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Shall we Live again?

Light
FROM MODERN SCIENCE
AND PHILOSOPHY

BY
JOHN A. O'BRIEN, Ph.D., LL.D.



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JOHN A. O'BRIEN, PH.D., LL.D.

The University of Notre Dame

- I. THE SOUL: WHAT IS IT?
- II. IS THE WILL FREE?
- III. SHALL WE LIVE AGAIN?

If a man die, shall he live again? Job xiv. 14.

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SHALL WE LIVE AGAIN?

*"It must be so—Plato, thou reason'st well!
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself and startles at destruction?
'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man."*

—Addison, *Cato*, Act. V, sc. 1.

OLD as the race is the question of life after death. "If a man die," asked Job of old, "shall he live again?" This is the one question which confronts every man born into the world. It is not merely of speculative interest. It is of deep practical concern for all mankind. Charged with vital human interest, and laden with consequences which jut into eternity, it looms up like the Sphinx of Thebes posing to every wayfarer a question fraught with life or death. Its importance can scarcely be exaggerated. Along with the existence of God and the freedom of the will,¹ it constitutes the third in the trinity of problems which lie at the heart of philosophy.

While a few may affect indifference as to whether or not they survive, the overwhelming majority finds no inclination to strike that pose. They are unable to see in such an attitude any surcease from the restless yearning for continued existence, which throbs like a fever in their veins. Neither can they work out a reasoned scheme of things, nor a moral order with adequate motivation, until they have answered the question about a life beyond the grave. And they are right. With this question remaining unanswered, man goes through life as in a daze, uncertain alike as to his origin and his destiny. Life becomes a jig-saw puzzle with the essential parts missing, "a tale, told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

¹ Cf. the author's *Is the Will Free?* The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York 19, N. Y. 15c.

It is well at the outset to clear up some misconceptions which have clustered around this subject and which have tended to create disaffection. Persons are sometimes heard to remark that they are not interested in the prospect of thrumming a harp all day before a throne, or of flitting on celestial wings from one hymn meeting to another. Such conceptions are of a piece with those which picture heaven as having pearly gates and streets of gold, and God as an elderly gentleman forever seated on a throne far off in the cobwebbed attic of the sky.

It should be needless to point out that such conceptions, while forming the imagery for children's stories, are entertained by no serious theistic thinkers. They are puerile and should have no place in an adult's thinking. Yet not infrequently have we found persons who thought they were arguing against immortality when in reality they were only arguing against caricatures of it. We shall present toward the end of the discussion conceptions of supernal felicity not incommensurate with the intellect and the will of man.

The Nature of the Evidence

Some have contended that the question cannot be answered with definiteness and certainty because of the lack of sufficient evidence, that the most that can be achieved is a degree of probability of survival. When such a conclusion is formed, it is traceable in our judgment to two chief causes.

First, such writers fail to recognize that every branch of learning has a method of demonstration that reflects the character of its own subject matter and achieves validity within its own field. Thus truths of physics are established by a process of physical demonstration, those of mathematics by mathematical reasoning. Truths of philosophy are established by philosophical induction; those of aesthetics by aesthetic evidence and reasoning. How would you prove that *The Last Judgment* by Michelangelo is a greater painting than the amateurish water-color daubs of Adolph Hitler? Certainly you cannot provide a physical or mathematical proof. You can prove it, however, by applying the canons of art, the principles of aesthetics. And you can prove it to the hilt.

In like manner the immortality of the soul, being a question of philosophy, is established by philosophical evidence and reasoning. Not being susceptible of demonstration by the methods of physics or of mathematics, which play so large a role in the estab-

lishment of the facts of modern science, some have concluded that the immortality of the soul does not admit of proof. This is erroneous. It admits of proof, and of conclusive proof, but not of the kind which they have in mind. The evidence is of a philosophic character, such as is used to establish the existence of God and the freedom of the will.

The second reason for the unsatisfactory and inconclusive results achieved by not a few writers is that they undertake to treat immortality as a detached and isolated theme, torn out of its proper setting. They fail to perceive that human survival is a corollary of two antecedent facts, namely, the spirituality of the soul and the rational organization of the universe, with God as its author and guarantor. From these two great primary truths, the persistence of the human personality, at least for some time after the disintegration of the body follows with irresistible necessity. Whereas if it be treated independently of these two antecedent facts, the treatment is likely to be sentimental, to abound in wishful thinking, and can scarcely fail to be inconclusive. For it is a treatment in which the two chief fountainheads of evidence have been either ignored or tapped only in an incidental manner.

The Immaterial Cannot Disintegrate

We have already demonstrated that the human soul is a substantial being, that it is simple or indivisible, that it is immaterial, spiritual and not *intrinsically* dependent upon the body for its activity or existence.² By death is meant the disintegration of part from part. But the human soul, being simple and immaterial, has no parts and is therefore incapable *per se* of such dissolution. Moreover, since it is spiritual, and does not intrinsically depend upon the body for its existence, it is therefore exempt from corruption *per accidens*. Consequently the human soul is incapable of corruption in either of these ways. Its incorruptibility is thus seen to be a corollary of its immateriality.

The mind, as we have shown, is as distinct from the brain as a sculptor is from his hammer and chisel. If the mind were merely an aspect of the nervous system, a function of the brain, it would not enjoy this immunity from the corruption to which the physical organism is subject. In establishing with great care the immateriality of the soul and its intrinsic independence of the bodily

² Cf. the author's *The Soul: What Is It?* The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York 19, N. Y. 15c.

organism, we not only extracted the fangs from cerebralistic materialism but we also established the intrinsic incorruptibility of the soul and hence its immunity to disintegration or death. Far from being of a sentimental or wishful nature, the evidence and the reasoning by which we demonstrated these facts were of a rigorously philosophical character, which will carry conviction to any open mind.

The only way in which the human soul could cease then would be through annihilation, by itself, or by any created thing, or by God. By annihilation we mean the reduction of something to nothing. But neither the human soul, nor any other created thing, is capable of causing any being to disappear completely. The most that human power can do is to modify. Annihilation is possible only to God, through the withdrawal of His conserving power. Annihilation and creation are correlative terms, and both necessitate the action of divine omnipotence.

