

SPICE FOR SPIRITUALISTS:

OR,

THE DOGMA

OF

AN IMMORTAL LIFE

EXAMINED AND CONSIDERED.

BY JOHN J. WOODWARD.

PHILADELPHIA :

THOMAS WILLIAM STUCKEY, PRINTER,  
No. 57 North Seventh Street.

1875

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## INTRODUCTION.

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ERROR cannot be useful or beneficial to mankind: it is the duty of every individual therefore to endeavor to dispel it; and in presenting this inquiry to the public, I have no other object than the benefit of my race.

I have been actuated alone in this humble effort to throw a few additional rays of light upon a subject hitherto much neglected or but little considered, and yet at the same time of the utmost importance: "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and shall lose his own soul."

I have no motives of selfish interest, no sinister ambition to delude, mislead, or decoy mankind from the path of truth.

Having for a long time been convinced that we are living under and sustaining the dark shadows of ancient superstitions; that we are wading in the turbid waters of the dead past, and surrounded by the false systems fabricated by the ignorance of man in the early stages of his mental development; from this conviction, I am induced to offer for the consideration of the reader some facts and conclusions relative to man and his future destiny.

Man remains an enigma to himself, not because he is a problem so difficult to solve or investigate, but mainly because ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, the harness of ecclesiastical institutions, and a host of obstacles have hitherto been arrayed against every inquiry tending to a rational and philosophical elucidation.

But a brighter and better day is dawning, a knowledge of the energy and forces of matter, the laws of its organization, the diffusion of the lights of the several departments

of natural science, the ardor of research, the softened disposition of mankind, and the awakened and excited curiosity every where manifested, gives peculiar interest and propriety to this long-neglected and delicate investigation.

We of the present day are no longer bound to respect the opinions, beliefs, and notions consequent upon the blundering guess-work and stupid ignorance of mankind in remote ages. No howl of holy horror hitherto raised by the church against the presumptuous audacity that dares to treat man like any other natural production, can any longer avail. No mad-dog cry of infidelity can longer prevent the reflection of the light of natural truths upon the mind of the honest inquirer. No storm of unreasoning indignation will deter any one from a calm and deliberate investigation: we can observe our own facts, and draw our own conclusions.

It is a truth familiar to all, that any attempt at reformation or introduction of new truths have always been met by the fiercest opposition. It is deemed sacrilege to assail any of the accepted doctrines or traditions of the past. The masses, too, prefer an undisturbed ease, disliking the task of investigation; and are therefore content with the irrational theories that have been forged by our fathers and thrust upon society. To this class we may add still another: I mean those who are wholly incompetent to examine and explore for themselves, and are therefore willing to go with the current.

In view of those facts, I can hardly hope to make a broad impression upon the community. But there are some who are willing to look into this subject with candor, and a desire to know the truth; to them I address myself. I know how hard it is to penetrate the citadel of ignorance and confirmed error, therefore to those that to-day place faith in the stupid fables of antiquity above the teachings of natural science in relation to man, I have nothing to say. I have no controversy with such as place blind faith above reason.

In an impartial investigation of the nature and destiny of man, it is necessary to a correct understanding of the subject to divest ourselves of all traditional prejudices, and

we should be willing to receive and embrace the truth whenever, wherever, and however it may be found, without regard to its agreement or disagreement with our preconceived opinions. The study of man is unlike any other subject: it embraces and extends to almost every branch and department of human knowledge, and the deeper we examine the wider is the range. And no person is qualified to judge of the correctness or truth of any theory or doctrine connected with man, unless he has previously made himself acquainted with a wide range of demonstrable facts, and is willing to accept the light of natural truth, even though it may lead to the destruction of some long-cherished belief. In this inquiry we have but one question to ask and to answer, and it is this: Is the doctrine of immortal life true or false? And no other question can be entertained until this one is settled. The question of consequences, the great bugbear of fools, will doubtless arise with many, but they have always taken care of themselves.

Though ignorance and error largely abound in the world, and society is penned in on all sides by an impenetrable wall of bigotry and prejudice, having no weak side of common sense whereby you may approach, still there are individuals to be found that the arrows of truth may reach. And a sense of duty should prompt each one of us to try to make some nook or corner more enlightened; and, if I can be instrumental in diffusing a little light and truth, thereby supplanting error in a few, I shall be amply repaid for this humble effort. As a test of the truth of the views I here maintain, I ask only that they may be carefully submitted to the teachings of natural science, that is destined ere long to be the great and only lawgiver of the world.



# ETERNAL LIFE:

OR,

THE DOCTRINE OF MAN'S IMMORTALITY.

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It is one thing to believe the myths and traditions of the past, but it is quite another to *know* by virtue of study and research what is the truth. The antiquity of a tale or doctrine is by no means any proof of its authenticity; but on the contrary, it is evidence quite conclusive that it is untrue, because most of the tales and teaching of the remote past are upon investigation found to be false. There is a vast difference between knowledge and belief,—mankind believe much more than they know. They believe largely in that which they can neither know nor comprehend. Belief with many is based upon faith: and faith is belief without evidence; it is an assent to that which is not found in experience, fact, or demonstration.

The great mass inherit their beliefs as they inherit the family estate: no question of probability, plausibility, or possibility is raised; they are accepted for truth because they descended from their ancestors and came from antiquity.

A child comes into existence from his parents; he has inherited his organization; that is, his features, faculties, disposition, and elements of character. Without thought he accepts their habits of life, practices, prejudices, notions of religion, and government: he is taught by them that these are adapted to his happiness and prosperity, and that want, misery, and suffering will certainly follow their rejection. Thus all that he has inherited, as well as his youthful training, together with the surrounding institu-

tions, are interwoven and incorporated into his very being: they become a part of himself, and as dear to him as life itself. So it is seen why men cling with such tenacity to opinions and beliefs adopted in youth: they never think of investigating any dogma or doctrine, unless by some experience they learn that it is at war with their interest or happiness.

But aside from the opinions involuntarily contracted or inherited, belief is not a matter of choice. Those that are free from the fetters of faith, and the blinding influence of traditional prejudice, cannot believe otherwise than they do, until sufficient evidence is afforded to form a new conviction. Belief must depend upon evidence: thus, before I will run from fear, I must have some belief that there is positive danger. I may conclude it is safe to enter a powder magazine; but I discover there is fire near by, and my belief is changed by the evidence of danger.

It is the height of folly to ask an individual to believe this or that; because if you can overcome his ignorance, prejudice, or interest with facts or arguments that amount to evidence, he must give his assent, he cannot avoid believing; it is no matter of choice with him. Evidence is the only sure foundation; tribunals acquit and condemn upon it. It is the weight of the testimony that determines the verdict of the jury. No correct conclusion or belief can be arrived at or formed independent of evidence. It is a thing impossible to form a correct opinion or belief without knowledge: and all knowledge is objective; it comes from without through the medium of the external senses. Thus, evidence producing an impression upon the faculties is indispensable to the correctness of all belief and judgment. A belief formed and asserted where no evidence is afforded, is but a chimera, a phantasy, an imaginary whim, that can have no foundation in fact or experience.

It is belief without evidence that has cursed and scourged mankind in all ages: it is the key that has so long locked the world in ignorance and darkness. It is lamentable and humiliating to think how long vain imaginations have weighed upon the understanding of the undeveloped mind: in whatever direction we look in the history of the past

we discover its baneful influence. Savage or civilized, all alike consciously and unconsciously, have been crushed beneath its dominion,—bewildering, darkening, and degrading the race. Belief without knowledge is the source of all the delusions, superstitions, and religious persecutions that have so blackened, blood-stained, and disgraced the history of humanity in all ages.

It is faith, a belief without evidence, that was the prolific mother of all the mysteries and miracles that have been given to the world, teaching mankind to believe in fictitious powers, beings of the imagination, in violation of all known and natural law, feeding the feeble mind with trash for truth. It is belief without evidence that has compelled philosophers to conceal their discoveries upon pain of fire or gibbet, thus destroying the efforts of science to enlighten the human mind.

Be it observed and remembered that man has made no true progress in any department, until he abandoned the conjectures and speculative opinions inherited from an ignorant ancestry. Man has existed upon the earth but little short of one hundred thousand years.

How long then has he lived and groped in the dark, but little removed from the condition in which he first appeared? Since it is less than four hundred years ago that one-half of the globe was unknown to the other half, and only about the same period that the art of printing was invented, without which knowledge could not be diffused: chemistry, electricity, and galvanism were discovered in the last century; the principal mechanical sciences give strong indications of infancy and youth; the study of geology has only within a short time earnestly commenced, without which we can form no correct idea of the past changes in the physical structure of the globe, or the varied successions of its inhabitants; the application of steam and electricity to the uses of life are of quite recent origin; the properties of matter and its inherent forces are just now being understood and explained. But in nothing was the ignorance of mankind more conspicuous than in regard to himself: of man and his nature but little or nothing was known. It is but little over two centuries since

the circulation of the blood was discovered, or any correct idea formed of the economy of life; the uses and functions of many of man's physical organs were entirely unknown: the heart was considered the organ of the affections or the seat of wickedness and deceit; now its office is to propel the blood throughout the system. It is less than a century since the true functions of the brain and nervous system were ascertained and explained; previously the head was deemed but a round knob terminating the columnal structure, convenient as a location for eyes, ears, &c.

So in view of those facts it may safely be said, that comparatively man is obviously only in the beginning of his true career of discovery and progress.

Now, in consequence of this profound ignorance, we really inherited but little from antiquity of any true value; but, on the contrary, their false theories and blundering guess-work served as formidable obstacles to the promulgation of scientific truth when it was presented. They originated much that they never discovered; they were prolific in theories, which they formed before they observed facts: we have rejected nearly all that they claimed for knowledge as spurious and worthless. We discard their geography, their astronomy, their chemistry, their botany, their natural and mental philosophy, their systems of government, their mythology; in short, their physics and metaphysics, together with their prophecies, auguries, oracles, and omens.

Man in his undeveloped and uncultivated condition only a few thousand years ago, was an ignorant, sensual, credulous, superstitious savage, with an intellect simple and weak. In this condition the entire of nature presented to his mind but a mighty chaos of events, too stupendous, too complicated, too diversified, and intricate to unravel; the chain of causation too mysterious and abstruse to be discovered or traced by his feeble and limited powers. With no history of the past and no correct knowledge of the present, he could have no idea of cause and effect, the economy and forces of nature, or the working of her laws. To him all was unknown; everything was a mighty mystery; doubt, suspicion, suspense, intimidation, fear, and

terror were excited by all that surrounded him. In this condition he passed a long night of darkness, before his mind was fitted for the most simple comparison of ideas or digestion of impressions. When he became competent to reflect upon his condition, he discovered that he was surrounded and subjected to influences and forces superior to his own and independent of his choice or will: under these circumstances he endured the action of the elements and powers of nature like a machine for a long time, without even recurring to the cause. But at length, by slow degrees, his curiosity became excited, and he began his conjectures and speculations concerning the phenomena of nature.

In this condition of ignorance, he essayed to write the history of the silent ages. Imagination seized the pen of the historian, and with fanatic fervor he recorded the great myths of creation that are to be found in the sacred books of all religions. Without study, without research, without discovery and without knowledge, he solved the enigmas of nature by supposing the supernatural. Though of nature he knew little or nothing, yet in the boundless immensity of imaginative power he discovered a super-nature; a domain outside, over or above nature: this being beyond the reach of conception, became at once the abode of invisible powers and spiritual existences, that managed and controlled the vast machinery of the universe. Thus mankind in their ignorance of physical causation gave us good and evil spirits, gods and devils, angels and witches, holy ghosts and saviours, gorgons and goblins, each of whom had a special office to fulfill in the varied phenomena with which they were surrounded.

