

PRICE ONE PENNY.

IS MAN MORTAL ONLY;

OR, HAS HE AN IMMORTAL SOUL?

AN INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN THE SCIENCE AND ART SCHOOL, BLACKBURN, BY

W. J. COLVILLE, SUNDAY, JULY 15TH, 1883.



URING the past few days the thought of this town has been much agitated on the question of human immortality. The recent debate between Rev. H. CAMERON and Mr. A. SMITH has aroused the thinking portion of the community to re-investigate the rational and scriptural proofs of man's immortal nature. According to the rules of the debate the question "Is man mortal only?" and the very similar question "Has man an immortal soul?" was to be discussed, and decided by reference to the bible and reason. On the first night of the debate, when it was opened by Mr. Smith, that gentleman declared that the question was to be settled by reference to the bible and reasoning upon the bible. To him the bible appeared immensely large, and human reason apart from it, insignificantly small, whereas in this last quarter of the nineteenth century, unfortunately for that dogmatism which leans for support upon the literal infallibility of the bible, reason is everywhere extolled as beyond all price, while the bible is often ignored or set aside as an antiquated and comparatively worthless court of appeal.

In our address to-day we shall endeavour to make very plain our own position with reference to the bible and human reason, and while we certainly shall not endorse the orthodox theory of plenary inspiration as commonly put forward by Christians of the evangelical type, we shall place ourselves in an attitude towards the very venerable book with which many

of our secularist agitators do not appear at all times to sympathize, though our theory of the worth of the bible is not necessarily at variance with the logical conclusions of those who do not believe in any sense in miracle or supernaturalism; but who, believing in the omnipotence and immutability of the laws of nature, attribute every occurrence in the universe to the working of these all-powerful and unchanging laws. To us the bible is a collection of manuscripts of varying age and nature, all may have been originally inspired, but even were they so, inspiration is limited by the channels through which it flows, just as light is fettered and coloured by the windows through which it is admitted into buildings. If the window is large, clean, and white, then the solar ray can pour in, in all the glory of its native undimmed refulgence; but if the window be small and sullied, or if it be of coloured glass, then the light which pervades the apartment will be faint, and coloured by the aperture through which it passes. Take this in illustration of the way in which moral and intellectual light reaches the human mind, and you will have a consistent and rational theory of divine influx which, contradicting no fact of science and imposing upon the human mind no arbitrary fetters, will account rationally for real or apparent discrepancies and contradictions, and throw much useful light upon the much vexed question of intercourse between the mundane and spiritual realms of existence.

The bible is not, correctly speaking, one book, but many; it reflects the thought of many men and many spirits, and is, while very valuable and instructive, by no means a perfect literal history of the whole human family. Neither is it to be regarded by persons of sound common sense as a direct transcript of the whole of spiritual truth. Concerning its authenticity, its authority, and its genuineness, scholars are everywhere divided. Bishop Colenso, whose views are considered decidedly heretical by the Church of England, has nevertheless brought forward many unanswerable arguments in favour of his views, and stands to-day as the representative of much liberal broad church teaching within the pale of the establishment. Of course the high church or ritualistic party among anglicans will refer us to antiquity, to the voice of the church, and to the especial ministry of the holy spirit by means of apostolic succession, while the evangelical will tell us that in every age, within the breast of the individual believer, the same holy spirit has testified to the infallibility of the sacred page. The rational student of the bible, though a reverent Jew or Christian, will be quite ready to