Now, not only is there no reason to believe that God would destroy the work of His hands, but there is every reason to believe that He will sustain in existence that part of creation which most resembles Himself, the soul of man. We know that even our corruptible body does not perish completely. Are we to believe that God, having created the soul of an incorruptible nature, would cause it to perish more completely and utterly than the corruptible body which it animates? Well does Edward Young ask:

“Can it be?
Matter immortal? and shall spirit die?
Above the nobler, shall less noble rise?
Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,
No resurrection know? Shall man alone,
Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,
Less privileged than grain on which he feeds?”³

This dictate of our rational nature is confirmed by the revelation of Christ, as we shall see in detail later, that the soul of man is destined for everlasting life, and that God does not contradict the work of His hands. To the question of Job, “If a man die, shall he live again?” we answer: “Yes, for the soul of man is by its nature, immaterial, incorruptible, incapable of disintegration, can be annihilated neither by itself nor by any created power, and

³ *Night Thoughts*, p. 114.

will not be annihilated by its Creator." Here then is a purely rational, philosophic answer to a philosophic question.

Universal Belief In Immortality

We come now to a consideration of a less technical character. While simple, it is none the less weighty and impressive.

The belief in a future life is among the most universal beliefs of mankind. It ranks alongside the belief in a Supreme Being. It has been found among tribes and races of every degree of civilization or barbarism in every part of the world. "The notion of the survival of the spirit after death in some form, whether clear or vague," says Henry Frank, "has ever existed in the human mind from the most primitive times to the present hour."⁴ Referring to this belief in the immortality of the soul, Plutarch observes: "This belief which we hold, is so old that we cannot trace its author or its origin, and it dates back to the most remote antiquity."⁵

Similar is the testimony of Sir James G. Frazer: "The question whether our conscious personality survives after death has been answered by almost all races of men in the affirmative. On this point skeptical or agnostic peoples are nearly, if not wholly unknown. . . ."⁶ Later in that same work, Frazer points out how impressive is that widespread belief, saying: "It is impossible not to be struck by the strength, and perhaps we may say the universality, of the natural belief in immortality among the savage races of mankind. With them a life after death is not a matter of speculation and conjecture, of hope and fear; it is a practical certainty which the individual as little dreams of doubting as he doubts the reality of his conscious existence."⁷

While a few have questioned the existence of such a belief in Buddhism, Frazer, Max Müller, Rhys David, and other careful investigators are unanimous in affirming its "belief in the existence of the human soul after death."⁸ In fact, Metchnikoff's painstaking study caused him to conclude that Buddhism "is so persuaded of survival after death as being the rule, that it grants only

⁴ *Modern Light on Immortality*, p. 35.

⁵ *De Consol. ad Appolonium*.

⁶ *The Belief in Immortality*, vol. I, p. 33.

⁷ *Ibid*, vol. I, p. 468.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 26.

to rare and elect souls the privilege of at length laying down the burden of continuous life.”⁹

Confucius mirrors the belief of the Chinese in the indestructible character of the human soul. “Death,” he says, “is not destruction properly so-called, but a decomposition which resolves each substance into its natural state. The intellectual substance again ascends to heaven from which it came, the animal spirit, *khi*, unites with the aerial fluid, and the terrestrial and aqueous substances turn once more to earth and water.”¹⁰

At one time the Jews were behind the other nations in the distinctness of their belief in personal immortality. This seems to have been traceable to the intensity of their conviction that obedience to Jehovah’s commands would bring them national victory and agricultural prosperity. The bitter experiences of the exile shattered this illusion and later we find some of the noblest proclamations of a future life coming from the lips of Jewish sages.

Plato Champions Immortality

The Greeks appear to have been among the first to attempt a systematic philosophical treatment of immortality. While belief in a future life is evident in Homer, the conception of immortality is more distinct and also more spiritual in Pindar. It is, however, at the hands of Plato that the doctrine attained its most elaborate philosophical exposition and defense. He treats it in virtually all his writings but especially in *Phaedo*. Not less than eight different lines of evidence are adduced to establish the deathless character of the human soul. “Man,” he taught, “consists of soul and body. The soul alone constitutes the self to which the body is only externally appended. So conceived the immortality of the soul is beyond all doubt, for the essence of life lies beyond all temporary change.”¹¹

Among the Romans, Seneca is emphatic in proclaiming a life beyond the grave. “As the mother’s womb,” he observes, “holds us for ten months, making us ready, not for the womb itself, but for life, just so, through our lives, we are making ourselves ready for another birth. . . . Therefore look forward without fear to that appointed hour—the last hour of the body, but not of the soul. . . .

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

¹⁰ *Modern Light on Immortality*, p. 37.

¹¹ *We Believe in Immortality*, edited by S. Strong, p. 127.

That day, which you fear as being the end of all things, is the birthday of your eternity." ¹² Equally explicit is Ovid, who declares: "In my better part I shall be raised to immortality above the lofty stars." ¹³ So likewise Horace affirms:

"I shall not wholle die; large residue
Shall 'scape the queen of death." ¹⁴

Viewing with these two in proclaiming the immortal character of the human soul is Cicero. "Whatever that may be," he asserts, "which feels, which has knowledge, which wills, which has the power of growth, it is celestial and divine, and for that reason it must of necessity be eternal." ¹⁵ As modern and up-to-date as today's newspaper is the answer he gives to those people to whom "the immortality of the soul seems incredible because they cannot conceive what kind of a thing the soul can be when freed from the body."

To such persons, he replies: "Just as if they could really form a correct idea as to what kind of a thing it is even while in the body; what its form, size, and location are. . . . This should be pondered by those who say that they are unable to conceive a soul without a body; they will then see whether they can conceive it when it is in the body. As for myself, when I reflect on the nature of the soul, it seems to me by far more difficult and obscure to determine its character while it is in the body, a strange domicile, than to imagine what it is when it leaves it, and has arrived in the empyreal regions, in its own and proper home." ¹⁶

With the birth of the Christian religion, the doctrine of immortality assumed a new position in the world. It became the basis of the whole scheme of the Christian faith. The mists and the haze in which it had been enshrouded for both philosopher and peasant were removed and the doctrine was set forth in clear and simple terms. Christianity's emphasis on the priceless value and the everlasting character of the human soul was an important factor in establishing the equality of men and the liberation of the slave. The doctrine received its complete philosophical elaboration from St. Thomas.

¹² *Epistulae ad Lucilium*, Epis. c 11, sec. 23.

¹³ *Metamorphoses*, Bk. XV, l. 875.