Now it could hardly be expected that while man remained too ignorant to comprehend the inherent properties of matter, that he was in a condition to know and explain the highest phase of organic life as exhibited by himself. Yet it was in this stage of knowledge, in this undeveloped condition of the human mind, that the nature of man was proclaimed. He was declared to be a compound being, with an animal nature and a spiritual nature, having a living soul or entity that endured forever. This theory and doctrine was not based upon any knowledge acquired by a

deliberate investigation of organic structure in man and the lower animals, nor upon any careful comparison between them; but upon a conclusion, that as man seemed to be so transcendent to the brutes, there must be a wide-marked separation and difference somewhere. Their limited knowledge not permitting the discovery of the true cause of superiority, it was supposed that there was something in man denoting an individuality that endured or lived forever.

This is the origin of the idea of man's immortality, that has descended by tradition down to us from the dead past, which has been imbedded in society through motives of selfish interest, and is now by many deemed too sacred for investigation. But upon this subject of eternal life reason is unsatisfied, and therefore seeks to interpret the immeasurable superiority of man over the speechless animals in a more rational, truthful, and worthier way. Upon this subject no satisfactory conclusion has ever been reached: except among thinking and disciplined minds it remains to be a problem of doubt and discussion. Pulpit orators, though pretending that there is no doubt remaining upon this point, still continue to introduce and discuss it; thus clearly indicating they are conscious that no evidence at all demonstrative or conclusive has ever been adduced, calculated to satisfy honest inquiry.

#### *Antiquity of the Doctrine of Immortality.*

This doctrine was originated at a period long anterior to any correct knowledge of nature or scientific truth, still it was not developed in the rude infancy of man, but at a time when he became prolific in chimeras, fables, and new theories, which—when once advanced—were eagerly embraced by all incompetent to judge between fiction and fact. It is not difficult to induce a belief, no matter how absurd, that promises great and peculiar advantages.

The first traces of this theory, of an immortal spirit in man, that history or tradition gives us, is found in India, where the whole tendency of thought was ideal, the whole religion a pure spiritualism, a perfect abstraction, and their

god a spirit intelligence. With them spirit was the only reality, the world but an illusion. But as the Brahmans of India were the descendents and successors of the Arians, they doubtless inherited this idea from them. As we have no history at all reliable that extends backward into antiquity more than six thousand years, its origin is lost in the night of time. We to-day have an antiquity, and have been taught by and from antiquity; so in like manner have the Brahmans of India had an antiquity by which they too were taught,—they like the moderns had precursors to study, imitate, and copy. But, from the feeble light that is afforded by history, we cannot go beyond India: we therefore say that she is the mother of the human race, the cradle of all our traditions. India has given to the world her civilization, her laws, her customs, her *morale*, and her religion. She impressed upon Egypt, Persia, Judea, Greece, and Rome a stamp as ineffaceable, impressions as profound, as these last have impressed upon us.

Nations and individuals learn of each other, and influence each other: Egypt was one of the first countries that received the influence of that antique theology that has radiated even to us. The government of Egypt was an identical copy of that of India: in the first rank appeared the priest, protector, and guardian of all civil and religious truth, controller of kings and people, anointed of the Lord, irresponsible in all his acts: in fact, above all laws, as he was above all men. The priests of Egypt, then, imbibed this doctrine of the immortality of the soul as it existed in India: they, like all their greedy craft, seized upon it with avidity for selfish aggrandisement, as one calculated to yield emoluments and power to the order.

They were not slow to discover that, by alluring promises of everlasting life, they could purchase and extort from the people immunity from labor, a luxurious living and princely power. The priests instituted rites, ceremonies, and forms of worship in which they largely officiated, for which they exacted gifts and offerings; and, in return for this support, gave cheap promises of eternal life to their credulous admirers. By this means much was done to disseminate and perpetuate this belief, and wherever it was

established, any attempt to doubt, question, or canvass its truth, has always been met with the fiercest opposition: knowing the weakness of their cause, and the entire want of evidence upon which this belief was based, and that it could not be successfully maintained by sound logic or inductive reasoning, the priesthood, to stifle investigation, cried sacrilege and blasphemy. It was in Egypt that the doctrine of the transmigration of souls was inculcated by the priests: they taught that the souls of men after death passed into the bodies of clean or unclean animals, according to the deeds done in the body, and that, at a distant period of time, they returned to the body to which they originally belonged. This belief induced their kings to build enormous edifices and hew catacombs out of the solid rocks for the reception of their bodies, in order that they might repose in security till they were to be again endowed with a living soul. Here is the solution to the practice of inhuming mummies in those huge pyramids, as well as that of deifying and preserving various animals.

From Egypt this doctrine of India was carried into Persia, and also into Greece and Rome, by Pythagorus, Plato, and others, from whence it has been largely diffused over the world.

Vitateness, a love of life or desire to live, seems to be common and proper to all animals, tending to self-preservation; but man, being capable of discovering and foreseeing that there were limits to life, willingly accepted this doctrine at the behest of the priests, as it in some degree satisfied his desire. It was gratifying to believe that, though death was the lot of all upon earth, it did not terminate the existence of man; therefore he, being superior to all other animals, lived forever in another world.

### *Diversity of Belief respecting this Dogma.*

The first thing that strikes the observer in relation to this doctrine of eternal life, is the discordance and diversity of opinion exhibited by its believers; which is proof positive that it is based upon no tangible or reliable evidence that may be recognized by all. About the nature and

character of the soul, and its final destiny after the dissolution of the body, scarcely any two sects of believers can be found to agree. One claims that there will be at the last day a general judgment, when all humanity will arise from the dead; bone will join its fellow bone, and atom its fellow atom, and appear before the tribunal of God, to receive their final doom. Another believes that the soul or spirit only goes to God, to be judged by the deeds done in the body during life: that if this Supreme Judge finds that the good outweighs the evil, then heaven and its blessings is the abode of the soul forever; but if the evil preponderates, then endless woe and torment is its portion. Another maintains that heaven is no place, but only a state and condition; that there is no judgment before the throne of God; that, in the condition death leaves them, if a state of happy tranquility, enjoyment and pleasure is the soul's eternal inheritance; but if in a state of sin and transgression, they are doomed to sorrow and suffering throughout all coming time. Others insist that the animal body is only a tabernacle of clay, a clog and a cumbrance, the temporary abode of the spirit for a short time; that when death takes place, the soul is delivered from its prison-house, and begins its true life of progress, advancing from one stage to another of higher perfection and greater intelligence. Again, others believe the soul does not soar away to heaven at once upon leaving the body, but hovers round near it, awaiting a new home, or its reception into some inferior animal. Then come the modern spiritualists, believing that the souls or spirits of individuals upon leaving the inanimate form, rise only to a little elevation, watching over their friends upon earth, and at will materializing themselves for the purpose of communicating with particular individuals. These exhibit, however, a liberality not to be found in any other believers, as they do not deny to animals an immortal life, but admit them as consorts in their spiritual abodes; beasts, birds, and all animals associated with man upon earth enjoying spiritual existence; birds singing in the groves, swans swimming on the lakes, affording pleasure to man as upon earth. This is ascertained by

the same kind of evidence that convinces them of their own immortality.

These, together with numerous other wild and fanciful theories, in which we find various devices and contrivances for the reception of the soul,—such as purgatory, a hell burning with brimstone, a heaven provided with saints and angels, and a mediator seated at the right hand of God, have been at different times conjured up.

Now any one of the various notions relative to the destiny of the immortal soul in man, stands upon just as good and strong a foundation as that of any other. As this dogma is wholly imaginary, based alone upon conjecture, it is not difficult to account for the many opposite and conflicting opinions respecting it. It is because men always disagree when the evidence is conflicting or not clear, or, as in this case, where there is no evidence at all to base a conclusion upon.

Truths cannot conflict with each other; those several theories cannot be true; the house is divided against itself, and must therefore fall. No inference for truth can be drawn from contradictory testimony. This discordance of belief is not to be found upon any subject where absolute truth is discovered: upon no scientific truth do mankind disagree, because ascertained fact is the bond of union, the same demonstrative evidence is accessible to all. So all mankind, no matter what their race, nation, faith, or language, can harmoniously stand upon the same platform.

Now, instead of descanting further as to when, where, and how this doctrine originated, or by whom it was disseminated, let us endeavor to discover whether it is true or false, by applying the knowledge and science of the present day to this long-taught theory. Let the evidence afforded by the nature of man, and the analogy between him and the lower animals be considered, it surely will prove as much and be as conclusive as the authority of conjecture.

*Man an Organic Production.*

The physical basis of all organic life is termed protoplasm: in both the animal and vegetable kingdoms it is found to be a chemical unit, in both it is the component material.

Protoplasm simple or nucleated is the formal basis of all life: it is clay in the hands of the potter, who may mould, mark, paint, or bake it as he will, yet it still remains clay.

A nucleated mass of protoplasm is, then, the structural unit of the human body: in its earliest state it is a mere multiple of such units; and, in its greatest and highest perfection, but a multiple of these units variously modified.

For nearly fifty years biologists and other scientists have known that man originates in a similar germ; that is, the germinal vesicle being the same, having his inception in an egg, he passes through the same slow progressive modification, depending upon the same contrivance for protection and nutrition, and enters the world by the same process as all placental mammals. Man is identical in the physical process by which he originates, identical in the early stages of his formation, identical in the mode of his nutrition before and after birth, with the animals which lie immediately below him. If we compare the perfect adult structure of man with theirs, it exhibits a wonderful similarity of organization. Man resembles them as they resemble one another, and he differs from them as they differ from one another. Indeed no naturalist of any name or note ever placed man apart in a distinct order, as an animal or being having no relation and connection with any other. But, on the contrary, Linnæus, Cuvier, and all distinguished zoologists and comparative anatomists, arranged man in the same order with the animals possessing the characteristics upon which classification is based.

Protoplasm is not only the formal basis of the human body, but it is the material out of which the entire animal frame and fabric is built. It is the stuff that forms the bulk of all organic life, and is the agent of nutrition from infancy to old age, death, and dissolution.

Every time we run, walk, move, feel, or perform any mental action, this labor requires the expenditure of a certain amount of force, which uses up and dissolves numerous particles of the brain, nerves, and muscles. It is a principle in modern science that all force is measured by the amount of material consumed. We cannot think, wink, or utter a word without some physical loss: some portion of our organism is dissolved into carbonic acid, water, &c. Now it is quite clear that this process of waste and expenditure cannot go on forever; the wear and tear, the loss and waste resulting from the movements of all animal machinery is supplied by taking organic matter into the digestive apparatus. Thus, from all fruits, plants, and vegetables, cooked or raw, the living material to restore the waste of life is supplied. By the inward animal laboratory the rice, wheat, corn, and other farinacious substances are, in a few hours, converted into animal fibre, living, moving, feeling, thinking, &c. Again, we take a living animal, we deprive it of life, in a short time the carcass becomes rigid and cold; it is then subjected to boiling, roasting, and various other culinary processes; by this time the protoplasm has become motionless, inactive, and dead. But when taken into the living human stomach, it is there overhauled by the apparatus of digestion, and prepared to pass into the circulation; and the subtle influences there imparted convert this dead protoplasm into living, moving, active protoplasm. Thus, in the short space of three or four hours, the beef, the pork, the mutton, and the fowl is transubstantiated into the man. The ox, the hog, and the sheep are converted into the man; the substances composing their bodies become in him contractile muscle, thinking and willing nerve and brain. It is clear that he is not only from these lower animals, but of them.