allow that the bible must submit itself to searching scrutiny, must allow itself to be assailed with similar weapons to those with which all feel entitled to handle Emerson, Paine, Voltaire, or Shakespeare; and if after investigation it shall be found worthy of the highest place in the ranks of literature, will it not be far more honoured and beloved if it has endeared itself to human hearts and minds by proving its own divinity than though it should be blindly accepted by persons who believe in its sacredness because the word "holy" is imprinted on its covers, and they have been taught from earliest infancy that every statement it makes is necessarily true? Mr. Smith evidently takes the ground that things are true because the bible declares them to be so; but even should we grant the correctness of his position, (which, however, we do not) we should still be at a loss to see how an infallible book can be capable of causing such diversity of opinion among its worshippers, unless our proposition is the correct one: that no matter how highly inspired a teacher or volume may be, all knowledge of truth among men is relative, as human capacities are so varied that what one can readily perceive another cannot see at all. It is puerile and unworthy of the infinite to suppose that God spasmodically visits the earth and occasionally allows a privileged one or a few, to become the receptacles of his truth. The only consistent and God-honouring idea of revelation is that it is constant, unintermittent: that truth is purposely withheld from no one, and arbitrarily revealed to no one; but that throughout the universe every mind receives as much of truth as it is capable of assimilating, and that those who are in darkness are so not because of God's unwillingness to enlighten them, but solely on account of their failure to benefit by what is found highly beneficial to others, otherwise receptive. All orthodox and evangelical Christians agree that God's word is true and that the bible is God's word. Notwithstanding this central affirmation upon which all agree, the divisions in Christendom multiply rather than diminish, and the hardest battles in theological controversy are constantly fought out between men who hold precisely the same views upon the bible. The Calvinist declares that election and reprobation are clearly revealed in the scriptures. The Arminian with equal positiveness asserts that universal salvation is offered to all, but will not be accepted by all. The Universalist urges that universal salvation is offered to all, and will assuredly in time be accepted by all. While Mr. Smith, and his followers and believers in conditional immortality generally, as enthusiastically maintain that man is not inherently

immortal, but is only a candidate for immortality, and that immortality is only gained by union with Christ, who is immortal.

With the kindest personal feelings toward Mr. Smith, but with a resolute determination to prove the fallacy of his positions, we shall now take up point by point his arguments and references; and we hope in so doing we may, while justifying both from reason and the scriptures the sublime fact of human immortality, express only feelings of kindness and respect for all who hold different views from our own, and who are honest and self-sacrificing in their promulgation. Mr. Smith is a come-outer from the established church, his dissent from the prevailing tenets of that church rendering it necessary that he should either cloak his conscientious convictions or secede from the establishment and take the independent stand which he has been honourable and fearless enough to take. This act of Mr. Smith's certainly entitles him to the kindest mention by all engaged in the work of religious reform, and places him in a somewhat similar position to that of Rev. Charles Voysey, who has gained the admiration of a large percentage of the most intellectual and refined of the free religionists of our day. But however much we may admire a man's independent and fearless advocacy of what he sincerely believes to be true, we do not feel any more obliged to pass over flagrant errors and absurd inferences in silence than though they were made by men whose zeal was less unquestionable. We deal with principles, not persons, and in the advocacy of our philosophy always strive to introduce persons merely as illustrations of the progress of current thought. Mr. Smith, as you are well aware, is a believer in conditional immortality. This doctrine is neither new or singular; it is commonly believed by many who have studied the Buddhist scriptures that the original uncorrupted faith of millions of Asiatics, of deep research and great spirituality, is that man can only preserve his identity in the heavenly spheres, and remain a spiritual unit in the great ocean of conscious life throughout eternity, provided he has so fanned into a flame the spiritual spark within him that he has succeeded in consummating his own individualization as a spiritual entity. The secret organizations of various lands are believed by many to have shared this view, and in that very remarkable and fascinating treatise, "Ghost Land," translated and edited by Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, we find a similar view taken by some of the "brothers," while others go so far as to declare that immortality is a delusion, and that only the "atmospheric spirit"—a sort of etherealized

