rejoinder from the scientific view is plain enough. This, it would be said, is a mere *obscurum per obscurius*. The belief in God is simply the working of the human mind striving to account for the beginning of its own existence, exactly as the belief in immortality is the result of the attempt to think about the end thereof. If the definition of God be a stream or tendency of things that we cannot otherwise account for, then it will not help us to a belief in immortality. It is surprising indeed to see how the plain conditions of the case are evaded by enthusiastic controversialists; and I am almost ashamed of being obliged to make statements that have an inevitable air of being the baldest truisms.

4. The idea that immortality is essential to the moral development of man, and that therefore it is demonstrably true, seems to receive some little countenance from Prof. Max Muller in the close of his article on Buddhism, in which he thinks it improbable that—

“The reformer of India, the teacher of so perfect a code of morality, . . . should have thrown away one of the most powerful weapons in the hands of every religious teacher, the belief in a future life, and should not have seen that, if the life was sooner or later to end in nothing, it was hardly worth the trouble which he took himself, or the sacrifices which he imposed upon his disciples.”

The true bearing, in all its immense importance, of man's morality upon his belief in immortality will have to be considered hereafter; but, when used as a demonstration, it is at once seen to belong to the class of arguments from final causes which science resolutely rejects. A much more fatal answer, however, is found in a simple appeal to history, from which it will be found that, in Mr. Froude's words, no doctrine whatever, even of immortality, has a mere “mechanical

effect" upon men's hearts and consciences, and that noble lives may be lived and exalted characters formed by those who are brave enough to disregard it. Nay, what is worse, immortality may be a powerful weapon for evil as for good, if it chime in with a perverted nature. The Pharaoh before whom Moses stood believed it, and we know with what results. Only that, once more will science retort, which can be proved to be true upon sufficient evidence, can be positively known to be useful.

To sum up, then, what has been said, we have seen that, however strong may be the wishes of man for immortality, however ennobling to his nature and true to his instincts the belief in it may be, there is nothing in natural religion to answer the demands of modern thought for actual proof, and nothing therefore to impugn the wisdom or refute the morality of that class of persons, representing, as they do, a growing tendency in the human mind, who take refuge in a suspense of thought and judgment upon matters which they declare are too high for them. Occasionally we may suspect that the garb of human weakness does but conceal the workings of human pride, never perhaps so subtle and so sweet as when human nature meekly resolves to be contented with its own imperfections, and to bow down before its own frailty; but denunciations of moral turpitude only harden the hearts of men who ask for the bread of evidence and receive stones in the shape of insults.

We turn next to consider the effects of modern thought upon the evidence for immortality derived from Revelation. And here the difficulty of obtaining assent to what seem to me obvious truths will be transferred from the advocates of religion to those of science. Nevertheless, I maintain an invincible conviction that it is possible to state the terms of debate in propositions which commend themselves to candid minds, and which do not, as I have said, pretend to solve the controversy, but merely to define its conditions.

Now, the first proposition is: That the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, if assumed to be true, does present actual scientific evidence for immortality. An illustration will make my meaning clear. Whether or not life can be evolved from non-living matter is a subject of debate; but it is admitted on all hands that, if a single living creature can be produced under conditions that exclude the presence of living germs, then the controversy is settled, and therefore Dr. Bastian sets himself to work with the necessary apparatus to prove his case. So, in the same way, if any man known to be dead and buried did rise again (as for the moment is assumed to be the case), and did think and act and speak in His own proper personality, then immortality (in the scientific sense of the word) is thereby proved. Accordingly, those who wish to prove their case, betake themselves to history for the required evidence, which they may or may not find, but which, such as it is, must be allowed to go to the jury. Science may refuse to listen

to arguments for facts derived from men's hopes and beliefs; it ceases to be science if it refuses to listen to arguments which profess to rely upon facts also. Were there to happen now an event purporting to resemble the Resurrection, it would be necessary to examine the evidence exactly as men are commissioned to investigate any unusual occurrence, say, for instance, the supposed discovery of fertile land at the North Pole. All this is plain enough, and leads to no very important conclusions, but it is, nevertheless, necessary that it should be stated clearly, and distinctly apprehended.