The vegetable and animal worlds are connected each with the other so intimately and closely, and run into each other so, that the nicest perception can scarcely determine where one begins or the other ends. And so it is with the various types of vegetable and animal life: they are so blended, each form with the one below it, in the chain of existence, that little or no gap is observable, the higher or-

ganization of a low type running up to a low organized form of a higher type. Nor does this connection stop here: it runs gradually through this higher type, by variations of structure, until it arrives at the lowest limits of the one still higher in the scale.

It is shown upon powerful evidence that there is a continuous variation of organic forms, from the lowest to the highest, including man as the last link in the chain of being: that all mammals have much in common with each other; all come into existence in the same way, subject to the same laws, and live by the same economy, the same processes of respiration, digestion, etc.; all are subject to disease, and to all death comes in the same way.

The germinal and embryotic characters and appearance being the same in all types of the mammal, nothing can be discovered by an examination of the embryotic form for a considerable time, indicating what the type of the new animal will be. There is not much apparent resemblance between a barn-door fowl, the dog which guards the farm-yard, and the man that owns the whole, yet they are identical in their primary development in all essential respects. Indeed, it is quite a considerable time before the body of the young human being can be readily distinguished from that of the young puppy.

And, further, the brain of the human fœtus in the process of development passes through the forms and appearances exhibited by the brains of the inferior animals. Thus, at one period it presents that of the fish, then that of the reptile, the bird, the rodent, the ruminant, the digitigrade, the quadrumana, and, lastly, the bimana. The offspring of the Caucasian is born a perfect Mongolian, and is developed into the type of the parents after some months of time have elapsed, demonstrating that organization begins far down in the organic scale. He is bound up in a bundle of animate forms, the assemblage of which constitutes the great kingdom of organic life. Man is connected with all forms of life below him, and animated nature is a living whole.

Thomas H. Huxley says: "If man be separated by no greater structural barrier from the brutes than they are

from one another, then it seems to follow that the process of physical causation by which the genera and families of ordinary animals have been produced, is amply sufficient to account for the production of man." And still further, the same authority informs us, that: "In view of the intimate relations between man and the rest of the living world, I can see no excuse for doubting that all are co-ordinate terms of nature's great progression from the inorganic to the organic,—from blind force to conscious intellect, will, and reason."

Now, as far as the close connection of the mineral, vegetable, and animal worlds, and the different orders and varieties of animals with one another extends, no clue is given to anything like immortal life in man, the last link in this concatenation. But, on the contrary, reasoning from analogy, we must conclude that there is, in this vast system of evolution in organic life, that rises by an almost imperceptible gradation, from the lowest mammal up through the various types to the lowest of the human race, and from these upward to the most refined and gifted, a powerful argument against this assumption.

### *Influence of Physical Circumstances on Organic Life.*

Physical circumstances exert a powerful influence in moulding and determining the character of both plants and animals. Our fruits and culinary plants exhibit under cultivation characteristics and qualities widely different from what were common to them in a state of nature. Some are so modified that they show no trace of their original stock. The new circumstances and conditions consequent upon domestication have produced a wonderful effect upon all the animals subjected to its influence, as shown by the entire farm stock; and in a state of nature, away from artificial influence, the fauna of any particular region is marked by climatic influences. Thus, in the frozen, snowy north, where all surrounding objects are white, the animal inhabitants, too, put on a coat of hair and feathers of the same complexion; in the temperate regions, the wild animals and game living and sitting upon

the ground are brown, the color of the dead leaves and grass that surround them; while the squirrels are gray, the color of the bark of the trees upon which they feed and live; and when we turn to the torrid zone, to a warm region, there we find the feathered fauna with a gorgeous plumage, like the brilliant hues of the plants and flowers among which they are found. Nor does the influence of external circumstances stop with the external appearance; it extends to their organisms. The fishes found in caves where light is excluded have no eyes; birds restrained from flying lose, in a few generations, the power of flight; and aquatic birds kept from the water in time lose their web-footed structure. This same physical influence extends to the mental constitution also, by modifying the organs upon which it depends. The young of domestic animals manifest little or no fear of man, while the young of the same varieties in a wild state exhibit it, particularly if their parents have long considered man as their enemy. In a perfect state of nature, away from the haunts of man, wild varieties do not exhibit more fear of him, at first sight, than of other animals. This is proved by the fact that, on islands uninhabited by man, large birds exhibit no more fear at his approach than small ones. This fear of man is slowly acquired by experience, and, like the training in the pointer dog, is inherited. Large birds have for centuries been hunted and destroyed in all civilized countries, and hence they fear man as their common enemy, and flee from his approach. Again, dogs in a state of nature have no love for man, but in a state of domestication they exhibit it in a remarkable degree; circumstances have influenced their mental qualities, and these new qualities are inherited by the offspring. Dogs, by a course of training or education, have lost or disobeyed their natural disposition to jump at game when found, and will stand instead. This training produces a changed condition of the brain and nerves in the animal; hence the hereditary peculiarity in the young puppy. These are a few among the many changes that physical circumstances produce in the characteristics of the lower orders of organic life.

Now, have we any evidence to show that man has in like

manner been changed and modified in his physical and mental constitutions. A little investigation will suffice to show that he, more than any other known animal production, yields to surrounding circumstances; climate and temperature influence both his stature and complexion, as well as his mental capacity. It is well known that man in northern latitudes manifests but little genius, and that the inhabitants of tropical regions are, as a general thing, neither authors nor inventors. He seems to be both plastic and elastic, his constitution readily accommodating itself to the vicissitudes of climate. His escape from the hardships of savage life, and the adoption of civilization, softened to a great degree his nature and disposition. The artificial covering that his ingenuity supplied, the better to protect his body from the attacks of insects and the inclemency of the climate, in due time supplanted that coat that nature provides for all warm-blooded animals, and he in consequence exhibited a marked change in appearance, becoming more a man and less a beast.

But the crowning influence upon man by external circumstances, acting as a developing stimulus upon his mental organs, is seen in the position in which he found himself in the early stages of his existence. He was by no means alone in the world; he made his appearance at a time in the history of our planet when myriads of types of life had already appeared and disappeared. He found himself contemporary with large and formidable animals, with whom he had to run the race of life: animals that respected or knew no right or law, save one,—the law of self-preservation. He found the mastodon, elephant, and rhinoceros, large and powerful animals, that feared no destroying enemy; the equine family, strong, swift, and cautious, capable of fleeing from both hunger and danger, and well provided with means of defence; the bovine family, with size, strength, horns, and speed, capable of taking care of themselves; and the elk, deer, and their kindred, with argus eye, ever on the alert, with speed that few could equal; all of them granivorous in their habits, living upon the spontaneous productions of the earth, having but few obstacles to prevent their perpetuation. On the other

side were the blood-thirsty carnivora, armed by nature with teeth, claws, and superior sight, scent, and stealth; requiring by their organization blood and flesh to sustain life. For these man, as an animal, was no match. He found himself in the depths of the forest, in the midst of those ferocious and formidable rivals, diminutive in stature, feeble in strength, with no instruments of defence save fists and feet, which were nothing in comparison with those of his antagonists; and he, too, walking on his heels, the index of sloth in regard to movement, while all his competitors in the great contest of life walked on their toes, indicative of great speed.

Now the question arises, How was man, thus surrounded on all sides, to maintain his existence, and successfully run the race of life? He no doubt had inherited a large share of brain-power from his near relatives, the simia family, and this was the only quality he had upon which to rely. It was a contest of brain against muscle; and upon this brain there was a constant strain, a continual draft for strategy to outwit his adversaries. He was forced to find the means of safety; he was obliged to be on constant guard, and to keep his eyes open. He had then to live by his wits, or perish in the contest for life.

It is well established that the exercise of any animal organ is accompanied by a corresponding increase of action and power. This tax upon the brain, this demand of genius to counteract superior power and speed, this incessant call upon the intellect for increased activity, was the cause of the superior development of brain for which man is distinguished. Here is the cause of the immeasurable superiority with which man is endowed. It ceases longer to be a mystery, or any supernatural gift to man: it lies in the simple fact, that because the brain had to work, in conformity to natural law it had to grow.

The development of the human mind consequent upon activity is confirmed by comparing the skulls of the Nilotic Egyptians, found in the catacombs, with those of moderns of the same race. The brain measurement of this ancient Caucasian family shows an average of but 81.7 inches, while in the modern Caucasian Teutonic family it

rises to 94.8 inches, thus exhibiting an advance of brain-power of 13.1 inches between the period of the living Egyptian and the modern type.

*Analogy between Man and the lower Animals.*

Man was brought into existence, nursed, and fed by his parents, as all other animals. He and all the lower forms of mammals are composed of bones, muscles, nerves, blood-vessels, organs of nutrition, respiration, and thought. All derive their existence from a previously organized being, who subsists upon food, grows, attains maturity, declines, dies, and decays. Man and all animals, when they first come into existence, are upon an equal footing as regards their mental capital, or stock of information. There is no such thing as innate ideas or inborn knowledge; the future diversity depending upon the individual capacity to acquire and treasure it. All animals have the same media through which it comes, the senses: they all see, hear, feel, taste, and smell, and all begin to receive ideas or learn from the impressions received as soon as they come into the world. Thus far man and the lower speechless animals stand upon the same basis, and are equal. Man and all animals learn gradually by remembering the sensation or impression produced upon the mind by the operation of any external cause. Thus the calf, the pup, and the boy neither know nor fear the sensation produced by a fall or a blow until they have received one: the impression is their first lesson in education. The lower animals, like man, possess faculties corresponding to the perfection of the organs of the brain; but the faculties in them are definite in their action, because there is little disturbing influence to affect them.

In the savage, we see the same stationary and definite action of the mind in this particular, showing the strong analogy. In adult, educated, and enlightened man the mind has an extensive range; in the civilized, uneducated man it is more contracted; in the savage still more so; and in the infant the range is exceedingly limited, though it is mind working in all of these, of the same kind, differing only in degree. And when we descend to animals devoid

of the power of speech, and lower in the scale of organization, we still discover the evidences of the same faculties of mind, varying not in kind, only in degree of manifestation, dependent on the degree of development.

This can be better illustrated by reference to the animals themselves, and the faculties and emotions exhibited by them. All show terror or fear, and a sense of danger that they seem to try to avoid; many are subject to flattery and pride; almost all are capable of affection, jealousy, envy, hatred, malice, and shame; they will quarrel about what seems desirable to them, and, like man, persist as long as physical endurance will permit; many resent an insult, and punish the offender when an opportunity is afforded; almost all show retentive memories, and the more sagacious and gifted reason and draw conclusions.