material body—outlives for a while its grosser counterpart, and then loses its individuality for ever. But these views are not entertained by the most advanced of the world's theosophists. The higher theosophy, to which but comparatively few attain, accords far more closely with the ideas of the soul entertained by the best minds among the Greeks, who, like Socrates and Plato, contended for the identity of the human soul as the real unchanging being, and regarded the physical body merely as a garment, a moving tabernacle, or a house of discipline for the spirit. A few years ago the columns of the *Christian World* were almost filled for many weeks with discussions on conditional immortality, and anyone who read those articles, some of them from very able Congregational ministers, who stand exceptionally high in the estimation of multitudes, must have observed that the doctrine was simply invented or accepted as a loop hole of escape from that atrocious dogma of everlasting torment, which all the denominations are now happily discarding; but while we heartily sympathise with the conditional immortalists in their vigorous protests against the eternity of future misery, we can but behold in their arguments a failure to grasp that larger and loftier truth of universal salvation, which Ballou, Murray and many other distinguished American Universalists so nobly proclaimed more than a century ago. Conditional immortality is inconsistent with the nature of man, and does not harmonize at all with the plain teachings of the bible; and when disputants over a doctrine appeal to the bible and to reason, it is necessary that they should clear away from their paths all valid, rational, and scriptural objection to their premises before expecting the public to admit that they have reason and scripture on their side. In America there are many who believe that man is not inherently or essentially immortal, but only a candidate for immortality. Among these are many Trinitarians, who believe that man becomes immortal through alliance with Christ, by faith; and also many Unitarians who consider that immortality springs from the cultivation of the divine life within, and is the reward of a good moral and philanthropic life rather than the result of any particular trust reposed in a personal saviour. Mr. Smith's absurdities are not due to his simple belief in conditional immortality, but to his peculiar and utterly irrational theory of immortality. While we deny his original premises, that man is by nature mortal only, a rational mind can tolerate and reasonably consider such a proposition; but when a gentleman, claiming knowledge not only of the bible in its English form, but also of the dead languages, and of the facts revealed by modern

science, undertakes to prove to an intelligent audience that immortality consists in the rebuilding of the carnal body, which is set aside at death, and that God's people without immortal souls—as according to Mr. Smith there is no such thing in the universe as an immortal soul—shall rise again in the physical frames in which they once lived on earth, reason is insulted, intelligence is defied, and the theory is so grotesque and repulsive as to make us all feel, if we only reflect upon it, that immortality, if we ever obtain it under such conditions, will be a catastrophe rather than a blessing.

Mr. Smith quotes from Genesis to substantiate his positions. He deduces from the first book of the Pentateuch that Adam and Eve were the original inhabitants of the earth, and that death was introduced into the world as the result of their disobedience to the commands of God, delivered unto them concerning trees in the Garden of Eden. Now we will turn to Genesis, and see what this book really says, even in the letter, concerning the formation of man. The first chapter, from verse 26 to end of chapter very clearly states that God created man (that is, mankind) in his own image, male and female, and said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it. In the 29th verse, it is most emphatically stated that every tree is to furnish them with food; no single tree are they prohibited from using as a source of food. Here we have a vague general account of the origin of man. We are not told where man was originally brought into existence. It may have been in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, or Polynesia, or some old tract of land long since submerged by water, so that modern discoverers, exploring as they will the deeps of sea and land, searching for the cradle of the human race, can find no clue to its whereabouts whatever, even if they believe in their infallibility by reference to the Mosaic records. This ought to satisfy any ordinary reader of the bible that the whole system of theology, which bases itself upon the fall of a certain man and woman in a definite locality in Asia, 6,000 years ago, can in no sense refer to more than one race of men. Now read Genesis ii: there you will be introduced to a garden of Eden. There you will be told of the Lord God forming a man from the dust of the ground, and a woman from his side, and to that particular man and woman the prohibitory command is given, thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Now for a rational interpretation of these two chapters. The first chapter gives a general literal account of the order of succession of the various

types of animate and inanimate existence upon the earth ; and, strange to say, Moses and Darwin do not conflict very seriously after all. All modern theories of evolution declare that man is the result of all that appeared before him. All naturalists and geologists unite in affirming that the inanimate creation preceded the animate ; that vegetable growths were developed before animals ; and that man came last of all. What does Moses say ? That there were grasses and herbs before there were fowls and fishes ; and that there were fowls and fishes before there were warm blooded animals or mammals ; and that man appeared later than the cattle. There you have—in outline—the most ancient doctrine of evolution, not clearly taught in all elaborateness of detail as it is being discussed to day, but hinted at, at least,—certainly not contradicted—and certainly not unknown to the writers of the Pentateuch.