¹⁴ *Odes*, Bk. III, ode 30, l. 6.

¹⁵ *Tusculanarum Disputationum*, Bk. I, ch. 27, sec. 66.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, ch. 22.

The Significance of This Belief

The universal character of this belief and its persistence through the ages is truly striking. "We may safely say," observes John Fiske, "that for much more than one hundred thousand years, mankind has regarded itself as personally interested in two worlds."¹⁷ For a belief so universal and persistent, there must surely be a foundation in fact. True, many crudities are to be found in the conceptions of savages concerning the life beyond, just as there are to this day crudities in their conceptions of the sun and the heavenly planets. But who would expect to find among rude and savage peoples the same type of concepts as those obtaining among cultured and civilized nations? What is truly remarkable is that, in spite of all the diversity of concept, the same underlying belief in a future life is always present.

The universality of this belief raises the question: What is its origin? Thus Frazer after raising the question, suggests an answer: "What then is the kind of experience from which the theory of human immortality is deduced? Is it our experience of the operations of our minds? or is it our experience of external nature? As a matter of historical fact—and you will remember that I am treating the question purely from the historical standpoint—men seem to have inferred the persistence of their personality after death, both from the one kind of experience and from the other, that is, both from the phenomena of their inner life and from the phenomena of what we call the external world."¹⁸

Since this belief is based upon both types of phenomena, it has a firmer basis than beliefs based solely on the observation of external phenomena—beliefs which could not be checked by comparison with the facts and experiences of man's inner life. Judgments concerning the apparent movement of the sun around the earth and other matters of natural science were on a different basis. Here peoples were without the scientific instruments necessary to arrive at the facts. They were moreover questions of a purely speculative nature, having no direct and immediate bearing on the life or destiny of mankind. Into such matters errors may creep all too easily. This is true not only among primitive peoples but among the civilized as well. But the question of immortality profoundly affects every human being, and like the existence of God, rests upon evidence drawn from the moral order,

¹⁷ *We Believe in Immortality*, S. Strong, p. 127.

¹⁸ *The Belief in Immortality*, vol. I, p. 468.

the rational organization of the world, and from a scrutiny of the activities of the human mind with its sense of enduring personal identity amid the constant flux of ideas and experiences.

It is truly remarkable that whilst societies, in passing from rude primitive conditions to civilization and culture, slough off many of their previous conceptions, the belief in immortality has not weakened but has grown in strength and in firmness. It would seem to be an apprehension of the human mind similar to the perception of the existence of a supreme being.

Thus Dr. J. D. Quackenbos rightly observes: "A psychological proof of *post mortem* existence has been found in the fact that immortality is an apprehension of human reason."¹⁹ The argument from the universality of belief in a future life is weighty and convincing. To say that all mankind in all ages and stages of civilization has been deceived is to impugn the validity of the human mind to distinguish truth from falsehood. Its scientific value is frankly acknowledged by Professor Gase-Des Fosse, who says: "If the name of science is given especially to all research based on facts, it can be said that this argument in favor of the immortality of the soul has a scientific value, as all its strength lies in establishing a fact which is universally human."²⁰

The Desire For Happiness

There is a deep-rooted and universal longing in mankind for happiness without alloy. So deeply implanted in the heart of man is this craving that he is compelled by his very nature to seek happiness. We frankly admit that this is one of the few matters in which the will is not free. The mind and the will and the heart of man stretch out eager fingers seeking to grasp happiness. This craving for happiness is not therefore an expression merely of man's sensual appetite but of his intellect and will as well. The desire for perfect beatitude, the striving for the possession of the infinite good, are not the result of a blind instinct but of an intelligent yearning. They are, in fact, an authentic expression of the rational nature of man, of that element which makes him specifically human.

It is peculiar to no man, but common to all mankind. Far from suppressing such desire, the development of the mental and moral faculties render more acute than ever that yearning

¹⁹ *Body and Spirit*, p. 262.

²⁰ *The Proofs of Life After Death*, compiled and edited by R. J. Thompson, p. 206.

for the possession of the infinite good which alone can still the hungers in the restless heart of man. The more men seek to conform to the loftiest ideals of virtue, the less satisfied they become with the pleasures which do not minister to the deepest yearnings of their minds and souls. They want full and perfect happiness, without admixture of pain, transiency, or uncertainty.

Such is our major premise. It expresses a truth which no man, who looks deeply into his own heart or into the hearts of others, can really doubt.

Our minor premise asserts that such happiness cannot be found in this life. Our own experience, the testimony of our fellows, and the history of the human race show clearly that man's yearning for unalloyed happiness can never be satisfied in this vale of tears. Health, strength, beauty, riches, popularity, intellectual talents fall to the lot of few. But even to those few, they bring no exemption from the worries and trials which beset the footsteps of all mortals. Indeed, these possessions not infrequently increase the nervous tensions and make the head rest less lightly on the pillow.

With half of the world rising up periodically to destroy the other half, with blood, sweat and tears the order of the day for hundreds of millions, with the fear of ever bigger and better wars to plague our tomorrow, it is evident that anything like perfect happiness on this war-torn planet is beyond the wildest dreams of man. Fortunate are the mortals who manage to keep half a step in front of disaster biting ever at their heels. Hence we are obliged to postulate a future life wherein man's universal and necessary yearning for happiness will find its fulfillment.

To deny this is to predicate both folly and cruelty on the part of God. Such a denial would mean a head-on collision with the great principle formulated by Aristotle: "*Nature does nothing in vain.*" Sir Thomas Browne characterized this as "the only indisputable axiom in philosophy."²¹ Botanists, physiologists, and other searchers into nature have pointed out its detailed exemplification in their respective fields. The hunger for food, the thirst for water, the craving of the lungs for air, the yearning for sleep, the desire for companionship, all find their fulfillment in the world of reality.

Would it not be strange indeed if the desire for perfect happiness, the noblest of all the cravings that stir within the human breast, were planted in man only to mock and taunt him with

²¹ *Religio Medici*, Ph. i., Sec. 15.

its unattainability? Would it not be passing strange if this were the one blind spot in the cosmic eye, where vision is most imperative? Are we to believe that this region of man's highest hopes and deepest yearnings is the one place where Nature *does* something in vain? "We scale the ladder of creation," observes Dr. R. Downey, "only to find it break at the topmost rung!"²² This is an impossible conclusion. It runs counter to the very structure and constitution of our minds, hearts and souls, counter to nature, and counter to God, our Creator and our loving Father. Therefore we are compelled to conclude that there must be a life beyond, where the deepest cravings of man's nature, so universal and so inextinguishable, will find their fulfillment in an unalloyed happiness that knows no ending.