And, again, a large proportion of the faculties assigned to man by the modern system of mental philosophy is common to the inferior animals: we observe love of life, alimentativeness, amativeness, constructiveness, self-esteem, love of approbation, cautiousness, benevolence, firmness, imitation, and locality. The action of these several innate faculties common to both man and the lower animals produces the striking analogy observable in the mental phenomena: precisely as there is found a resemblance in the machinery upon which mind depends for manifestation, do we see this affinity. Wundt, who thoroughly investigated this subject, says: "Animals are creatures whose intelligence differs from man only by degree of development. There exists between man and the brute no wider intellectual gap than is to be found in the animal kingdom itself. All animated organisms form a chain of connected beings without an interval. When we represent mental life as it exists,—as a whole,—we must then admit that all animal forms are a part of the whole."

Professor Agassiz confesses that he can "neither see nor say in what the mental faculties of a child differ from those of a young chimpanzee." He also observes, that "the range of the passions of animals is as extensive as that of the human mind; though they may differ in degree, they do not in kind."

This similarity of mental manifestation must be apparent to the most casual observer: this affinity is not less conspicuous in the physical organism. If we compare man with the highest type of speechless brute, we find that every part of the animal fabric, including the brain, bear the closest analogy. Professor Vogt says, that by comparing the brain of man with the brain of the chimpanzee, he finds that they are suprisingly similar. The naturalist Gratiolet also says: "There is a cerebral form peculiar to man and ape, and so in the convolutions of the brain there is a general unity of arrangement;" and this uniformity in the arrangement of the convolutions in both clearly indicate their close connection in the chain of animal life.

If we look at the variations in the size of the human brain itself, we find that its volume is different in different races of mankind: it is far greater absolutely between the highest formed race of man and the lowest, than between the lowest man and highest ape. The largest human skull measured by Dr. Morton in internal content was 114 cubic inches, while the smallest was only 63,—a difference of 51 cubic inches. The highest gorilla development reaches 36 cubic inches, which, taken from 63, the lowest development in man, makes a difference of but 27 inches. So there is less difference between the highest brute and the lowest savage than between the savage and the highest formed and most improved man. Then the gap, both physical and mental, is greater between the lowest man and the highest, than between the lowest man and the highest ape. Where, then, is the gulf between man and the speechless brute? It exist nowhere in nature, only in the imagination of the uninformed. The simple truth in regard to all types of the mammal is, that a certain amount of mental faculty is evolved from a given amount and quality of matter constituting the brain.

No distinction in the mental phenomena exhibited by man and the speechless animals can, with any propriety, be made. What is termed instinct in animals and reason in man is but a distinction in name, without a difference in function. All the facts bearing upon the subject being taken into consideration, they lead us to but one conclusion,

which is all and the only distinction that can be discovered or made between what is called instinct and what is called reason. In the one case, when the action of the mental constitution is undisturbed by external causes, and its action in consequence is definite, or when we see the action of the faculty in a low-developed state, then it has been called instinct; but when the action in the highest development becomes varied and indefinite, then it is called reason, and it was ignorance only that pretended to discover and make a distinction in the mental constitution of animals that is not found in nature. Will any one of the believers in mental distinction say where or in what class, order, or genera of animals instinct ends and reason begins, or how high in the organic scale instinct holds its sway? Professor Huxley, alluding to the manifestation of the mental phenomena, says: "No impartial judge can doubt that the faculties observable in man are deep rooted, and are traceable far down in the lower types of the mammals;" and Agassiz declares that "the gradation of the intellectual faculties among the higher animals and man are so imperceptible, that to deny animals a certain sense of responsibility would be an exaggeration of the difference between animals and man. The testimony of those great naturalists who have made the nature, relation, and connection of man and the lower animals the study of their lives, is, to say the least, authority as good as the belief of those who have never given the matter a serious thought.

Now, seeing that all animated organisms form a chain of connected organic beings without an interval, at what point, or in what period, in this progressive development of intellect, did man acquire or receive this spiritual part of his nature, that endows him with the attributes of immortality. If man of the most gifted intellect is to enjoy it, then the next in the scale is to have its benefit; neither can it be denied to the wild savage, the idiot devoid of reason, or the insane man that has from disease lost his reason, or the child whose brain is undeveloped and incapable of reason; and the higher apes, coming close up to man, must come in also for the same prerogative. There is no escape from it, if eternal life depends upon mental development

or improveable reason. If sagacious animals, that exhibit the faculties, passions, and emotions of man, though in a less degree, are not accountable or immortal, by what philosophy, by what evidence, by what pretence, can man himself claim this boasted prerogative of immortality? Agassiz says: "The arguments of philosophy in favor of the immortality of man apply equally to the same principle in other animals."

### *Analysis of the Human Mind.*

Throughout the entire realm of nature the naturalist finds but one substance, existing under a variety of forms, diverse modifications or modes of existence, and that substance or entity is matter; and however subtle, ramified, imperceptible, or invisible it is, yet ever subject to certain laws, though its conditions are sometimes such as to be known by its effects only.

Thus light is the effect of certain forms of matter, under peculiar conditions, put in motion, requiring time to travel from place to place.

Heat or caloric, too, is a peculiar modification of this same material; it is invisible to the eye, though it is distinctly felt, and is known by the effect it produces on all bodies.

Electricity and galvanism are invisible and subtle conditions of matter, known only by their effects, ever present, pervading all bodies.

Power or force is another invisible condition, known only by the effects exhibited by certain arrangements and combinations of matter.

Life is the result or consequence of material elements arranged, disposed, modified, and combined under organic laws evolved under favorable circumstances by spontaneous generation, and perceptible only by its effects.

Thought is a material effect, found only in connection with organized animal forms; it is exhibited alone by physical organs.

Thus, light, heat, electricity, force, life and thought, are inherent capacities and conditions of matter, known and

found only in connection with it, and exhibited alone under the several proper circumstances and combinations necessary for the evolution of each.

The elements of life and, consequently, thought exist in inanimate matter, and are developed and manifested by the action of the organic forces. Thought being the result and product of organized matter, its amount, kind, and character depends upon the quantity, quality, and arrangement of the matter so organized, just as the power of an electric battery is determined by the manner in which it is constructed, and the quantity and quality of the materials composing it.

It is a settled medical and scientific truth that mind is dependent upon physical organs, or upon certain combinations of matter constituting the brain or organ of intellect; that the kind and grade of mind is determined by the size and activity of those organs in man as well as in other animals.

So late in the day, it is unnecessary to multiply words to prove that mind is material and governed by the laws of matter, for we know nothing, and cannot know anything of mind or its manifestations only as it is connected with corresponding physical organs. All the qualities of mind and degrees of intellect are determined by the material conditions.

Thus in infancy, while the volume of the brain is small, undeveloped, and in an imperfect condition, its functions are weak, exhibiting only that limited thought found in the lower animals and showing but little of the future intellect. In youth, as the organs of the brain grow in size and strength, and advance toward perfection, we behold the mind growing in capacity and power, exhibiting a wider range of thought, and pointing upward to the vigor of more mature years. In manhood, in the meridian of life, when all the parts and organs have attained their full size and perfection, we find the mind following this condition of the physical organization. It is then seen to have acquired its full vigor and endurance, which continues until the organs begin to be changed in their action by age itself. In the decline of life, in old age, the functions of the organs

are changed, the sensibilities are blunted, then the mind, like the body, loses its vigor and becomes feeble; the memory is no longer retentive and exhibits to a great degree the weakness of early years, and in extreme old age and debility is frequently entirely lost.

In disease, when the organs of the brain are either excited or prostrated, the mind follows the condition of the body as every one knows; it either exhibits the peevishness of the child or the ravings of the maniac. In idiocy, too, the mind exhibits the weakness and defects seen in the constitution and construction of the brain. Indeed, if there is any proof wanting to show that the material and so called mental worlds are a living unity, or that the brain and mind in a normal condition is in perfect harmony, the proof may be found in the fact that, as soon as the brain or any portion of it is injured or destroyed, the mental manifestation is correspondingly impaired.

Mind and intelligence is dependent upon certain material conditions:—First, the five senses; next, a perfect brain, with its connecting nerves; and, lastly, upon the faculties corresponding to the several organs composing the brain. Connected with the brain in man are twelve pairs of nerves, that run out to different parts of the body, acting as electric wires and conveying sensation to the seat of intelligence; but for these connecting cords we could not see, hear, feel, taste, smell, or perceive anything dependent upon the senses.

All scientists define the brain as the seat of nervous sensation: the moral and intellectual, as well as the physical, character depending upon the quality of its structure and the relative size and development of its various convolutions. The faculties are natural, innate, and inherent in the physical constitution of the brain: they are the original fundamental powers upon which all mind depends. The faculties are dormant and inactive until enlightened and educated by the external senses. Every faculty stands in a definite relation to external objects, and when the senses present the objects, they excite the faculties into activity. When called into action, the first act is perception, which is a cognizance of the impression made by the

external object as exhibited by the senses; the second is memory, or the power the faculties possess of retaining and reproducing the impression received; the third act is judgment, the capacity of the faculties to compare and decide; the fourth is imagination, the highest function, combining all the others, and amounting to invention. Thus every faculty perceives, every faculty remembers, every faculty judges, and every faculty imagines.

The action of those faculties constitute the bases and elements of the human mind; and the kind, character, and strength of the mind is determined by the number, activity, and capacity of the innate faculties. If an individual possess only a few active faculties, capable of taking cognizance of but few external objects, he can have but few ideas; because those few faculties stand in relation to but few objects, and consequently must exhibit but a limited or contracted mind: and he who possesses the largest number of well-developed active faculties will evince the most comprehensive and powerful mind.

Now we cannot make a faculty, but we can cultivate and improve what we have inherited by nature: when we have done this, then we have cultivated and improved our minds. The faculties can be increased in power, capacity, and endurance by the frequent use or practice of the corresponding organs; just as muscle can be so trained by use and exercise that surprising feats of strength and activity are performed.

These faculties are not all manifested with the same degree of energy and activity in different individuals, because the physical organs upon which they depend are not equally developed or trained. There are no innate ideas or thoughts; there is no inborn knowledge; we have no such things until we receive them. External objects through the senses produce a sensation upon the nerves, which is conveyed to the faculty producing an impression. This is the phenomena of perception; it is the first function of the faculties; and without this act of perception there could be no such thing as an idea. The action of the senses, as a media through which impressions are made upon the faculties, give rise or birth to all ideas or

thoughts; so the greatest number of active faculties give birth to the greatest number of ideas or thoughts that constitute the mind.

The mind may be defined as the sum or aggregate of the impressions received by the faculties, consisting of the ideas and thoughts conceived, remembered, and treasured by them. Mind is, then, not a faculty, but the united impressions, associations, ideas, and knowledge stored up by the several faculties, to be drawn upon at will or pleasure.

But we are incessantly told by unthinking dogmatists that mind is the thinking faculty in man, that by which we receive sensations, the soul or spirit.

Now it is clear that we receive both sensations and ideas through the medium of the senses, which are material. A person devoid of the five senses cannot have any sensations, impressions, or ideas. Can an individual in which the sense of taste is wanting have or receive any sensation of bitter, sour, or sweet? Certainly not, consequently he can have no idea of the sensations that those names indicate to those that have this sense. Does light or the various colors have any impression upon the faculties of a man born blind? Can he form any idea or thought upon the beauty or shades of colors? Or can a man born deaf have any perceptions of sound, or ideas of harmony or melody?

Any one of those three individuals having all the senses perfect except one, and with an average number of active faculties, can possess some considerable amount of mind. Now, if mind is that by which we receive impressions, then this mind, though somewhat defective, must take some cognizance or have some idea of taste, light, or sound, but this is not the fact, as previously shown. Then it follows that this definition of mind is not correct, because it is not that by which we receive impressions. It is the senses that is the medium or instrumentality by which impressions are made upon the faculties that perceives and remembers, from which ideas and thoughts are formed.