Two other propositions may also be laid down as to the nature of the evidence for the Resurrection, both of them once more sufficiently obvious, but still not without their value in leading to a fair and reasonable estimation of the exact state of the case, and tending also, as we shall see presently, in one direction. It may be taken for granted, in the first place, that nothing can be alleged against the moral character of the witnesses, or against the morality which accompanied and was founded upon the preaching of the Resurrection. Mistaken they may have been, but not dishonest; enthusiasts, but not impostors. Furthermore, the deeper insight into character, which is one of the results of the modern critical spirit, enables us to see that they numbered among their ranks men of singular gifts, both moral and intellectual, who combined in a wonderful degree the faculty of receiving what was, or what they thought to be, a miraculous revelation, and the power of setting it forth in a sober and measured manner. All this is candidly admitted by the best representatives of modern thought.

Again, it may safely be asserted that, judged by the critical standards of historical science, the evidence is abundantly sufficient to prove any event not claiming to be miraculous. Let us suppose such an event as an extraordinary escape from prison related in the same way, though I admit that it requires a considerable intellectual *tour de force* to eliminate, even in imagination, the supernatural from the narrative. It is not going too far to say that no real question as to its truth would in that case ever be raised at the bar of history, even though a powerful party were interested in maintaining the contrary. A strictly scientific investigation, for instance, has brought out in our own days the absolute accuracy and consequent evidential value of the account of St. Paul's voyage to Malta. On the whole, then, we may conclude that the testimony is really evidence in the case, that it proceeds from honest and capable men, and that no one, *apart from the existence of the supernatural element*, would care to deny its truthfulness, except upon grounds that would turn all history into a mass of fables and confusion.

There remains, then, the old argument, that it is more easy to believe the witnesses to be mistaken than the fact itself to be true, and that we cannot believe a miracle unless it be more miraculous to

disbelieve it. To this argument I avow my deliberate conviction, after the best thought I can give the subject, that no answer can be given regarded from a merely intellectual point of view, and subject to the conditions which modern thought not only prescribes, but is strong enough to enforce. It goes by the name of Hume, because he was the first to formulate it, but it is not so much an argument as a simple statement of common experience. All men who, from the days of St. Thomas, have disbelieved in miracles, have done so practically upon this ground. And to the "doubting" Apostle may be safely attributed the first use of the now famous formula, "It is much more likely that you, my friends, should be mistaken than that He should have risen." Now, to such a state of mind, what answer short of another miracle could be given then, or can be given now? True, you may point out the moral defects in the mind of Thomas which led him to disbelieve, but these are immediately counterbalanced by a reference to the intellectual defects of Mary Magdalene, which prompted her to accept the miracle. There is no real room for weighing the evidence on both sides, and pronouncing for that which has the greatest probability, when your opponent, by a simple assertion, reduces all the evidence on one side to zero. Once more let me ask Christian apologists to realize this, and having realized it, no matter at what cost to the fears and prejudices of theology, let us then proceed the more calmly to examine what it precisely means and to what conclusions it leads us.

We observe, first, that this argument is derived not from the first of the two ways in which, as we saw, science influences belief, namely, by altering the nature of the evidence required, but from the second, namely, by predisposing the minds of men against belief upon any attainable evidence whatever. We have seen that the evidence is that of honest men, that it is scientifically to the point, and sufficient to prove ordinary historical events. More than this cannot be demanded in the case of events which do not come under law or personal observation. But the minds of men are so predisposed by their experience of unchanging order to reject the miraculous, that, first, they demand more and more clear evidence than in other cases; and, secondly, they have recourse at once to the many considerations which weaken the force of evidence for things supernatural, and account for men's mistakes without impugning their veracity. Any one who reads Hume's essay will be struck at once with the, so to speak, subjectivity of the argument. Upon this very point he says, "When any one tells me he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider *within myself*," etc., etc.. We ask then, at once, "To whom is it more likely that evidence of a miracle should be false than that the miracle should be true?" and the answer must of course be, "Those who, rightly or wrongly, are predisposed in that direction, by their experience of a changeless law, growing ever wider and more