The Rational Organization of the Universe

The existence of life beyond the grave follows as a necessary corollary of the rational organization of the universe. The guarantor of the reasonableness of creation is none other than God, Who is infinite justice and righteousness. Hence we may say that immortality follows as a direct and immediate consequence of the rational organization of the universe and indirectly and ultimately from the existence of an infinitely perfect God. He is the underwriter of the reasonableness of the cosmic scheme, the vindicator of the moral law written in the mind and the heart of man. The argument achieves its full cogency only when the appeal is carried to the supreme being, who is both the ultimate source and sanction of the moral order of the universe.

The reasoning runs as follows: God has written in our rational nature the moral law, commanding us to do right and to abstain from wrong. As an infinitely wise, just, and holy law-maker, He must have provided a perfect sanction for this law. But there is no such perfect sanction in this life. Therefore the soul must exist at least for some time after death.

We have already established, in our discussion of religion and morality, the necessity of sanctions to put teeth into the moral law.²³ It is sufficient to point out here that no law is worth the paper on which it is written, if it does not provide sanctions in the form of rewards and penalties to secure its enforcement. No leg-

²² *Personal Immortality*, p. 23.

²³ See the author's pamphlet, *Religion: Does It Matter?* The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York 19, N. Y. 15c.

islator who is in earnest about his law can allow it to be ignored with impunity. The failure to do so would indicate to young and old alike that the law is only a dead letter, which they can observe or violate as best suits their convenience and pleasure. God would not play the role of such an indifferent legislator. If He makes a law for man, He must attach to it a *proper sanction*.

The moral law, that good should be done and evil should be avoided, is universal among mankind. A study of the literatures, laws, and moral ideas of the nations of the world proves this abundantly. If such a law were without sufficient sanction, it would obviously be incomplete and inadequate, and consequently incompatible with the character of an infinitely wise and just lawmaker.

"The Bootlegger Grows Fat"

It is a matter of common observation that a sufficient sanction of the moral law is not found in this life. Virtue does not always receive its due reward nor vice its proper punishment. While honesty is ordinarily the most profitable policy, there are numerous instances where its observance yields but a meager dividend, and its violation, riches and pleasures. The widespread graft and corruption which honeycomb the politics of so many of our large cities is concrete evidence that vast numbers do not believe in the remunerativeness of uncompromising honesty under all circumstances.

All too often the bootlegger, the gambler and the grafter grow fat and rich, and bask in the luxuries and pleasures which money can buy, while the scrupulously honest man grows thin and poor, with his nose to the grindstone, as he wears himself out trying to keep the wolf from the door. Al Capone with his winter home in Florida, with its Oriental rugs, its gold door knobs, with his yachts, his thick beefsteaks, his carnival of sensual pleasures, is the symbol of the man who grows fat upon the returns of his brothels and his villainies. How many a Lazarus, reeling under the burden of providing the bare necessities for his family, must have looked wistfully at the sumptuous palace of this earthly Dives and hungered for a few scraps from his table groaning with delicacies garnered from far and near. No, a realistic view of the distribution of the good things of this earth, its pleasures and its luxuries, compels one to admit that they are not proportioned on the basis of virtue.

This is further confirmed by the fact that multitudes of vir-

tuous people spend long years of their life on beds of pain, from which the only escape is death. Others are handicapped by frightful deformities which rob them of the possibility of marriage and of establishing homes of their own. One has but to visit a home for crippled children or an institution for victims of incurable cancer to realize how hollow and empty is the adage: Virtue is its own reward. He realizes likewise how monstrously irrational is the cosmic scheme of things, if the flickering candle of life is forever extinguished in the damp darkness of the uncomprehending grave.

Father Damien of Molokai

Take Father Damien laboring among the lepers at Molokai. Giving up home and family in Belgium to spend himself in ministering to these outcasts of humanity on a lonely island in the south Pacific, he eventually contracts the dread disease and dies. His life is a long martyrdom, motivated by a quenchless love for God and unflagging devotion to the most neglected of His children. In an open grave the lepers place the body of the man whom they love more than life itself. He was their spiritual shepherd, their physician, their nurse, their carpenter, their defender, the man who laid down his life for them. Stand by that open grave and say:

“Well, there’s your six feet of earth. Soon the earth will close over you. The black silence of the grave will engulf you. The worms and the maggots will devour what the leprosy has left. You come to the same end as that of the villain, the knave, and the murderer. They come to it after trampling upon all the laws of God and man. You come to it over the *via dolorosa* of martyrdom for God and man. But the end, the goal, the reward is just the same.”

Who is there who would not cry out in protest against such monstrous injustice? Who would not rebel against such utter irrationality? Who would not proclaim that such a common denouement of virtue and vice brands the universe as a ghastly farce and life a tragic lie? Yes, we can go further and affirm that such an ending would constitute a denial of the wisdom and justice and holiness of God Himself and therefore of His very existence. Hence we are obliged to repudiate the monstrous conclusion that death is the end of all, the verdict meted out alike to sinner and to saint.

If there is a moral order in this world, as all mankind admits,

then there must be a recompense in proportion to one's deserts. Back of that moral order stands its guarantor and vindicator, God, Whose infinite justice equips it with adequate sanctions. Since these are not always applied in this life, there must be a life beyond, in which the gross and palpable inequities of the earthly scene will be rectified in a pattern of perfect justice. It is evident then that it is God Himself Who constitutes the unshakeable foundation and the ultimate basis for a future life.

A Demand of the Moral Order

The existence of such a divine being, who will ultimately reward me for doing my duty or punish me for neglecting it, is a matter of life and death to the practical reason. Without God, the bottom falls out. "The whole system of our belief," points out Prof. H. Sidgwick, "as to the intrinsic reasonableness of conduct must fall, . . . without a belief in some form or other that the moral order which we see imperfectly realized in the actual world is yet actually perfect. If we reject this belief, . . . the Cosmos of Duty is reduced to a chaos, and the prolonged effort of the human intellect to frame a perfect ideal of rational conduct is seen to be foredoomed to inevitable failure."²⁴

Immanuel Kant likewise insists upon the immortality of the soul as a postulate of the practical reason. Man has no alternative to belief in an after life, he declared, except the impossible one of acting against his rational nature. We may thus summarize his argument: The law of duty postulates moral perfection or holiness. But such perfection is not attainable in this life. Therefore it can only be achieved by an indefinite progress. But such indefinite progress implies the persistence of the human personality after the disintegration of the body. This is but another way of saying that the human soul must be immortal.