But there are some very singular and unscientific passages in this first chapter of the bible concerning the creation of the sun after the earth. How are these to be reconciled with the known facts of astronomy ? We are told that the sun and moon were made on the fourth day ; but where is the scientist who does not most positively infer from the order of the solar system that the sun is older than the earth, or the earth could not be made to revolve around it ? The letter of this chapter very clumsily declares that the moon was not formed, and that the sun's rays did not clearly reach the earth until the close of the third day or tertiary period. Now what theories are current in the scientific world of to-day concerning these very matters ? Many notable astronomers entertain the idea that the moon was formed from a ring that formed around the earth, and that with the departure of this ring and its alteration into a satellite the impedimenta were removed which until then formed a barrier between the earth and the sun, and practically produced a permanent eclipse of the sun. Turn your telescope toward Mercury to-night, if the atmosphere allows of your making observations upon that planet, and what will you discover ? Thick clouds, dense vapours, darkest obscurations veiling its surface. Just as Mercury now is the earth has been. The light which a planet receives does not depend upon its nearness to or its distance from the central luminary, but upon its condition as a receiver and reflector of solar light. Thus one of the innermost planets—the very one nearest to the sun—may be the darkest in the system ; and the outermost—the one furthest from it—be the brightest of all. At one period in its history a world may be dark as Cerebus, at another time bright as bright

can be ; and this owing not to any change in the position of a world in space, but owing entirely to changes in the condition of the world itself. That scientific knowledge was possessed by men on earth many thousands of years ago is abundantly proved by Egyptologists, and all antiquarians, and that the learned were always wont to express themselves figuratively to the multitude, and plainly only to the initiated few, is clearly proved by reference to all ancient history, both sacred and profane.

Now as regards this question of death. Where is the scientist or student of nature who will not tell you that your coal beds are carboniferous formations, and that they are literally immense masses of decayed and hardened vegetable substance ? Now, every geologist knows that the carboniferous era was one during which man could not possibly exist upon the earth. Now, during this era, vegetables died in immense quantities, or we should have no coal fields to-day. If death is the result of sin, then the original sin must be that of the vegetable, because the vegetable certainly died long before man appeared. Then, what are we to say of primeval animals—the mammoth, the mastodon, and other extinct species ? Did they sin before man, and are the fossilized remains of ancient animals of prodigious size proofs that they disobeyed God, and therefore inherited the penalty of physical death ? Again, if man has no pre-eminence over the beast, as Mr. Smith is so fond of constantly reiterating, were the beasts originally made neither mortal nor immortal, but candidates for immortality, and did they forfeit immortality by transgression ? If they did not, and man did—if they were created without power of becoming immortal, and man was created with that power—then man must have had a radical pre-eminence over the beast.

One of Mr. Smith's favourite Mosaic characters is a talking serpent. Now, does he wish us to believe that serpents before the fall walked upright and had the gift of speech, and that because one of them tempted Eve that they were all doomed henceforth to crawl upon their bellies and eat dust ; or does he think, as many of the orthodox do, that the devil assumed the form of a snake, and spoke seductively to Eve, and brought about the fall of herself and husband, and through them of all the human race ? If he accepts either of these premises or interpretations, what does he mean by referring his hearers, on one of the nights of the debate, to the new testament, to the words of Paul especially, II Cor. v. 9, which he quoted ? Does he believe that in the days of Paul serpents regained their lost power of speech, and walked about Palestine or Corinth alluring

the primitive Christians to live corrupt lives ; or, does he wish us to believe that the devil in Corinth again took the form of a literal talking serpent and seduced the Corinthians as he seduced Eve ? If so, there must have been a literal tree of knowledge of good and evil in Corinth, and these early Christians must have fallen from grace by eating the literal fruit of a literal tree. I ask Mr. Smith, if he does not believe any such nonsense as this, why he persists in so foolishly twisting the bible as to make what he calls God's word appear ridiculous in the eyes of every man, woman, and child who uses his common sense in ever so slight a degree. The ministers of religion are the men who make the infidels, and if atheism is a crime, christian ministers will have to answer for many a heinous crime at the day of judgment ; for by their perversity and obstinate literalism they have so perverted and falsified the truths of revelation, that wherever their interpretations are oftenest heard the bible becomes the greatest laughing stock and target for ridicule in the community. Mr. Smith objects to accepting the truths of scripture figuratively and allegorically ; then why does he turn to Paul to substantiate his crude and nonsensical literalism when this great apostle to the gentiles, alluding to Hagar and Ishmael and Mount Sinai, in Arabia, declares these things are an allegory—see Galatians iv, ver. 24.