comprehensive." Nor is Paley's answer, which assumes the existence of God, at all available as against Hume, who, in his next section, puts into the mouth of an imaginary Epicurus all the arguments against such a belief. But it is a most just and reasonable remark that this predisposition does not exist in the case of those who—again rightly or wrongly—are wishing to know God and hoping to live after death. It is at this point that natural and revealed religion, weak when divided, becomes strong by combination. The Resurrection would certainly never be believed if it did not fall like a spark upon a mass of wishes and aspirations which are immediately kindled into life. Granted a man (and this is no supposition, but a fact), whose whole nature craves not to die, and whose mind is occupied by the standing miracle of its own immortality, and then the Resurrection, so far from being improbable, will be the very thing which gives life to his hopes. The more he sees that natural religion cannot give him facts as proofs, the more he will welcome Revelation which does, just because it will satisfy the rational desire which science is creating in the human mind. And just as there is no answer to Hume's argument for one predisposed as Hume was, so is there none to one predisposed as this supposed (but very actual) man is. The one is as incapable of disbelief as the other of assent. Hume and Paley do not really grapple with each other, but move in parallel lines that never meet. As Hume himself said of Berkeley, "His arguments admit of no answer and produce no conviction," so might each of the two say of the other. On the one hand, we have all the results of human experience, a severe standard of intellectual virtue, a morality which confines itself to its duties toward humanity, and the power of being able not to think about ultimate incomprehensibilities. On the other hand, we have intense longings after the infinite, which science, admitting, as it does, the existence of the Unknowable, cannot possibly deny to be legitimate in those who feel them sincerely; also a body of evidence, sufficient to prove ordinary events, for a fact that gives certainty and power to all these longings; a morality, which has reference to a Supreme Judge, and an absolute incapacity for life and duty until some sort of conclusion has been arrived at concerning the mysteries of our being and destiny. Both of these represent tendencies of human nature with which the world could at this stage very badly dispense; both may have their use and their justification; either may be true, but *both* cannot, for the Resurrection either did or did not happen.

From this account of things some very important considerations follow, a few of which I will endeavor to sum up in three heads. The scientific value of Revelation as a necessity, if there is to be any vital and practical religion at all, will, I hope, have been sufficiently indicated already:

1. The lines of a long and, perhaps, never-ending conflict between

the spirit of Religion and what, for want of a better word, I will call the spirit of Rationalism, are here defined. Neither of the two being able by mere argument to convince the other, they must rely upon gradually leavening the minds of men with prepossessions in the direction which each respectively favors. The time may come when Rationalism will have so far prevailed that a belief in the miraculous will have disappeared; the time may also come when the Christian Revelation, historically accepted, will everywhere be adopted as God's account to man of ultimate incomprehensibilities. Surely, no man who has ever fairly examined his own consciousness can deny that elements leading to either of these two conclusions exist within his own mind. He must be a very hardened believer to whom the doubt, "Is the miraculous really possible?" never suggested itself. And he must in turn be a very unscientific Rationalist who has never caught himself wondering whether, after all, the Resurrection did not take place. Nor, so far as we may at this epoch discern the probable direction of the contest, is it possible to estimate very accurately the influence which science will exercise upon it. On the one hand, it will certainly bring within the mental grasp of common men that view of law and causation which, in Hume's time, was confined to philosophers and their followers, and was attained rather by intellectual conceptions than by such common experiences of every-day life and thought as we have at present. On the other hand, it will purge religion of its more monstrous dogmas, and further, by calling attention to the necessity of proving fact by fact, and again, by clearing up the laws of evidence, will tend to deepen in the minds of religious people the value and meaning of Revelation; while, at the same time, by its frank admission of hopeless ignorance, it will concede to faith a place in the realm of fact. Every man will have his own views as to the issue of the conflict: for the present it is sufficient for him, if he can be fully satisfied in his own mind.

2. The predisposition in men's minds in favor, whether of Religion or Rationalism, will be created and sustained solely by moral means. This is the conclusion toward which I have been steadily working from the beginning of this paper to the end of it. The intellect of both Christian and Rationalist will have its part to play; but that part will consist in presenting, teaching, and enforcing each its own morality upon the minds of men. I need not say that I use the word morality as expressing in the widest sense all that is proper for and worthy of humanity, and not merely in the narrower sense of individual goodness. Rationalism will approach mankind rather upon the side of the virtues of the intellect. It will uphold the need of caution in our assent, the duty of absolute conviction, the self-sufficiency of men, the beauty of law, the glory of working for posterity, and the true humility of being content to be ignorant where knowledge is impossible. Religion will appeal to man's hopes and wishes recorded