The argument is a valid one. Its cogency lies in the obligation of man to act in conformity with the dictates of practical reason. This does not require us to agree with Kant's conception of the autonomy of reason. For we do not weaken the cogency of the argument, but strengthen it, when we push the sanction for the moral law to a source beyond reason, to its ultimate source and final sanction, God, its author and vindicator. The gist of this argument is contained in the simple statement of Von Hartmann: "The bare fact that we possess moral instincts

²⁴ *Method of Ethics*, Bk. IV, ch. VI, 1st edit.

is, even taken by itself, the refutation of all anti-teleological views of the universe."²⁵ By anti-teleological views Hartmann means views which would regard the universe as without meaning or purpose.

A Stairway Leading Where?

It is to be noted that the argument for the immortality of soul as a postulate of practical reason is in reality but a corollary of the rational organization of the universe whose guarantor is God Himself. Scholars who have thought deeply on the problem, though they may differ in other respects, have not failed to perceive God's rational organization of the cosmos as the ultimate grounds for the belief. Thus John Fiske declares: "I believe in the immortality of the soul . . . as a supreme act of faith in the reasonableness of God's work."²⁶ "You ask," said Goethe, "what are my grounds for belief in immortality. The weightiest is this. We cannot do without it." Dr. Joseph Fort Newton asserts: "Manifestly the soul is as immortal as the moral order which inhabits it, else morality were a mockery."²⁷ E. Y. Mullins goes to the heart of the matter when he declares: "*The universe is a stairway leading nowhere unless man is immortal.*"²⁸ The stairway of duty, if the universe is organized on rational lines, must lead to God. Says George H. Carruthers:

"The picket frozen on duty,
The mother starved for her brood,
Socrates drinking the hemlock,
And Jesus on the rood;
The millions, who humble and nameless,
The straight, hard pathway trod,
Some call it consecration—and others call it God."

Yes, God is the beginning and the end, the alpha and the omega of all our striving, the guarantor of our unending life, the haven of all our anxious hopes and eager yearnings.

It is one of the shining merits of the doctrine of immortality that it harmonizes so well with the reasonableness of creation.

²⁵ *D. sittl. Bewusstsein*, p. 465.

²⁶ *We Believe in Immortality*, ed. S. Strong, p. 59.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²⁸ *My Idea of God*, p. 199.

The two doctrines support each other, and neither could stand without the other. While God and the rational organization of the cosmos constitute the ultimate grounds of our belief in a future life, the demand of our moral nature for a divine remunerator, who will rectify in a future life the inequalities of the present, is one of the most forcible proofs of God's existence. Thus do these truths fit together into a pattern, which satisfies the demands of our rational nature and gives meaning and purpose to human existence. With any one of these missing, life would be a jigsaw puzzle, which would remain forever unsolved.

"On the supposition of universal mortality," observes Prof. Hastings Rashdall, "the contrast between the capacities of human nature and its actual destiny, between the immensity of man's outlook and the limitations of his actual horizon, between the splendor of his ideals and the insignificance of his attainment, becomes such as to constitute, in a mind which fairly faces it, a shock to our rational nature sufficient to destroy belief in the rationality of things, and to imperil confidence in the authority of Moral Reason as a guide to human life. To those who have once accepted the rationality of things, and most emphatically to those who have once accepted the faith in a personal God, the improbability that a being of such capacity should have been created to be simply the creature of a day, that 'cometh up, and is cut down, like a flower, and never continueth in one stay,' has almost invariably amounted to an absolute impossibility. It is the favorite argument alike of reasoned Philosophy, and of the intensest moral intuition."²⁹

"I Would Go Mad!"

Let us illustrate these abstract truths with an example. Some time ago we had occasion to prepare for death a mother who has been bed-ridden for several years because of a serious spinal injury. Widowed after the birth of her fifth child, she had worn herself to the bone to keep her little brood together, a roof over their heads, and clothes on their backs. After some seventeen years of incessant labor, which included taking in washings, ironing, sewing, and all manner of other work, she suffered an injury that made her a hopeless invalid with half of her body paralyzed.

In the last year cancer had set in. Always cheerful, never

²⁹ *The Theory of Good and Evil*, vol. II, p. 265.

complaining, she bore her burden like the Christian heroine that she was, in spite of the intense pain caused by the inroads of the cancer. The joys which every mother craves, of nestling in the home she had made, of leaning proudly on the arms of her stalwart sons, of listening to the tender confidences of her lovely daughters, aglow with the meaning and the mystery of life at the threshold of romance, were to be denied her. The sequel to her seventeen years of unremitting toil and of four years of invalidism, she knew full well, would be death.

One day when we visited her, the dread carcinoma was eating like a glutton into her emaciated body and her failing strength told her that the end could not be far off. Out through the hospital window, she could see people passing, happy, gay, and free from care. Fighting to hold back the tears, she said to us: "Father, these last four years have not been easy. At times the pain has been almost unbearable. I've worked so hard for my children. I love them, and I hate to leave them now. But God knows best. And I bow to His will. But if I did not believe there is a God and a future life, I think *I would go mad.*"

God and An After Life

In those simple words she summed up the case for an after life with a directness and pregnancy greater than that found in the treatises of all the philosophers. For she expressed the irrepressible demand of the practical reason of all mankind, of all the men and women whose cross is heavy and whose road is steep. Is that not the conviction burnt into the souls of the millions of American sons fighting, suffering and dying for what they believe to be a better world? Say to the soldier who has endured months of nameless suffering, as he lies dying in his lonely foxhole:

"Soon the water and the mud will cover you with its pall of death. That will be the end of you and all your dreams. Your love for your wife and children, your devotion to your country, your sacrifice for human freedom, and all the high hopes and ideals which surged within your soul, all perish with you beneath the oozing slime. Like a candle snuffed in the night, your flickering light goes out. The end for you is darkness, silence, and the uncomprehending mud which covers you and all your hopes and dreams."