But it is only just to our hearers to give our own view of the scripture allegories, which is simply this. The ancients were, for the most part, unlettered and in bondage ; they were from time to time under the dominion of tyranical monarchs, who persecuted to the very death, all who possessed knowledge they chose to condemn. The learned were very few in number, comparatively, and they were the only ones capable of writing and preserving history in those times. They usually established secret orders or brotherhoods, and taught a few prepared pupils or disciples the inner facts of their philosophy. When they wrote, their writings served a double purpose ; that of recording national events, and that of perpetuating under symbols which were not provocative of monarchical displeasure the scientific and spiritual truths they possessed, but which they were compelled to veil. Moses, we are told, was educated at the court of a Pharaoh—he was regarded as the grandson of the reigning monarch. He was versed in the knowledge of the Egyptians, and when the Israelites left Egypt at the time of the exodus, we are told they spoiled the Egyptians and borrowed their ornaments. Comparative theologians are now discovering that very many Jewish customs and ceremonies, as well as

doctrines, are directly traceable to older Egyptian ideas and practices. The Pyramid of Gizeh—that miracle in stone which is to-day numbered among the greatest wonders of the world—cannot have been erected later than 2,170 B.C., and probably much earlier; and no one can deny that that stupendous pile could not possibly have been erected by persons unacquainted with astronomy, mathematics, geometry, and the secrets of masonry. Masons claim kinship with Solomon, the builder of the great Jewish temple; and every mason admits that masonry is a system of correspondencies: that the Jewish religion and temple were masonic; therefore, correspondential. Who is there at all familiar with Oriental literature, or with the classics, who does not know that the Orientals and the Greek philosophers purposely wrote in a dual form, that they might teach their disciples hidden wisdom and not betray their treasures of truth into the hands of their relentless persecutors, through whom Socrates, for speaking too plainly, was compelled to quaff the poisonous hemlock through which he ended his earthly career in a dungeon cell? Who denies the parabolic character of many of the utterances of Jesus? Who believes that the parable of the prodigal son; of the sower; or of the ten virgins, is a fragment of literal history? And yet the metaphors employed conform so closely to Jewish and Oriental customs generally, that there is a certain amount of literal historic accuracy even in the parables themselves. No view of any book can be a helpful one which does not bear practical good fruit in the age and place when and where it is put forward; and Mr. Smith's, and many other people's literalism, being capable of bearing no good fruit in the present day, may be safely regarded as a mere vice of the times, due to an utter absence of logical clearness and familiarity with the facts both of history and science. Thus much for the allegoric theory. Now a word concerning the Pentateuch. It is by the best scholars unanimously regarded as an essentially Jewish production,—as a history of and a guide for the Jews especially, rather than for humanity at large. The Jews always considered themselves the especial favourites of Jehovah: they always believed that they were in some peculiar sense the chosen people of God; and no matter how far advanced in liberal theology many modern Jews may be, the Jewish race still feels that it has what it loves to call a Messianic mission to fulfil; for, while the idea of a personal deliverer is receding from Jewish thought, no Jew who professes any real attachment to his race and religion fails to hope and believe that God will especially employ Israel in bringing about the