in Nature and in history, to his yearnings for affection, to his sense of sin, to his passion for life and duty, which death cuts short. And that one of the two which is truest to humanity, which lays down the best code of duty, and creates the strongest capacity for accomplishing it, will, in the long-run, prevail; a conclusion which science, so far as it believes in man, and religion, so far as it believes in God, must adopt. Here, once more, it is well nigh impossible to discern the immediate direction of the conflict, whatever may be our views as to its ultimate decision. Science is almost creating a new class of virtues; it is laying its finger with unerring accuracy upon the faults of the old morality; it is calling into existence a passion for intellectual truth. But then Religion has always given the strongest proofs of her vitality by her power of assimilating (however slowly) new truths, and of rejecting (alas! how tardily) old falsehoods, at the demands of reason and discovery. A religious man can always say that Christians, and not Christianity, are responsible for what goes amiss. It is because religious practice never has been, and is at this moment almost less than ever, up to the standard of what religious theory exacts, that we may have confidence in gradual improvement and advance, until that standard, toward the formation of which science will have largely contributed, be attained.

3. Closely connected with the above, follows the proposition that all attempts on the part of religion to confute the "skeptic" by purely intellectual methods are worse than useless. There is no intellectual short cut to the Christian faith; it must be built up in the minds of men by setting forth a morality that satisfies their nature, consecrates humanity, and establishes society. It is not because men love the truth, but because they hate their enemies, that in things religious they desire to have what they can call an overwhelming preponderance of argument on their side of the question, the possession of which enables them to treat their opponents as knaves or fools or both. Religion may have been the first to set this pernicious example, but, judging from the tone of much modern writing, Rationalism has somewhat bettered her instructions. No doubt it is a tempting thing to mount a big pulpit, and then and there, with much intellectual pomp, to slay the absent infidel—absent no less from the preacher's argument than from his audience. Delightful it may be, but all the more dangerous, because it plunges men at once into that error, so hateful to modern thought, of affirming that intellectual mistakes are moral delinquencies. No one, least of all science, denies that men are responsible for the consequences of their belief, provided these consequences are limited to such as are capable of being recognized and foreseen, and are not extended to comprehend endless perdition in a future state—an idea which is supposed, rightly or wrongly, to lurk beneath the preacher's logical utterances, and which religion has done next to nothing to disavow. And so we come to this conclusion: to build up by precept

and example a sound and sufficient morality; to share in all the hopes and aspirations of humanity; to be foremost in practical reforms; to find what the instincts of mankind blindly search for by reference to the character of God finally revealed in Christ, and to the hope of immortality which His Resurrection brought to light; to endeavor to clear religion from the reproach of credulity, narrowness, timidity, and bitter sectarian zeal; these are, as our Master Himself assured us, the only means of engendering in the hearts of men that moral quality which we call Faith: for "HE THAT IS OF THE TRUTH HEARETH MY VOICE."

In a future paper I hope to show, by reference to the facts of man's nature, how this faith in immortality is being, and is to be, so far wrought into his mind as to form a predisposition toward a belief in the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection of Christ as a proof of that which he cannot help but desire to believe.—*Contemporary Review.*



THE SOURCE OF LABOR.

SCIENCE has taught us that the processes going on around us are **S** but changes, not annihilations and creations. With the eye of knowledge, we see the candle slowly turning into invisible gases, nor doubt for an instant that the matter of which the candle was composed is still existing, ready to reappear in other forms. But this fact is true not only of matter itself, but also of all the influences that work on matter. We wind up the spring of a clock, and, for a whole week, the labor thus stored up is slowly expended in keeping the clock going. Or, again, we spend five minutes of hard labor in raising the hammer of a pile-driver, which, in its fall, exerts all that accumulated labor in a single instant. In these instances, we easily see that we store up labor. Now, if we put a dozen sovereigns in a purse, and none of them be lost, we can take a dozen sovereigns out again. So in labor, if no labor be lost, as science asserts—for the inertia of matter, its very deadness, so to speak, which renders it incapable of spontaneously producing work, also prevents its destroying work when involved in it—we should be able to obtain back without deduction all our invested labor when we please.

Imagine a mountain-stream turning an overshot wheel. It thus falls from a higher to a lower level. A certain amount of labor would be required to raise the water from the lower level to the higher; just this amount of labor the water gives out in its fall, and invests, as it were, in the wheel. If, however, when arrived at the lower level, the water were to demand of the wheel to be pumped up again, the slightest trial would show that it would ask more than it could obtain,