Would not he, like the mother just mentioned, say: "If I were to believe that life is such a ghastly farce, that the sufferings and the life which I offer up on the altar of my country's

cause, bring me no reward, that there is no God, no hereafter, I would go crazy." Yes, God and an afterlife are necessary to satisfy the demand of our moral nature that the universe be organized on rational lines and is not a crazy quilt of patterns running at cross purposes and leading only to idiocy. "Can it be fancied," asks Edgar Allan Poe, "that the deity ever vindictively made in His image a mannikin merely to madden it?"

"I Shall Emerge One Day"

The hypothesis that death completely destroys the human personality, renders the universe monstrously irrational. According to that hypothesis, points out Dr. H. E. Fosdick, "one generation of incomplete, aspiring persons is wiped off the earth, as a child erases unfinished problems from his slate, that another generation of incomplete, aspiring persons may be created—created and then annihilated. Nothing ever is finished anywhere. God, like a half-witted artist, amusing Himself with tasks that have no meaning, paints pictures in which He barely outlines forms of beauty, full of promise, only to erase them and begin again. Aspiring characters, as an agnostic said, are trying to get music out of sackbuts and psalteries, that never were in tune and seemingly never will be, and our social labors simply build transient oases in a desert world, empty of spiritual meaning—oases that in the end the desert will consume in burning sand."³⁰

The mere exposition of the consequences of such a theory is sufficient to show its untenable character. On that theory, the thief, the sensualist, the murderer, are wise, while the saint, the sage, the martyr, are fools. If there was ever a *reductio ad absurdum*, here is one.

The necessity for an after life, as a consequence of the rational organization of the universe, is so clear and so overwhelming that it is difficult to see how any one who has followed with open mind the course of the argument, can entertain any serious doubts. It is not too technical nor too abstract for a child to understand. The conclusion which we have reached is the only one which is in accordance with our minds, with our moral nature, and with the very instincts of our nature. It is not mere egotism, nor selfishness. It is in accord with the noblest part of our nature. "The cry of the human," declares Henry Van Dyke, "for a life be-

³⁰ *The Assurance of Immortality*, Harpers, N. Y.

yond the grave comes from that which is noblest in the soul of man." ³¹ Robert Browning but expresses the conviction of mankind the wide world over in his lines: ³²

"If I stoop
Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
Close to my breast; its splendour, soon or late,
Will pierce the gloom: I shall emerge one day."

A Few Analogies

We offer now a few analogies which are suggestive and helpful in our thinking about the survival of the human personality after the disintegration of the body. Look at nature in the dead of a northern winter. How drab and lifeless appear the gaunt skeletons of leafless trees, the flowers long faded and gone, the grass, sere and dead. What a picture of death all nature presents. Yet how quickly the trees, the flowers, the grass, respond to the kiss of the spring sunshine and leap from the dark abyss of death to the multicolored pageant of life. How speedily the gaunt skeletons of the trees shoot forth bud and leaf, the flowers find their colors and their fragrance, and the grass its verdant blade, all throbbing and aglow with the mystery of a resurrected life.

Take the case of the cocoon and the butterfly. In the larva stage the butterfly is shut up in a cocoon. It is without the power of movement, and bears no resemblance whatsoever to the shimmering fleet-winged insect it is soon to be. Let a stranger scrutinize that bit of formless matter and he will find nothing therein to tell him of the slender-bodied, wide-winged, roving insect that is to emerge from the chrysalis, and haunt us with its gorgeous coloring and tremulous beauty, as it flits from flower to flower. Here is a transformation which mirrors in a small and feeble manner the still more marvelous emergence of the resplendent soul of man from the disintegrating prison house of the body.

Take the case of man himself. He begins his earthly pilgrimage as a unicellular organism, a tiny fecundated ovum. If not informed beforehand, who, gazing upon that microscopic bit of protoplasm, would ever suspect that from it would emerge a Plato, a Shakespeare, an Einstein? What could be more unlike

³¹ *Greatest Thoughts on Immortality*, p. 68.

³² *Paracelsus*, Pt. V.

a full-blossomed human being, whose mind can penetrate to the distant stars, trace their orbits and measure their mass, than such a microscopic bit of formless matter? Here is a miracle of nature, a miracle which prepares our minds for that climactic event in the life of man when the soul wings its way from its bodily cocoon to roam the untrammelled world of the spirit.

All of these illustrations help us to look beyond the mere appearance of things to appreciate the higher forms of life to which they finally arrive. They all help us better to appreciate the truth of that profound principle laid down by Aristotle: We judge the nature and the worth of a being not by its origin but by the goal at which it finally arrives.

The presentation of all the principal lines of evidence and of reasoning of a philosophical character to establish the immortality of the human soul has now been completed. All the important considerations proposed by philosophers and scientists will be found in summary form in this treatment. Evidence from spiritualistic performances or psychic research has not been presented because up to the present none of these investigations has yielded results which are conclusive and capable of objective verification by impartial investigators under controlled conditions. Nor is any such evidence at all needed. We have confined ourselves to the solid ground of philosophic reasoning where the capacity to think straight is the only passport required for participation. The evidence for an afterlife is clear, cogent, and conclusive before the court of the human intellect.

Evidence From Divine Revelation

We could rest our case here. But there is a final line of evidence which lifts the conclusion to still higher grounds of certitude, namely, divine revelation. This line assumes, of course, the existence of God and the fact of a revelation from Him. But as these truths have already been established by proofs³³ of a rigorously philosophic character, there is no reason why we should not avail ourselves of this supreme evidence. It places upon our conclusion the seal of divine approval and gives us the highest form of certitude possible, namely, the assurance of God Himself. This gives to humanity, toiling, sweating, and busy in a thousand pursuits a certainty and a comfort which they could never obtain from the reasoning of philosophers.

³³ See our pamphlet, *God: Can We Find Him?* The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York 19, N. Y. 15c.

Furthermore, almighty God gives us this comforting assurance in such clear and simple terms as to dissipate all doubt and uncertainty. It is to be noted too that while philosophy can prove conclusively that the soul must survive the body at least for some time, it cannot, strictly speaking, demonstrate from reason alone that such a survival is everlasting. Here is where divine revelation supplements our reason with the knowledge that the soul upon leaving the body passes on into *everlasting* life. This means that the soul is immortal—as immortal as the God Who brought it into being out of the abyss of nothingness.