dawn of universal peace and good will among the nations. The descendants of Adam, historically, are simply the progenitors of the modern Israelites. Adam is the typical founder of the house of Israel; and, while Abraham is called the father of the faithful, Abraham is a direct lineal descendant of Adam. Now, while from a common sense and scientific standpoint, it is entirely unnecessary to use arguments in defence of the fact of all men not having proceeded from Adam, there are still many persons who believe that the bible states positively, that Adam was the first man who ever inhabited the earth, and that all the tribes of the earth are his descendants. But turn again to Genesis, and you will find the bible teaches nothing of the sort. Turn to Chapter iv, and there you will find an account of Cain's slaughter of his brother Abel; when Cain has perpetrated this dreadful deed and is about to wander forth into a strange land, we are told that he expresses great dread lest anyone seeing him should slay him; and we are told further that God put a mark upon Cain, so that he should be protected from all who might otherwise cause his death. Then follows the story of Cain's marriage and the birth of Enoch. Who could have found Cain and slain him if Adam and Eve were the only people on earth besides Cain after Abel was slain, and Cain was fleeing from home to take up his abode in a strange land? The Jews always believed themselves to be a peculiar people, with a distinctive origin. At one time they were the most intellectual people on the face of the earth; and when we read a little later on in Genesis (chap. iv.) that the sons of God formed unhallowed alliances with the daughters of men, thereby giving birth to a race of giants, we can only behold in the letter of this history a characteristic Jewish protest against inter-marriage, and an expression of disapproval of any act which leads to racial degeneration by a higher people mingling with a lower for sensual gratification. The term sons of God is very old, and is equivalent to sons of Osiris, or sons of the Sun, frequently used to designate the especially favoured ones of the land among the Egyptians, and especially the seers and prophets.

Now comes up the all-important question: what did the Jews believe concerning immortality? They, as a people, accepted the doctrine taught to them in Egypt, viz. this: that the human spirit survives the death of the body and enters the unseen world, there to receive judgment at the hands of the universal judge, Osiris. If the departed spirit had done on earth more good than ill, then was it said to go on into Paradise; if it had done more ill than good, then it must pass through stages of

purification until it was cleansed from its iniquities and made fit for the heavenly realms. Many Jewish customs and ideas are of apparently Persian extract. Now, what did the Persians believe concerning immortality? The Parsees were all Universalists, believing in the ultimate destruction of all evil, and the eternal and undivided supremacy of good only. All the ancients believed firmly in immortality, and though some ideas of transmigration were weird and wild, yet there is a moral to every one of the old world tales; and it is the work of the modern teacher to clear away the alloy from the central gem, not to destroy the diamond because its lustre is not clearly revealed when surrounded with foreign substance. That the Jews firmly believed in immortality is quite plain from the book of Maccabees, and from the Talmud. Maccabees informs us distinctly that it is a good custom to pray for the dead. Paul alludes to persons being baptized for the dead. The custom of prayer for the departed in the Roman Church is derived directly from ancient Jewish usage. The Talmud, which embodies the very cream of rabbinical commentary upon the law and the prophets, enters in many places into learned and explicit dissertations upon the nature of the future life. We admit that Moses laid far greater stress upon the present than the future life; but he, like all wise philosophers, knew well that future happiness and misery flow from present obedience or disobedience to divine law, and thus his sage injunctions concerning the conduct of life are well-timed and sufficient, as the life beyond the grave is but the natural continuation of life upon the earthly side of it, and the habits formed here prepare us for joy or sorrow in the hereafter. The Jews always believed in spirit return: they taught the existence and frequent appearance of angels among men; and we ask to have it shown to us in a single passage of scripture that angels are other than what they profess to be—human spirits disrobed of material form. Turn to the Psalms for a definition of angels (the word angel literally only means a messenger.) Psalm civ., verse 4, “Who maketh his angels spirits.” Here we are simply told that angels are spirits. That they are not human spirits is nowhere stated; but that they are human spirits is constantly inferred, because they always appeared as men, and were spoken of as such: as, for instance, when the angels appeared to Abraham; yea, when the Lord himself appeared. Every appearance was strictly and unmistakably a human appearance. We are told that *three men* came to him, (Gen. xviii) one of whom is called the Lord, the other two are angels, who arrived at eventide in Sodom. These angels are distinctly called men, (Gen. xix)