Now, I have shown that the faculties are the instruments of thoughts and ideas only, when they have been acted upon by the senses, and not otherwise; and I have shown also that the mind is but the treasured ideas or thoughts

consequent upon the activity of the several faculties. Inasmuch, then, as it was a mistake to assign as the function of the mind what belonged to the senses, let us see if it is not equally a blunder to call mind the soul or spirit.

This soul or spirit is said to have an eternal existence, or to live forever; then, if it be true that it endures forever, it must be plain that the soul or spirit is not mind; for mind, as I have shown, is dependent on the action of the faculties when excited by the external senses. Now, if the senses, which depend upon the perfection of the several physical organs and nerves, and the faculties, which depend upon the material organs of the brain, can endure forever, then this definition of mind may be true. But if the five senses, and the faculties of the brain with their functions, are destroyed and annihilated when death and dissolution takes place, the mind must go with them: there is no help for it. Soul or spirit cannot, then, be mind: it must be something that does not depend upon material organs; for mind follows the condition of the animal organization through life, is diseased when the body is diseased, and perishes with it.

Hence, if it is still maintained that soul or spirit is mind, it follows that soul or spirit can have no eternal existence, and the whole doctrine has no foundation in fact or truth, and must be abandoned, like other antiquated notions, as a mere imaginary whim.

There is nothing abstruse or complicated when the functions of the organism that produces mind are sufficiently examined and understood. We find it produced in man the same as in all other animals; the whole trouble, doubt, perplexity, and confusion that have existed in relation to this subject has arisen, as it did in other studies, from the formation of theories before any correct knowledge was obtained by the observation of facts.

This theory of immortal life was invented to supply the want of knowledge: as the intellect of man appeared so transcendently superior to that of the lower animals, he must therefore possess something that was denied to them; so, in their ignorance of mind and the organs upon which it depended, they assumed that man had a soul that lived

forever, and could give no better idea of what this soul was, than stupidly to imagine that it was mind.

I want to evolve nothing but the truth. I have no prejudices for or against any system or doctrine, and no veneration for anything, no matter how cherished or sacred, that is not found to be true.

Untrained, ignorant savages may be induced to believe almost any marvelous or improbable story; but how any person with ordinary powers of mind, that has the ability or courage to think for himself, can remain so blind as not to perceive that mind, like the physical organization, is subject to disease, derangement, and all the vicissitudes of the animal fabric, and, like it, material, mortal, and perishable, I cannot conceive.

Whether the principle in man be called soul, spirit, reason or instinct, is a matter of no consequence, since it presents, in the whole line of organized beings, a similar phenomenon, closely linked together, which is the manifestation of mind.

The old metaphysicians taught that the material and the mental worlds were separate and independent of each other,—that they were alien entities, diverse existences, separated by an impassable gulf of eternal mystery. These false systematizers, in their ignorance of both nature and truth, divorced mind from matter, fearing that their connection and unity would at once jeopardize the cherished doctrine of man's spiritual existence, and sink him to a level with the brute.

Those metaphysical doctors lived in an age when there was no sound philosophy, and but little or no knowledge of physical science. They were unavoidably ignorant of the elementary qualities of human nature, and particularly of the influence of organization upon the mental powers. They were unacquainted with the relations and connections existing between the mind and the physical world, and could not possibly predict to what extent mankind were capable of being improved by natural means. So it is easily seen what has been the true cause why mankind have so many ages remained unacquainted with their own nature and relations.

The philosophy of man has hitherto been too much conducted as a speculative inquiry tending to a particular dogma, and not as an inductive science; and in consequence even the most enlightened people have never possessed any sound practical philosophy of the mental phenomena, but have been bewildered and misled by arbitrary, contradictory theories. Since the nature and laws of mind are understood, we find there are no gulfs or chasms, no black blanks, between the material and mental organizations.

In studying mind we are not to take leave of matter; the material and mental are in perfect harmony—a living unit that cannot be separated. Such a thing as the manifestation of mind or intellect independent of material organs is unknown in nature. We know nothing, and cannot know anything of mind only as a function of the physical faculties. All the measures of mind and indications of intellect are determined by material conditions.

*Organic Structure the Only Cause of Man's Superiority.*

Let us now examine wherein and in what particulars man differs from those animals to which he in general bears so striking an analogy. Let us trace his great superiority over the lower animals to the causes upon which it depends; then we will be better qualified to judge whether or not they confer or endow him with this great attribute of immortality. Those who have not sufficiently reflected upon the result that has been produced from structural peculiarities upon man, can hardly realize the fact that they alone have been instrumental in producing, in the course of time, the great gulf that now exists between him and the speechless brutes.

As the vast mountain ranges were once upon a level with the adjacent plains, so in the animal kingdom was man once upon a brute level, and by structural instrumentalities has gradually been elevated, until he stands the towering Andes of the living world. His intellect is the accelerated growth consequent upon the food gathered up during a period of thousands of years; even history, limited as it is, shows the development of the human mind to

be but the result of continual accessions. It is a truth of universal application, that every living creature commences its existence under a simpler form than that which it eventually attains. This we will find exemplified in the history of man's progressive development, his structure rendering him an improveable animal.

No elaborate argument is necessary to show that throughout the wide range of organic life a difference of structure produces a difference of function, and man exhibits in his organism but a few small advantages; but, small as they may seem, they are the instrumentalities by which he has climbed upward toward that proud summit he now occupies. One of these peculiarities is the superior prehensile capacity of man over that of any other animal: his hand, though resembling some other animals in point of structure, is better adapted to grasping, the "pollex" or thumb being opposable, its extremity can, with the greatest ease, be brought into contact with the ends of any of the fingers. It is this property that enables man to carry into effect the conceptions of the mind. Some few animals approaching near to him possess it in a limited degree, using clubs, throwing stones, climbing, &c. It is this perfect grasping capacity that gives to man much of his superiority.

Without this structural advantage none of the arts of life could have been cultivated; agriculture, commerce, architecture, and manufacturing never could have existed; no implement or tool could have been made or used; no scientific, optical, or nautical instrument could have been constructed; no metals could have been worked or brought into practical use; no fabric or manufactured material for clothing or any purpose whatever could have been produced. Indeed, without these man must have remained in quite a brute-like condition. Take from man his hands, give him instead hoofs or paws, and he is at once placed in a condition more helpless and powerless to live than those animals to whom they properly belong: he must live upon the spontaneous productions of nature without the art of cookery; the face of nature would have presented a widely different aspect,—the native forests must have remained unsubdued, and civilization unknown to the world of man.

All this and much more was dependent upon the structure of the human hand.

Another peculiarity of organic structure is found in the development of the human brain already alluded to. It is a settled scientific truth that mind is dependent upon physical organs, or upon certain combinations of matter constituting the brain or organ of thought. It has been successfully shown that the kind and grade of mind is determined by the size and activity of those organs; in man as well as other animals, large organs corresponding to energetic functions; this is distinctly seen in the corresponding manifestation of mental faculty. Man, it is well known to all, exhibits a larger brain, in proportion to his stature or muscle, than is found in animals below him in the scale, and hence is capable of exerting more brain power, or greater ability to plan and reason, and, as intellect rises above the mere organic, man possesses in this respect a superior prerogative.

And, lastly, in the human animal there is a structural peculiarity in the organs of sound or voice, the mechanism of the glottis and the will-power to contract and expand it, enabling man to articulate or modify the sounds he utters, giving him the power of speech. Thus, in process of time, he, after sufficient cultivation, by his ingenuity succeeded in the production of language. The cultivation and use of articulate sounds, or the invention of language, was the slow work of time, consisting at first of only a few simple sounds, conveying but limited ideas, but gradually becoming more varied and prolific, as necessity demanded it. Articulate sounds are the result of organic structure in man, just as much as particular sounds are produced in a musical instrument by particular mechanism.

Language is not a gift of nature; in order to use it, invention is first necessary: it is the work of human genius, and can be employed only by those that have learned to articulate the words of which it is composed, which is only done when the individual has obtained the complete control or command of the several parts and organs necessary for the utterance of the proper sound. Not until language was invented, and employed to convey ideas and the results

of experience from one to another, could man begin the work of mental culture with any system or certainty. A chance individual might rise above his contemporaries; but without language his knowledge could not be conveyed to others, and would consequently be lost. Without language it is easily perceived that each individual would only be the possessor of that which he discovered himself, he could receive none of the experience of others, and at the death of the individual all was lost that had been obtained during a long life of experience and discovery.

It was only by adding the experience of the past to his own that man became an improveable and progressive being. The invention and use of letters was a mighty auxiliary in the work of human elevation and improvement, writing being much more enduring and reliable than tradition or pictural representation. Without some instrumentality for conveying knowledge from one to another, man must have remained almost in a brute condition, as is well illustrated by the deaf mutes. A child born deaf can never, in any way, be made sensible of articulate sounds, consequently cannot acquire a language, or receive any information through that instrumentality: it may be perfect in every organ, with only a defect in the auditory nerves, which an expert anatomist alone can detect. The individual may have a perfect brain, a healthy and vigorous constitution, with full share of innate faculties, but be deficient in one of the avenues to the external world,—deaf; therefore can acquire no knowledge through that medium, and can only be educated through the other senses as far as they will go.

Confine a deaf and dumb man from infancy with the society of dumb associates, and he will not evince higher intellectual qualities than an ape or an orang-outang, though he may be perfect in his organization, except in hearing. From infancy confine a child, to adult age, with a calf; let him not hear a word or language spoken, educate him as a calf, and, my word for it, he will be a calf in everything but appearance, though he may have inherited all the faculties that would otherwise have made him intellectual. Still he will drop down toward the brute so far, that

it would perplex him to claim immortal life upon any other pretext than standing upon two legs.

Without further comment on the power of language to elevate the human species, we have the authority of scientific men upon this point. Both Cuvier and Huxley maintain that articulate speech is the instrumentality upon which depends the immeasurable superiority of man; and William Humboldt says, "Man is man by means of language, but in order to use it he must be man." That is, he must possess the necessary organism to produce articulate speech.

Here, in a few structural peculiarities, are to be found the whole solution to the phenomena exhibited by that complicated being of whom it was said, he was "fearfully and wonderfully made," being only a "little lower than the angels." But, as the place of angels in the organic scale remains unknown, we have better authority for saying that he is but a little higher than the ape, and of the same zoological order; and the entire assemblage, embracing all the multifarious and complicated actions connected with man or exhibited by him are included under but three heads:—First, that of nutrition, directed to the support and development of the body; Second, to changes in the relative position of the parts and particles of the organism with each other, producing perception, sensation, thought, will, &c.; Third, that of reproduction or perpetuation of the species. These three include every phase of phenomena observable in man: speech, gesture, &c., are but muscular contractions.

Man has become a progressive being by the instrumentality of several distinct natural causes: just as the trained setter dog transmits the disposition to set game to his offspring, so does man transmit dispositions, capacities, qualities, and acquirements to his descendents. From the time he became distinguished as an animal of superior intellectual capacity, he has been slowly and certainly progressing, his reasoning powers have been augmented by the accumulation and transmission of every improvement. He has discovered and treasured much, and has not yet reached the highest attainable point, but may yet discover more

progress, and grow in intellectual power for some time to come. But he cannot improve or progress forever; there is a limit to his researches and acquirements.