Let us now look at the evidence offered by divine revelation. "The souls of the just," says the Book of Wisdom, "are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure was taken for misery. . . . But they are in peace, and their hope is full of immortality."³⁴ Similar is the testimony of Ecclesiasticus: "The dust shall return into its earth from whence it was, and the spirit to God Who gave it."³⁵

Fifteen hundred years before Christ, Job predicts the resurrection of the dead as he looks forward to the coming of the Redeemer. "I know," he says, "that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day, I shall rise out of the earth, and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God."³⁶ This prophecy of the patriarch is confirmed by the Redeemer Himself Who says: "All who are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they who have done good, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life."³⁷

"I Am the Resurrection"

One of the most comforting utterances that ever fell from the lips of Christ is that which He addresses to Martha: "I am the Resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live."³⁸

St. Paul appeals to the fact of immortality as basic in the teaching of Christ. "The body," he says, "is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory; it is sown in weakness, it shall rise a spiritual body. . . .

³⁴ Wisdom iii. 1-4.

³⁵ Eccles. xii. 7.

³⁶ Job xix.

³⁷ John v.

³⁸ John xi. 25.

For this corruptible shall put on incorruption; and this mortal shall put on immortality. But when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written: Death is swallowed up in victory.”³⁹

In a second letter to these same Corinthians the Apostle again reminds them: “For we know that if our earthly house of this dwelling be destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not built with hands, everlasting in the heavens.”⁴⁰

People asked then, as they ask now, for a detailed picture of the felicity which the souls of the just will enjoy in Heaven. St. Paul tells both them and us that it is beyond the reach of human experience and above the power of the mind to conceive. “Eye hath not seen,” he declares, “nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for those who love Him.”⁴¹

It is as difficult for one born blind to picture all the beauty of a mountain landscape or for one born deaf to catch all the varied notes and tones of a great symphony as it is for a pilgrim in this earthly valley to conceive all the joys and bliss in the world of spirit. We know in a general way that the essential beatitude of the righteous will consist in the beatific vision, wherein they shall see God not through a mirror darkly, as in this life, but face to face. Then they shall know even as they are known. For Christ Himself has said: “Blessed are the clean of heart for they shall see God.”⁴² In the possession of God, Who is infinite truth, beauty, goodness, the human soul will find the answer to all its restless questing.

Supreme Joys

Among the supreme joys of life is that which comes from the discovery of truth. How deeply that quest grips the mind and the soul of man, and how indescribable the thrill of joy that comes from its attainment. When the Greek mathematician, Archimedes, finally achieved the solution of a problem on which he had long been absorbed, he ran through the streets of Syracuse, shouting, “Eureka! Eureka! I have found it! I have found it!” Who will describe the ecstasy that must have flooded the souls of Eve and Pierre Curié, when after hundreds of discourag-

³⁹ I. Cor. xv.

⁴⁰ II. Cor. v. 1.

⁴¹ I. Cor. ii.

⁴² Matt. v.

ing efforts, they finally succeeded in isolating and in giving to the world the unknown element of radium with its almost miraculous power of healing.

Similar joys have come to Pasteur, Newton, and to all the other noble souls who pushed back the frontiers of our darkness and brought the light of new discoveries into our world. Happiness scarcely less profound must likewise have flooded the souls of all the men and women whose patient labor, unflagging perseverance and creative insight have produced masterpieces of music, painting, sculpture and literature. What could engross the mind and thrill the soul more profoundly than the progressive attainment of truth, which would make the soul more and more like unto God?

It is in terms such as these that St. Thomas seeks to portray the felicity of heaven. Nor must we overlook, while stressing the pleasures of the intellect, the source probably of the greatest joy to most people, the joy of love. All the rapture and the ecstasy of love which human beings have ever experienced in this life will certainly continue to flood the souls of the just in ever-increasing measure. The mind and the heart and the soul of man will find the answer to their endless gropings and searchings in the mind and the heart of God.

A Great Responsibility

The fact of immortality places upon man a great responsibility. It is that of using well the fleeting moments of this earthly life that he may spend his eternity with the just and righteous in Heaven. The decision rests with each of us. For we ourselves must decide whether we shall be, in the words of the Apostle Jude, "wandering stars for whom the storm of darkness is reserved forever,"⁴³ or whether we shall be as stars that shine forever in the unfading glory of God. The attainment of that goal of eternal felicity is life's supreme triumph. The loss of it is life's ultimate and irrevocable tragedy.

This was the thought in St. Paul's mind when he wrote to the Galatians: "What things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption. But he that soweth in the spirit, of the spirit also shall reap life everlasting."⁴⁴

⁴³ Jude i.

⁴⁴ Gal. vi. 8.

The secret of the power of the saints to resist temptation is their ability to view a proposed act *sub specie aeternitatis*, that is, in the light of its eternal consequences. This is the touchstone which has never failed them. If those consequences mean the loss of God and of their everlasting happiness, they set their face like flint against the act. If they mean bringing the soul nearer to God and to the attainment of life's supreme goal, they are willing to go through hardship, humiliation, fire and death to accomplish that act as a step toward their great goal.

This is illustrated by an incident in the life of St. Thomas More. While imprisoned in the Tower of London by Henry VIII for refusing to take the oath that would put loyalty to his king before loyalty to his God, he was visited by his wife.

"Why, Mr. More," she said bluntly, "I marvel much that you who have hitherto been taken for a wise man, will now so play the fool as to lie here in this close, filthy prison, shut up with mice and rats, when you might be abroad at your liberty enjoying the favor of the king and council. You might dwell in peace in your fair house at Chelsea with your library, gallery, and garden, and be merry in company with me, your good wife, your children and household."

"Why, good Alice," he said with a winning smile, "is not this prison as near heaven as my own house?"

"Oh! tilly vally! tilly vally!" she replied with a sneer of contempt.

"Nay, then, Alice," More continued, "how long, think you, one might live to enjoy this house of ours?"

"Perhaps some twenty years."