and were certainly mistaken for ordinary human beings by the inhabitants of the place. Now if they had been, Mr. Smith's kind of angels, or angels with wings, which we often see in pictures and carving, how could it have been that they were so mistaken for men? Not only are they confounded with men on one occasion, but upon all occasions by the bible. Two angels announced the resurrection of Jesus—they are called two young men. An angel appeared to John, on Patmos, and revealed unto him things to come, and this angel says that he is one of John's fellow-servants—that he is one of the prophets. Is a prophet a being something other than human? If so, where is the scriptural evidence, or the rational evidence of such being the case? Mr. Smith so utterly failed to answer Mr. Cameron in the recent debate: so utterly failed to explain away with the slightest show of reason, the appearances of Samuel, through the woman of Endor's mediumship, and of Moses and Elias with Jesus and three chosen disciples, on the Mount of Transfiguration and the existence of souls in a conscious state under the altar, crying out as described in the Apocalypse, that it is useless to take up your time with showing the self-evident fallacy of his illogical statements. That there are passages in Job, Psalms, and Ecclesiastes which seem to teach the death of man as occurring when the body dies no one can successfully deny; but because these passages prove that certain men in certain states of mind did not realize their immortality is not the slightest proof that therefore we are to take it for granted that the human spirit is not an immortal entity, as distinct from the physical body, at least, as the hair is from the head it covers. The physical body is merely an appendage or integument, and just as the integuments of the physical body can change constantly without the bodies being seriously affected thereby, so can the entire physical frame change completely in the course of every few years without its changes seriously modifying the condition of the real individual. Mr. Smith says, show up your real man if he is distinct from your body! As well ask chemists, mechanics, natural scientists generally, to show up their steam, wind, and electricity, all of which agents are universally declared by science to be invisible. If invisible, how do we know they are real and active: is it not by the effects they produce? The effects of a real human intelligence, not the body, but operating through it, are so manifold that the simplest observations of every day life ought to convince every sane person of the reality of the spiritual man. If man is mortal only, and the body of man is the only man there is, how is it possible that an

old man of 70 can remember, with perfect clearness oftentimes, events which happened when he was a little boy of 7—events which have been buried in the oblivion of forgetfulness during many active years of business life. How often do we notice the singular phenomenon of an aged grandsire recounting, in his seat in the chimney corner, episodes in a life which could not possibly have been his if the body is the real and only man; for it is inconceivable that the new particles of matter composing his body at that time can have any recollection of what happened to the old materials which have long since been rejected! Memory proves the existence of the spiritual man, and the very fact of a mother recognizing by some fond paternal instinct the bronzed and bearded sailor, a man of 40, as the identical child of hers, who left her a mere stripling in his teens, is a proof beyond successful cavil that there is a something both in the woman and the man over which material fluctuations have had no power.

Mr. Smith tells us not simply that immortality is conditional, but that immortal life consists in the future resuscitation of corpses. There are many among the Congregationalists and others who are disposed to favour a certain theory of conditional immortality, which, as a substitute for the old idea of eternal torment, is very acceptable to many tender hearts; but the monstrosity of the idea of immortality consisting in the literal resurrection of the physical body is a folly into which no profound thinker can possibly for an instant fall, for the question at once arises,—what body is to rise? If we have lived to 70, the probabilities are that we have had ten bodies; if we have only lived to 21, we have had three. Is all the matter that has ever composed our bodies to rise *en masse* and form a colossal structure for the aged at the day of judgement, while the young are to have a much smaller and less cumbersome frame? Then—how are the materials to be fairly allotted or portioned out that all may receive exactly what belongs to them? Bodies decompose and become converted into fruits and grains which go to form other human bodies; the chances are that we have many of us eaten portions of our resurrected ancestors; if so, the materials which originally formed their bodies must go back to them, and we must be left with something less than enough to form a perfect physique. Such absurdity in the name of divine truth lands us upon such a sea of arrant folly that we care not to provoke a laugh by pursuing the logical sequence of such ideas any further. The plain words of scripture are,—“There is a natural (literally, a *physical*) body, and there is a spiritual body,”—“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God,”—“We