*Is the Soul a Positive Entity?*

We have discovered, by an investigation and comparison of man and the lower animals, the physical causes of man's superior position and condition in nature, but have not discovered the soul that endures forever. Now, if enough is known of this soul in man to convince any one that it is a living entity, then it is clear that something else must be known of it or about it. What is its nature and characteristic qualities? where does it come from? How or when does it originate? Does it grow with the animal, or is it received in a matured condition? Is the soul of the child begotten by the soul of the parent? or is it an undefinable being, created by God for the body of every infant that is brought into the world at the option of both pious and low, degraded parents? Was a large stock created at once, and kept on hand ready-made, to supply the demand? Who made the first discovery of its existence, and at what period? and how was its immortality ascertained? Are souls classified as to size and quality? are some supplied with great ones and others with smaller? or is there an equal measure meted out to all? Has an infant as large a soul as an adult? or has an idiotic organism a soul equal to a perfectly developed type of brain?

Now, if those and numerous other inquiries that might be made cannot be rationally answered, the only conclusion must be that the whole thing is but a sham and a delusion, —a production of the imagination, modified by the locality, time, and circumstances under which it originated. It is conceded by all that the physical organization, or bodily organs, undergo decomposition; that their figure is dissolved after death, but that the elements composing each individual still continue to exist: the living form, only, is changed. Thus far all can agree; but when it is said that each individual human being has something denied to all

organic life except man, then all cannot agree, because the evidence necessary to assure us of its truth is wanting,—nothing that the senses can take cognizance of is adduced to prove it. This belief hangs upon faith,—not a ghost of evidence is to be found to warrant any such conclusion. When we inquire into this dogma of the soul's immortality, we get no intelligent information from its believers. We are told by them that the soul is not a substance, but, in a word, that it is a spirit, that inhabits the human body while living, but after death it leaves for a new home, and that it is not to be discovered in its flight. But when further pushed, we are informed that it is a mystery beyond comprehension. If so, you cannot understand its nature. Why do you decide about a thing of which you are unable to form the least idea? To be convinced of the truth of anything it is necessary to know in what it consists. To believe in the existence of an immaterial soul is to say that you are persuaded of the existence of a thing of which it is impossible for you to form any definite or true notion: it is to believe in words without being able to affix to them any meaning.

Nothing is more certainly known than that it is the physical organs of the body which think, feel, suffer, judge, and enjoy. The human body after death is no longer anything but a mass incapable of producing those motions of which the assemblage constitute life. There is no longer respiration, circulation, digestion, sensation, motion, thought, or speech. We ridicule the custom of burying provisions with the dead, under the conclusion that it will be useful in another life; but is it more ridiculous to suppose that men will eat after death, than to imagine that they will think, feel, or suffer, and experience pleasure, joy, or delight after the organs adapted to produce those sensations are once dissolved? To say that there is any part or entity belonging to man that is susceptible of sensation after the death of the body, is to *say* that men will see without eyes, hear without ears, taste and feel without nerves.

Now, after deliberately surveying the whole ground, and testing this dogma by all the light that is within reach, I honestly and without hesitation assert that I cannot dis-

cover that man has received at his birth, or any time thereafter, any endowment or supernatural gift, completely foreign to the animal, that confers upon him the attribute of immortality. As we cannot discover this exalting and distinguishing principle, that insures an exemption from death and annihilation, common to the brute world, the whole idea stands upon nothing, and must be surrendered.

Nature shows no favors, grants no immunities; no type of life is exempt from the action of her laws. All vegetable life perishes, and all forms and phases of animal life follow the same conditions. Upon what principle can man claim an exemption? upon what pretext can he hope for himself what he admits is denied to all others? It cannot be from his anatomical structure, for we find almost absolute identity; not from his perpendicular stature; nor from his mental faculties, which, though more developed, are fundamentally the same as those of other animals; not from his power of perception, memory, will, and a certain amount of reason,—for these are all found below him. Neither can it be from articulate sounds: it must be upon something completely foreign to the mere animal, and belonging exclusively to man. Now, what is it? Will any one answer? No, never: ignorance has no answer to give; belief, with those converts of immortality, precedes knowledge. Man, say they, has a soul, but no one has yet discovered it; still it is, nevertheless, true. But when impartial science investigates its existence, it is found to be a nonentity.

In primitive times the limited capacity of the human mind failed to discover the true natural cause of man's superiority, and, to remedy their ignorance in this as in all other natural phenomena, they called in some strange unintelligible agency or name, that was more easily imagined than discovered. It was thus, to solve a difficulty the result of ignorance, that a soul became a supernatural gift to man. Had these dupes of the priesthood then the light and knowledge that now abounds, they never could have been made to believe such a glaring absurdity.

This doctrine was early introduced and imbedded in the great family of mankind, and as time rolls on and the race

increases in numbers, there is more treading in the same track, the ruts and channels become deeper, and the difficulty of leaving becomes greater: but shall we still blindly follow on perpetuating the follies, fictions, and fables of antiquity? In all candor I ask, is the stupid coinage of our ignorant ancestors to still pass as sound currency for us? are we still to look to them as authority for truth, regardless of the light that science and intellectual growth reveals to us?

If mankind would undeceive themselves in relation to this nonentity called soul, it is not to subtle hypotheses, not to the church, not to the Bible, not to blind tradition, not to the ignorant past, that they must appeal for a knowledge of the constitution of man, but to a direct investigation of nature by observation, experiment, and experience.

*The Idea of Eternal Life Unjust and Cruel.*

The doctrine that teaches that man rots, but never dies, is a violation of the humane institutions of nature, which removes from pain and suffering all forms of life that have so far violated the laws of health that it has become impossible for them to enjoy a pleasurable existence. The lower orders of the mammal can escape pain and torture,—death kindly relieves them; but with man, pain and torment is to be his portion throughout all coming time, if he does not conform to certain dogmas and human requirements.

There is no humanity in a doctrine so at variance with nature, that insists that man must live forever to suffer punishment in consequence of a few structural peculiarities, or a capacity inherited from his parents to reason just a little more than his contemporary of the same order that is incapable of cultivating language.

If man, by nature and his own exertions, has attained a point so far above the rest of the living world, he undoubtedly should in consequence be entitled not only to as much enjoyment of life and its pleasures, but more, in proportion to his elevated position. But this cannot be, as he is in constant danger of falling into a trap that will subject him

to everlasting misery; or, escaping this himself, be conscious at the same time that others of his fellow-mortals, from some mishap upon a road not very well defined, are suffering the cruel torments in store for those that fail to come up to the prescribed mark. No one can be happy when they know others are suffering. Nature and her institutions are always on the side of humanity; and there is humanity in the idea that death is an eternal sleep. A fear of death has been created by the religious belief of Christians in an eternal life of eternal punishment in the horrible hell sanctioned by the gospel, and the great uncertainty of finding that straight and narrow road that leads to heaven, derived from the same authority.

Men that are termed sceptics have no such unfounded fears: they meet death as an institution of wisdom and humanity, and with much more firmness than those who believe in this false notion; and among many pagans, with astonishing calmness the sick and the aged see the approach of death, meeting it with a fearlessness that no believer in eternal roasting can exhibit.

### *Future Life an Incentive to Crime.*

As far as the teaching or belief in this theory of eternal life or punishment in a world to come goes, its effects are mischievous, producing in one class, of a timid, sensitive, and mild disposition, a false alarm, a dread of torment, productive of no good; while in another class its tendency is even more insidious, being an incentive to crime instead of a preventive. It does not restrain the vicious, nor influence in the least the course or conduct of those who have inherited strong propensities to vice. The ignorant and degraded, the vicious and depraved, as well as the inmates of prisons and victims of the gallows, are nearly invariably believers in this theory of future punishments; for criminals are taught that, though "their sins be as scarlet, they can be made white as snow." To teach that in another world, after death, any one can enjoy a pleasurable existence forever, after a career of vicious and criminal

action in this, is beyond all question an incentive to the commission of crime.

Though sinners are denounced, condemned, and despised for their conduct in this world, still, by faith in the atonement through Jesus, and a course of repentance, there is in store for them in another world, after death, an immortal life of happiness,—is all that the vilest sinner could ask. What restraint can the torments of a future life have upon an evil-disposed individual with the temptation to commit crime? He has everything to hope, and nothing to fear, because he is taught that by employing a priest or clergyman to call upon Jesus, “the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world,” the blackest crimes, the most horrible villainy, will be forgiven, and the culprit will die in peace, enjoying an eternal life of bliss. Supposing this belief ever did, through fear, deter any one from the commission of foul deeds, how much good was the consequence, or how much less wicked or sinful the individual? They were only the more despicable and cowardly hypocrites; with the disposition and will to commit crime, but too cowardly to take the consequences. Indeed, it is no wonder that criminals, convicted of the blackest crimes, believe in immortal life,—it is the sovereign balm of all evil. It is easily perceived that its influence upon society is pernicious; and it is right that it should be so,—it cannot be otherwise, because the doctrine and principle is unsound. It is an attempt to cure an evil by a sham and false remedy.

No doctrine, law, or principle in harmony with nature does or can by its application work bad effects; and, as this belief, under every variety of operation, works only injury, it cannot therefore be sound or true. And again: if God is omniscient and omnipotent, and immortality was an institution to prevent crime, then a belief in it would prove an effectual bar to its commission, because God would employ none but sufficient means; but the means are not sufficient nor effectual,—therefore it cannot be an institution of God, but only a device of man. This doctrine, then, is of no avail, and of no consequence to any one except those false teachers that assume the office of directing

souls to heaven. It was born of the priesthood ; they have a direct interest in its perpetuation, because it yields emolument and power, insures exemption from labor and a luxurious living.

*Scripture Testimony against the Theory.*

In every case, truth is preferable for authority, instead of authority for truth ; but, as anything found in the Bible is good authority for some, I give the sayings of a man reputed for his wisdom and knowledge. He saith : “ Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth ? ” “ I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts ; even one thing befalleth them : as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; yea, they have all one breath ; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast : for all is vanity. All go unto one place ; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. ” Now, as far as the authority of Solomon goes, he puts, in quite as unequivocal language as is found in the book, man upon a level with the beast as regards immortal life.

Nor is that all ; for believers in Bible authority its negative evidence is very conclusive upon this point. Can any one, believing the Bible to be the word of God, admit that anything so important to the eternal welfare of mankind should or would have been neglected ? Belief in immortal life is now looked upon as a test of morality, because those who do not believe it are disqualified to give testimony or hold office, as though they were too immoral to be just or truthful. Now, how does it happen that God gave no evidence of it, nor made any mention of it through his favorite lawgiver, Moses ? It would seem, then, that it could not have been so important, or God, when communicating His will and law to a pet people, would have made this of paramount importance, and particularly enjoined it.

Moses either knew nothing of this doctrine, or deemed it unfit for the comprehension of the ignorant horde he in-

tended to govern, and God, too, must have been ignorant of its great value to mankind. Immortal life formed no part of the religious creed of the Jews; indeed, it was entirely unknown to them until they came in contact with the Persians and Assyrians. So far as the authority of the Old Testament goes, we cannot find any support for such an idea. Though the dogma was wide spread in the time of Jesus, still he made no specialty concerning it. He denounced the Pharisees, who professed to believe this doctrine, for their great immoralities, as hypocrites, comparable to "whited sepulchres full of dead men's bones and all manner of uncleanness"; while the most enlightened Jewish sect disbelieved it, and he had no word of condemnation for these Sadducees. And, further: Jesus promised his followers only worldly pre-eminence. They said, "We have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" He answered, "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." So neither Jew nor Christian has furnished any adequate account of a future state; because in those days good men went to heaven in the body,—flesh, bones, and all. Enoch was translated; Elijah went up, chariot and horses; and Jesus ascended up into heaven, to sit on the right hand of God, living in the flesh.