"Well, now, my good Alice, he were a very bad calculator that, for a hundred or a thousand years, would risk the loss of an eternity."⁴⁵

In a Nutshell

The survival of the soul after the death of the body is a truth of philosophy and as such can be established by appropriate evidence. Philosophical truths are not established by the methods of demonstration common to mathematics and the physical sciences but by philosophical facts and reasoning. This is as valid a method for its subject matter as are the methods of mathematics and the physical sciences for theirs. A recognition of this

⁴⁵ Walter's *Life of Sir Thomas More*, ch. 8.

elementary truth, often overlooked by untrained investigators, will prevent confusion, misunderstanding, and futility on the part of the investigators, and disappointment on the part of the readers. Immortality cannot be adequately treated if torn from its roots in the immateriality and incorruptibility of the soul and in the rational organization of the universe. From these two antecedent truths the necessity of an after life follows with invincible logic.

Referring to the immaterial character of the soul, we showed that it could not be subject to death. For death means the disintegration of something into its parts. But since the soul is simple and immaterial, it is not composed of parts and therefore cannot disintegrate nor die. We then pointed out that the soul can be annihilated neither by itself, nor by any earthly power, and that God, Who alone could do so, will not undo the noblest work of His hands.

We then showed that mankind in all ages and in all conditions of civilization and barbarism has believed in a life beyond the grave. To say that all mankind is in error is to impugn the capacity of the human mind to know. We pointed out that this is a matter not merely of speculative interest but also of vital concern for every human being.

We have shown that the desire for perfect happiness planted in the breast of every human is understandable only if that desire can at some time be fulfilled. Since it cannot be completely satisfied in this earthly life, there must be a future existence wherein it can be realized.

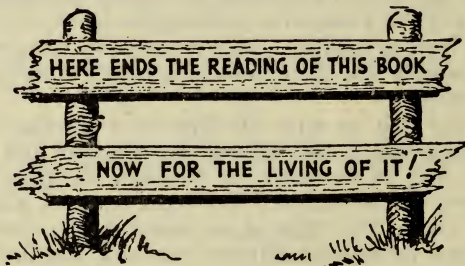
We showed that an after life flows as a corollary from the rational organization of the universe, whose author and guarantor is God. If there be no future life in which the gross inequities of the present can be rectified, then stark madness glowers over the cosmic scene. The voice of our moral nature demands that virtue receive a recompense different from vice, and that the saint and the martyr receive a verdict different from that meted out to the thief and the murderer. God, infinitely just and holy, stands in the last analysis as the supreme and ultimate grounds for the existence of a future life.

This conclusion of our rational nature is confirmed by the voice of divine revelation, which lifts the truth of the immortality of the human soul to a still higher plane of certitude. Backing the verdict of our own reason is that which mankind craves most of all, the assurance of God Himself. It is the possession of an

immortal soul that renders man a being of unique dignity and of transcendent worth. It imposes on him the supreme responsibility of so living that he may spend that eternity with God and with the just and righteous in a felicity that knows no ending. To achieve that destiny is the supreme triumph of life, to miss it is irretrievable tragedy. Man will not fail to reach that goal if he walks in the footsteps of the divine Master and spends himself in deeds of love and service for God and man. On this blended note of faith and hope, as sounded by William Ellery Channing,⁴⁶ we end our odyssey:

I laugh, for hope hath happy place with me,
If my bark sink, 'tis to another sea.

46 *A Poet's Hope.*



QUESTIONS

I (Pages 3 to 8)

1. Why is the question of the immortality of the soul so important?
2. What misconception should be cleared away at the outset?
3. The notion that immortality cannot be definitely proven is traceable to what two causes?
4. How does immortality follow as a corollary of the immateriality of the soul?
5. What would be the only way in which the human soul could cease?
6. Why cannot we believe that God will annihilate the human soul?
7. Show that belief in immortality is universal among mankind.
8. What testimony does Frazer offer on this point?
9. Does Buddhism deny the existence of the soul after death?
10. What does Confucius say concerning the indestructible character of the human soul?

II (Pages 8 to 13)

1. What was the belief of the Greeks concerning immortality?
2. What comparison did Seneca draw on the subject of the survival of the soul after death?
3. What difficulty did Cicero encounter on this subject? How did he meet this difficulty?
4. When did the doctrine of immortality assume a new position in the world? Why?

5. What is the significance of the universal belief in the immortality of the soul?
6. Upon what two types of phenomena is such a belief based?
7. Develop a proof for immortality from the universal longing of mankind for perfect happiness.
8. Can perfect happiness be found on this earth? Why?
9. What is the significance for immortality of the principle formulated by Aristotle?
10. What is the observation of Dr. Downey on this point?

III (Pages 13 to 18)

1. Develop the argument for immortality from the rational organization of the universe.
2. Why are sanctions necessary to render laws effective?
3. Does virtue always receive its due reward and vice its proper punishment in this life? Illustrate.
4. What does the case of Father Damien illustrate most vividly?
5. What is a demand of the moral order of the universe?
6. What does Kant insist upon as a postulate of the practical reason? Explain his reasoning.
7. The argument for immortality as a postulate of practical reason is in reality but a corollary of what basic truth?
8. What does Fisk say on this point? Goethe? Newton? Mullins? Carruthers?
9. What is one of the shining merits of the doctrine of immortality? Why?
10. What does Professor Rishdall say on this point?

IV (Pages 18 to 23)

1. What illustration is given of the truth that the moral order demands a future life?
2. Narrate the story about the American soldier dying in his foxhole. What truth does it illustrate?
3. What observation does Dr. Fosdick make on this subject?
4. How does Robert Browning express the conviction of mankind on this point?
5. What does the case of the cocoon and the butterfly illustrate?
6. Draw an analogy from the case of man himself.
7. The final line of evidence for immortality comes from what source?
8. Compare the certainty derived from the reasoning of philosophers and that afforded by Revelation.
9. What is the testimony of the book of Wisdom? Of Ecclesiasticus? Of Job?
10. What comforting assurance comes directly from Christ?

V (Pages 23 to 28)

1. How does St. Paul appeal to the fact of immortality?
2. Can people secure a detailed picture of the happiness of heaven? What did St. Paul say on this point?
3. What is one of the supreme joys in this earthly life?
4. Is it likely that we shall experience a similar joy in heaven?
5. What is the source of joy for most people on this earth? Will that joy likewise be experienced in heaven?

6. Immortality places what great responsibility upon man?
7. Narrate the incident about St. Thomas More.
8. Summarize the method used to establish the immortality of the soul.
9. Epitomize in a few sentences each of the various arguments.
10. What is life's supreme triumph? Its supreme tragedy? Quote the lines of William Ellery Channing.