have known Christ after the flesh, but henceforth after the flesh know we him no more." These and hosts of similar passages go to prove conclusively to the intelligent bible student that what is meant by the resurrection is something very very different to the coming up again from the grave, from dust, of a poor worn out garment of the spirit. Job's allusion to seeing God in the flesh has not the slightest reference to a fleshly resurrection, but refers entirely to his supreme trust in divine providence in the midst of his bitterest trials, feeling confident that in his earthly life he would more than recover from all his infirmities and gain even greater possessions than he had lost; this confidence was not misplaced, and when in his returning health and increasing riches he calls to remembrance the testimony of those who had traced the hand of divine goodness in his affliction, he exclaims, (Job xlii, v. 5), "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee."

Thus, one by one, Mr. Smith's scripture texts might be explained by others if he would only read the books of the bible from end to end, and compare text with context, instead of wrenching out of their context a few isolated texts and forcing upon them a meaning as foreign to collective scriptural teaching as it is to common sense and universal reason. One of this gentleman's strongest arguments against universal immortality is that only God's people attain to it. He says, Abraham, Isaac, Job, Moses and Elijah, as well as Samuel, may have had an existence beyond the grave because they were people of God. Then we will ask him what Jesus meant in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus: Lazarus may stand as a representative of God's persecuted saints, whose reward is in the hereafter and not here; but is the rich man a type of God's beloved, upon whom he confers the especial gift of immortal life? In the 16th chapter of the Gospel according to Luke, we have a most graphic account of the sufferings of a certain rich man, who neglected works of charity on earth, dying and being buried, and afterwards possessing powers of sight, speech, memory, and suffering, in a world called hell or hades. If "the dead know not anything,"—if their consciousness and memory have departed—how is it possible for them to suffer after death? To argue consciousness after death from this narration is to argue what is simply axiomatic and self-evident to every sane individual. I ask, whether Jesus, or men living in gross sensuality, should be accepted by professing christians as the best authority upon the existence and nature of the unseen world?—surely they will answer, Jesus; then, on the testimony of Jesus, Mr.

Smith's positions fall in ruins to the ground. Here allow us a word concerning the state of the rich man in torment. Orthodox christians have most erroneously inferred from this passage that punishment is vindictive, and not reformatory. That it is remedial in nature is self-evident from its results. The selfish egotist, who on earth thought only of his good dinners, his purple and fine linen, and other creature comforts and luxuries, needs to endure a little of the pains of hell before he could feel for somebody besides himself; after he has felt the pangs of suffering a holy disposition begins to be animated within him, he prays that his brethren may be saved from sharing with him a place of torment. Where, we ask, is the evangelical christian who will not tell us that one of the surest signs of a heart under the influence of the spirit of God is its concern for the salvation of others? If Christ ever intended to teach hopeless damnation for all who entered hell, how could he consistently have portrayed a soul in hell developing kindly regard for the souls of others?

In this brief, hasty, and necessarily very imperfect review of an endless subject, we have said no more than enough to awaken some who have not studied biblically and rationally the question of immortality, to open their minds and their bibles afresh, and search the scriptures of nature and the records of the ages for evidences of man's real condition in the life beyond. If Mr. Smith and his followers will open their souls to the spiritual influences at whom they scoff, and whose very existence they deny, they will learn that the human soul is something higher than a "smelling bottle," and that life beyond the grave follows the life on this side of it as naturally as day and night, winter and spring, succeed each other.

Our final word this morning shall be to call your attention to the moral bearings of the whole subject. Neither orthodoxy or materialism satisfy man's ever-increasing sense of justice and love of impartial right; neither can have the highest and most ennobling influence upon man here. If death ends all, then thousands of criminals escape for ever the consequences of crime: a little arsenic or laudanum can evade the strictest human justice, and land the man who takes it into eternal unconsciousness; while, if there is no life after physical death, millions suffer vicariously with no result of their pains, here or hereafter, and the universe is at the mercy of blind chance or an omnipotent fiend.

In our next discourse we will take up the subject of the real nature of the spirit life, and pursue to greater length some of the arguments which lack of time has necessitated our leaving unfinished now.