*Physical Law Inexorable.*

Weak, credulous, and superstitious mortals may spin their favored fancies and hug their dear delusions as much as they may, but they cannot influence or control nature. They are bound to submit to physical law, which knows no time, no place, no condition, nor type of life; to its inevitable decrees all must bow. Some in their vanity have tried to cultivate a belief in the immortality of man by asserting that there would be no use in coming into life if we were thus to die, like other animals, so soon. In this particular they must know and understand man's use in nature, and for what particular purpose the blind forces of

nature that developed man operated; they, too, must be able to discover more with the eye of imagination than is to be discovered by all other instrumentalities. The truth is, man holds and fills his place in nature as all other animals, the entire order to which he belongs constituting only a few links in the great chain of animation. Now, if it is necessary for man, in order to perfect nature, to have a fixed, enduring life, then it is equally necessary that other links in the same chain should also be enduring; for the last and highest link is of no more importance than the first and lowest.

Man is but a monad, comparatively, and the perpetuation of life as an individual must be of the smallest possible consequence. The material particles upon which the flame of a lamp depends are indestructible and eternal; but when separated and changed by chemical decomposition, the flame goes out; and man is but a transitory combination that exists only until his vital forces are expended, and then the inevitable issue is decomposition and dissolution. Not a vestige of man as man is left; the chemicals alone exist, in the same condition as before the organic structure of the animal. No type or form of anything in nature is perpetuated or preserved unaltered, nor do we know of the perpetual continuation of anything except matter. Then, with what propriety can any one assert that the life of man is enduring, since there is no endurance or permanence to the forms into which humanity has been forced. What vanity, to try to persuade ourselves that, though all other things in the organic world disappear, we ourselves are immortal! Man has a beginning, both mentally and bodily, and it is quite clear that whatsoever has a beginning must have an end, and where there is no end there could be no beginning.

*The Teachings of Theology Deceptive and False.*

I ask, in the investigation of this subject, nothing but fair, honest inquiry. For centuries this question has remained in doubt; thinking minds have decided and settled it for themselves, but many have not been bold enough to assert their deliberate convictions. We want men bold enough to be honest, and honest enough to be bold; we want the truth, and are ready for it: I fear not the consequences of its promulgation. I desire to see, in reference to this subject, conclusions drawn from facts and evidence proclaimed with the same energy and unflinching zeal for the cause of truth that theology has unblushingly employed, without evidence, in the diffusion of error for selfish ends.

The priesthood and their coadjutors,—the geographers of this other world,—long since have discovered that it were easier to deceive and gain power over the ignorant masses by amusing them with fictions, than to teach them truths to unfold their reason, or improve their capacity for correct judgment. It is this false doctrine of a future life in a world to come that has enabled them so effectually to conquer the present world of ignorance: without this it could never have been so completely accomplished. It is the only instrumentality by which the clergy could have enslaved and terrified people into perfect submission. So long as theologians and their dupes have been searching for something foreign to the mere animal upon which to base the superiority of man, they have only been deluding themselves, and deceiving or misleading others groping in the dark for that which cannot be found outside of the physical organization itself. All the surmises, assumptions, contrivances, and pretended supernatural gifts are but delusive shams, divested of every proof calculated to assure us of any such thing. When the boasted superiority of man is stripped of the rubbish thrown around it by the imaginary theories propagated by Manou and Zoroaster, subtilized by Pythagoras and Plato, and stands before us in the simplicity which modern sense and science

reveals, we find the cause simplified and narrowed down to a small point,—to that of structural difference only. But this, I repeat, our ancestors' limited intellects failed to find. The authority of our great-grandfathers and their deceivers is no longer to be respected: now, nothing but evidence founded upon facts can be relied upon to enable us to discriminate between truth and trash. Strong-rooted prejudices and cherished chimeras in relation to a future life, like the mist of the morning, will be dispelled by the light of biology.

But, aside from the truth or falsity of this doctrine, it can be of no possible consequence or value to the masses, —to none except those that receive pay or reward for preaching this dogma. For we are told by those soul-saving doctors, that the road that leads to Paradise is straight and narrow, and that few there be that find it (after all their teaching),—that the elect is small indeed; while wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to the realms of misery and death. Thus, by their own showing, all are damned to eternal torture except themselves and a few of the elect,—God's chosen favorites. Oh, ignorant, deluded mortals! how long will mankind continue to be duped and hoodwinked by such vagaries? It is alone by teaching this false and delusive theory that the clergy have maintained their hold upon the people. If the Christian world were undeceived, and convinced that all must perish, after death, with the body, those crafty, selfish engineers would lose the right and business of guiding human souls toward that eternal abode,—they could reap no gain from the hope with which they feed them and the terrors with which they oppress them. Here is the true cause and reason why the clergy are so tenacious concerning this theory,—here is the cause of the "mad dog" cry of sacrilege, infidelity, and blasphemy that is raised in holy horror by them to stifle investigation. But, be it known, it is not for the cause of truth or the good of mankind that they are thus concerned and alarmed, but for their own safety and power: and of all the theological jugglery, ancient or modern, that has been imposed and practiced upon mankind, this theory of the existence of a

soul and its immortality is the most absurd, daring, and impious; its counterpart is only to be found in the doctrine of vicarious atonement.

This doctrine has no inception in human nature. Man in his primitive condition entertains no such idea. Only some religions inculcate it, and only those accept it that are influenced by the false teachings of theology. Among large portions of the human race it is utterly unknown; indeed, the entire profession of Bhuddism, embracing nearly one-half of the great family of man, disbelieve this dogma altogether, and believe in and know only this world: the eternal world they regard as a nullity and a vagary.

### *The Destiny of Man is Extinction.*

When we consult the history of the globe, we ascertain that no part of its crust or the materials composing it are now in the condition in which they originally existed, every portion and part having been worked over and over again into new forms by the action of the physical forces; and, as a succession of great physical changes have taken place upon the surface of the earth, we must therefore expect to find corresponding changes in organic life. It is abundantly proven that it was inhabited thousands and thousands of years by myriads of types of animal life before man made his appearance, each of which have perished in turn, though some have endured much longer than others, outstripping their contemporaries in the race of life, but have eventually yielded to that order of nature,—that law of extinction,—that removes an old and feeble type for the introduction of a new and more vigorous one: just as the younger and more vigorous branches of a tree take the place and draw the sap and nourishment from the older, which, in consequence, die and are forever lost. None of the inhabitants now found living are primordial types; no form of life, either high or low, simple or complex, has endured through vast periods of time, or survived successive revolutions: old types have been invariably supplanted by new and more highly-developed forms.

Production and Destruction is the great law of life,—so

sure as an animal comes into existence so sure will it die ; this same law extends to families, species, and groups. Man and all types of life now in existence are certainly and surely following in the wake of their predecessors,—they are on the highroad to extinction: to that goal they must sooner or later arrive. There is no escape from this conclusion ; it is amply proven by the history of the past. Such has been the course, the round, the *role*, the fate of all beings since life began ; and, as we cannot conclude that the laws of nature will in the case of man be suspended, or that organic development and intellectual growth and progress upon our planet is just now to be arrested and forever stopped, man must share the fate of his predecessors and contemporaries.

As long as the chemical properties of matter and its inherent forces remain the same, nature must operate in the future as in the past ; and however fondly credulous man may feed upon the phantom of immortality, the stern and inexorable decree of nature will rule his race, and man will leave the stage of life : his inevitable destiny is *extinction*. To suppose that man could endure, while other animal species and groups around him must perish, is presuming too much ; nature makes no such exceptions, grants no such immunities. The laws of nature are immutable : old varieties, in both the vegetable and animal kingdom, wear out, decline, and die, never again to reappear.

It is no surmise or assumption to assert that the whole race of man is destined to become extinct : we can decide correctly what will take place in nature for the future by a knowledge of what has occurred in the past. We infer that variable weather and storms will come in the future, because such things have been common in the past ; we know that eclipses and transits will show themselves in the future, because we have witnessed them in times gone by ; we are sure that all animals now living will certainly die, because we know that all animals have died in the past. Hence, we are not less certain that the type of man will become extinct, because other types of animal life have forever disappeared in the past. Upon this point we have evidence, pointed, positive, and clear ; but where, where is

there a ghost of evidence to prove that man is a being that endures forever?

After we have deliberately examined and considered the physical development of the human creature, and the various phenomena presented in common with all mammals, we find that he is none other than matter combined, arranged, disposed, and modified after a peculiar manner, the form and mode of existence varying every instant, exhibiting only the various phases of which matter is susceptible. Is this truth too simple and too plain to account for the complex mechanism exhibited in the economy of man? But few realize the simple energy of matter, and its inherent properties and capacities. It presents an infinity of phases: sometimes solid, liquid, fluid, and gaseous; sometimes organic, sometimes inanimate and sometimes animate, sometimes sensitive and sometimes insensible. It is matter that is vision in the eye, sound in the ear, contraction in the muscle, sensation in the nerve, thought and volition in the brain, and mind in the man. In the face of these facts, will any one dare to claim for the family of man a perpetual existence?

## RECAPITULATION.

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Although the consideration, as given in the foregoing pages of this subject of man's immortality, is both brief and subsultory, still it abundantly warrants the following presentations and conclusions:—

That man is neither more nor less than an organic production, the product of the physical forces; that a mass of nucleated protoplasm is the structural unit of his body; that he originates in a germ similar to that of all animals below him, and comes into the world by the same process as all placental mammals; that he is built up and composed of the same chemical elements, developed in the same way, his brain in an embryotic state passing through the forms of the brains of the lower animals; that he is not only similar to them in structure, but from them and of them, because their very substance and elements are transubstantiated in a few hours into man himself, living, moving, thinking, willing, reasoning, &c., *vice versa*.

That, like all organic forms, the physical and mental constitution of man is moulded, determined, and modified by the influence of external circumstances; that it was alone the force of those conditions, surrounding him with difficulties and dangers, that conspired to his mental development, by a continual demand for genius, ingenuity, and strategy; and this constant exercise of the brain by slow degrees increased the size and activity of its several organs, and he in consequence was lifted above his rivals of the forest, thus outstripping them in brain power.

That there is a strong and striking analogy between the human structure and that of the speechless brutes that lie immediately below him, bone for bone, muscle for muscle, and nerve for nerve; that in the cerebral form and convolutions of the brain there is a general unity of ar-

rangement; that there is less difference in the size of brain between the highest brute animal and the lowest savage than between the savage and the highest developed and most improved man; that the gap, both physical and mental, is greater between the lowest man and the highest than between the lowest man and highest ape; that there is, then, no gulf between man and the brute, since all animal organisms form a chain of connected beings, without an interval.

That the gradations of the intellectual faculties among the higher animals and man are so imperceptible, that to deny animals immortality would be to magnify the difference between them and man; and that any argument in favor of immortality in man applies equally to the same principle in other animals that exhibit the faculties and emotions common to man.

That life and thought are inherent properties and capacities of matter, existing in a latent or dormant condition, like light, force, and electricity, ready to be evolved whenever the proper and necessary conditions and combinations are produced; that mind and mental power is material, its kind and character being dependent upon the quantity, quality, and arrangement of the organized particles; that thought is the result of molecular changes in certain combinations of matter constituting the brain and nervous system; that all the measures of mind and degrees of mental power are determined by material conditions; that from infancy to old age, from health through all forms of disease and malformation to death and dissolution, the mind or intellect is influenced by the physical condition of the animal organs, proving their connection and harmony; that as soon as the brain or any portion of it is injured or destroyed, the intellect is affected or destroyed to the same extent. Thought cannot be anything but material when it is dependent upon certain conditions of matter coming from it; it must therefore be of it. Thought is but a mode of motion in matter.

That soul or spirit cannot be mind, because mind depends upon the material organs of the five senses and the faculties which depend upon the organs of the brain; and

as these are destroyed and annihilated when death takes place, the mind must perish with them,—there is no escape for it. That if the existence and immortality of the soul is insisted upon, it must be shown that it is something of a more enduring character, completely distinct from the mere animal and capable of self-existence.

That, admitting,—what cannot be shown or proved,—the existence of a soul, this soul is not the cause of man's superiority; for it is demonstrated beyond all question or doubt that this depends upon organic structure and nothing else, and that physical development is amply sufficient to account for all human phenomena.

That the soul is no positive entity, because nothing is known of it or about it,—nothing of its origin, nature, or qualities is described; that when we inquire of believers in this dogma, we get no intelligent or definite information. We inquire: What is this soul? A hidden principle, the cause of human action,—a spirit. What is a spirit? A substance, or something which has neither form, bulk, extent, mass, weight, color, or parts. How, then, can it move a body, or in any way act upon our senses? That is a mystery. What, then, can be known of a thing too mysterious for comprehension? It is a popular belief, and must be so. Beasts think, feel, and act, very similar to man; have they no souls? If they had they would be of no consequence, inasmuch as they would be insensible to the damning power of priests, and could not pay to have them saved. That soul is but a name for a nonentity, to which we can affix no idea or meaning, invented for the purpose of hiding ignorance.

That the idea of eternal life is unjust and cruel, because it insists that man must live forever to suffer punishment in consequence of passions and dispositions inherited from his parents, and creates in many an unfounded fear of death, inimical to human happiness.

That the dogma of a future life is an incentive to crime, because it is taught that there are infallible recipēs to quiet consciences and save souls,—that priests in every country possess the secrets to disarm the wrath of God; that if the wicked will share with the clergy the fruits of their

frauds, they may prey with impunity upon the rights of others; that the acts of injustice, rapine, perfidy, and outrage will all be forgiven, that they will die in peace, and the soul will enjoy an eternal life of felicity. Thus a robber, or felon, by giving a part of his fortune to the priest, is insured against eternal fire, and all the torments of the damned. Is there any dogma or doctrine, true or false, that offers greater immunities or encouragement to the guilty?

That the existence and immortality of the soul is not founded upon Bible authority,—that neither Jew nor Christian has furnished any adequate account of a future state of existence.

That the teaching of theology in relation to this doctrine is false and deceptive, tending only to benefit those who preach it,—false, because there is no evidence to sustain it, having no counterpart in nature. It is supported mainly by the false teaching of the clergy, who procure influence, riches, and honor by thus taking advantage of the ignorance, folly, and prejudices of mankind, pretending to have derived power from God to direct the souls of men to heaven. That the clergy are tenacious of this dogma is clear from the fact, that they have shown a savage, persecuting, revengeful disposition toward the individuals who doubt this proposition, that theology is incompetent to understand or explain, and in order to maintain their power and safety, have waged a perpetual war, in every country, against reason, science, and truth.

That none of the inhabitants now occupying our planet are primordial types; old forms have successively been supplanted by new and more highly developed ones; that production and destruction is a law of organic life that will continue to grind on forever, or as long as the inherent properties of matter remain unchanged; that all animal families, species, and orders are following in the track of their predecessors to an inevitable extinction; that there is not an iota to save man from the fate that awaits his contemporaries. The fact that there is no endurance to the forms or of the type into which humanity has been forced, at once annihilates all hope that man possesses any

prerogative, other than organic structure, denied to the inferior animals. That he, being of them and from them, must therefore share the vicissitudes of life and death common to all organic beings; and that the certain destiny of the family of man is extinction,—that this want of perpetuity in the race is at once a death-blow to all ideas of eternal life or future existence.

## CONCLUSION.

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I have endeavored to discuss this subject honestly, coolly, and fairly, with a desire to give due weight to all the facts and arguments presented in its defence. But I have been unable, in my limited consideration, to discover either. I find that it is based alone upon a blind faith in the conjectures and chimeras of Pagan priests that tradition has carried down to us through a long night of ages, and that it now hangs only upon the hinges of ignorance and fear. I know how dear delusions are to those that believe without evidence or knowledge. I know how hard it is for ignorance to part with traditional prejudice and the blinding influence of education. No reliance can at all be put in any of the oriental fables and fictions picked up from among the theological rubbish that has drifted down to us through the channels of tradition. We want truth, based upon facts drawn from nature and experience. Truth is almighty and irresistible, and will ultimately prevail; strong-rooted prejudices and long-cherished superstitions must fall and vanish before its steady, onward march. Profligate priests have long enough had their way, say, and pay for teaching trash instead of truth; let them hereafter earn an honest living, and cease longer to delude and defraud the credulous masses.

I have maintained persistently that mind and soul are not synonymous, and that the nonentity called soul is not the cause of the immeasurable superiority of man. I have shown upon what it does depend; therefore, I am free to say in what it does not consist. And, after having thus presented the main structural peculiarities upon which the towering superiority of man depends, and from which he derives all that distinguishes him above the inferior

animals, I, in all candor, present the question,—Is there anything in the structure of the brain (that differs more between the several varieties of man than between the low type of human brain and the ape), the organs of speech, or the conditions of prehension, common to man, that insures to him immortality? Is man to live forever because his brain is so constructed that he can reason a little more than the gorilla, or articulate a little better than a parrot, or construct better than a bee or a beaver? Because language renders reason improveable, because the hands are so constructed that he can apply that reason to practice in the arts,—because of these few structural differences between animals, is one to endure forever and the other to be annihilated? To these inquiries, I agree with Solomon, “As the one dieth, so dieth the other. \* \* \* All go unto one place.”

Surely the facts I have presented, the arguments I have used, and the conclusions I have drawn in the investigation of this subject, can have no tendency to lessen or destroy our respect for the dignity or nobility of man, except in the estimation of those that have not yet escaped from the blinding influences of traditional prejudices. Because man is in substance and structure one with the brutes; because his superiority depends mainly upon the capacity for producing articulate sounds, that he has arranged into intelligible speech, whereby he has slowly accumulated the experience that was lost to others; because he has seized upon the advantages that organic mechanism gave him for his elevation,—because his superiority is dependent upon these, is he in any degree degraded? Not in the least; but ennobled, because it furnishes us with a knowledge of his primitive mental condition, and of the lowly stock from whence man has come, and the best evidence of the power of structural peculiarities to afford capacities by which he struggled upward through the darkness of the long past to the proud eminence he now occupies.

I have no doubt but what I have shocked the tender sensibilities of many by an assault upon a future life, and the destruction of a world to come; but, if I have placed obstacles upon the track on which they have so long rode

unmolested, recollect I have only been removing them from others. I have only made an assault upon ignorance and error, that now and in past ages have cursed our world, and given some facts and arguments tending to show that a belief in the hypothetical dogma of man's immortality is one among the many delusions that have captivated the human mind; and if my array of facts should raise a howl of holy horror, and a lamentation over the destruction of all faith in the existence of soul and the hope of a world to come, let them rave away and cling to their delusions; as they need, for want of intellect, the terrors of future punishment and the hope of reward after death to keep them in the paths of moral rectitude.

In the total absence of both facts and arguments to sustain this doctrine, I ask, of what consequence are the consecrated errors of ancient theology to us? Is a blind faith in their stupid fables necessary to explain the phenomena of human life? Not a bit of it. At the period or epoch that this hypothetical and mythical dogma was proclaimed, the human mind was not sufficiently developed to grapple with the enigmas of nature; the existing stage of knowledge forbade any rational conclusions in reference to the economy of nature or philosophy of life. Shall we continue longer to rely upon our grandmother's bones as the oracles of truth? The antiquity of a tale or theory adds nothing to its plausibility or truth. So long, then, as we seek in this maze of ancient darkness for proofs upon which to base immortality, so long as man is infatuated with the myths and phantoms of superstition taught by holy fanatics, so long as he views the discoverers and expounders of truth as his enemies,—just so long will he be unsettled, deceived, and disappointed: he will find his path continually beset with insurmountable obstacles, marching in the midst of unceasing storms, and tossed by every wind of tradition upon this ocean of uncertainty.

Cease, then, to cling to the delusions, to the chimeras and the errors of the dead past. That which is false cannot be useful or valuable. Truth is the only helm that will guide man out of the sloughs of mystery, miracle, fraud, deceit, and terror that the priesthood have everywhere thrown

around us. We can rely upon facts only, fiction will no longer avail.

I have said the question of consequences was unworthy of consideration or discussion; but methinks I hear the minions of superstition raise a hue and cry against an assault upon this popular delusion; so I ask when or where, in the history of the world, was mankind injured or afflicted by the overthrow or destruction of a popular error? Galileo was charged by ignorance with teaching a doctrine and system of astronomy at variance with the Bible and the truths of theology, of corrupting the youth, and endangering the well-being of society. But the new philosophy demonstrating the truth prevailed, and ignorance and its false notions were eventually overturned and eradicated. Now, did the world of mankind sustain any loss or calamity by the downfall of the old, false doctrine, or adoption of the new? The human family have always profited by the adoption of truth in contradistinction to error. The demonstrative philosophy taught by Galileo forced the truth upon the human mind, thereby supplanting error, and mankind was largely the gainer in consequence.

The idea that it is better to cling to an old error that has long had the sanction and consent of ignorance, than to accept a new truth, is altogether fallacious. Although error may be deep-rooted, and even form the very basis of a theory or system in human society, still it is ruinous policy to cherish it, to the rejection of a demonstrable truth. Truth is valuable because it is truth, and its dissemination a blessing. Every one now knows and appreciates the truths that science teach; they understand their vast importance in human progress; but when they were first discovered and proclaimed, loud-tongued denunciators were ready to cry humbug even at Morse's telegraph, and denounce geology and kindred sciences as baseless and mischievously immoral because they did not harmonize with the book of Genesis, their traditional prejudices, and superstitious dogmas. But the time is close at hand when the false doctrines and fictions of the past must fade and fall before the steady onward march of scientific truth. The search of the Scriptures and the investigation of religions

have impaired their authority; doubt and infidelity range over a wider area than ever before. Scepticism has become naturalized in modern intelligent society.

Science and religion, the two antagonists, are now in the open field, and will have a free and fair fight. One must be vanquished. Already physical science has attained a prodigious and powerful growth, and has been sweeping myths and phantoms, gods and devils, out of the world. Idols and images have been crumbling and tumbling, definitions of the unknown have been vanishing, chimeras and fables are fast fading away, and soon the human mind will be disenthralled from the chicanery and knavery of an insolent and arrogant hierarchy.