

IMMORTALITY AND MODERN THOUGHT.

“Philosophy can bake no bread; but she can procure for us God, Freedom, Immortality.”—*Novalis*.

THE apparent futility that has attended all efforts to prove the immortality of man springs largely from the fact that a sense of immortality is an achievement in morals, and not an inference drawn by logical processes from the nature of things. It is not a demonstration to, or by, the reason, but a conviction gained through the spirit in the process of human life. All truth is an achievement. If you would have truth at its full value, go win it. If there is any truth whose value lies in a moral process, it must be sought by that process. Other avenues will prove hard and uncertain, and will stop short of the goal. Eternal wisdom seems to say: If you would find immortal life, seek it in human life; look neither into the heavens nor the earth, but into your own heart as it fulfills the duty of present existence. We are not mere minds for seeing and hearing truth, but beings set in a real world to achieve it. This is the secret of creation.

But if demonstration cannot yield a full sense of immortality, it does not follow that discussion and evidence are without value. Mind is auxiliary to spirit, and intellectual conviction may help moral belief. Doubts may be so heavy as to cease to be incentives, and become burdens. If there are any hints of immortality in the world or in the nature of man, we may welcome them. If there are denials of it that lose their force under inspection, we may clear our minds of them, for so we shall be freer to work out the only demonstration that will satisfy us.

Whatever is here said upon this subject has for its end, not demonstration, but a clearing and paving of the way to that demonstration which only can be realized in the process of moral life—that is, by personal experience in a spirit of duty. Or, I might say, my object is to make an open and hospitable place for it in the domain of thought.

This result would be nearly gained if it were understood how the idea of immortality came into the world. It cannot be linked with the early superstitions that sprang out of the childhood of the race—with fetichism and polytheism and image-worship; nor is it akin to the early thought that personified and dramatized the forces of nature, and so built up the great mythologies. These were the

first rude efforts of men to find a cause of things, and to connect it with themselves in ways of worship and propitiation. But the idea of immortality had no such genesis. It is a late comer into the world. Men worshiped and propitiated long before they attained to a clear conception of a future life. A forecasting shadow of it may have hung over the early races; a voice not fully articulate may have uttered some syllable of it, and gained at last expression in theories of metempsychosis and visions of Nirvana; but the doctrine of personal immortality belongs to a later age. It grew into the consciousness of the world with the growth of man,—slowly and late,—and marked in its advent the stage of human history when man began to recognize the dignity of his nature. It does not belong to the childhood of the race, nor can it be classed with the dreams and guesses in which ignorance sought refuge, nor with the superstitions through which men strove to ally themselves with nature and its powers. It belongs to them neither in its history nor in its nature. It came with the full consciousness of selfhood, and is the product of man's full and ripe thought; it is not only not allied with the early superstitions, but is the reversal of them. These, in their last analysis, confessed man's subjection to nature and its powers, and shaped themselves into forms of expiation and propitiation; they implied a low and feeble sense of his nature, and turned on his condition rather than on his nature—on a sense of the external world, and not on a perception of himself. But the assertion of immortality is a triumph over nature—a denial of its forces. Man marches to the head and says: “I too am to be considered; I also am a power; I may be under the gods, but I claim for myself their destiny; I am allied to nature, but I am its head, and will no longer confess myself to be its slave.” The fact of such an origin should not only separate it from the superstitions, where of late there has been a tendency to rank it, but secure for it a large and generous place in the world of speculative thought. We should hesitate before we contradict the convictions of any age that wear these double signs of development and resistance; nor should we treat lightly any lofty assertions that man may make of

himself, especially when those assertions link themselves with truths of well-being and evident duty.

The idea of immortality, thus achieved, naturally allies itself to religion, for a high conception of humanity is in itself religious. It built itself into the foundations of Christianity, and became also its atmosphere and its main postulate, its chief working factor and its ultimate hope. It is of one substance with Christianity — having the same conception of man; it runs along with every duty and doctrine, tallying at every point; it is the inspiration of the system; each names itself by one synonym — life.

Lodged thus in the conviction of the civilized world, the doctrine of immortality met with no serious resistance until it encountered modern science. It may have been weakened and obscured in the feature of personality by pantheistic conceptions that have prevailed from time to time, but pantheism never will prevail in a hurtful degree so long as it stands face to face with the freedom of our Western civilization. A slight infusion of it is wholesome, and necessary to correct an excessive doctrine of individualism, and to perfect the conception of God; and it has never gone far enough in its one line to impair the substantial validity of the doctrine of immortality. We may repeat without hesitation the verse of Emerson:

“Lost in God, in Godhead found.”

But when modern science — led by the principle of induction — transferred the thought of men from speculation to the physical world, and said, “Let us get at the facts; let us find out what our five senses reveal to us,” then immortality came under question simply because science could find no data for it. Science, as such, deals only with gases, fluids, and solids, with length, breadth, and thickness. In such a domain and amongst such phenomena no hint even of future existence can be found, and science could only say, “I find no report of it.” I do not refer more to the scientific class than to a scientific habit of thought that diffused itself throughout society, and became general by that wise and gracious contagion through which men are led to think together and move in battalions of thought, — for so only can the powers of darkness be driven out. We do not to-day regret that science held itself so rigidly to its field and its principles of induction — that it refused to leap chasms, and to let in guesses for the sake of morals. If it held to its path somewhat narrowly, it still went safely and firmly, and left no gaps in the mighty argument it is framing and will yet perfect. The severity and even bigotry that at-

tended its early stages, even with its occasional apparent damage to morals, were the best preparation for the thoroughness of its future work. If its leaders — moved by the conviction that all truth is linked together — at times forsook the field of the three dimensions, and spoke hastily of what might *not* lie beyond it, they are easily forgiven. When scientists and metaphysicians are found in each other's camps, they are not to be regarded as intruders, even if they have not learned the pass-word, but rather as visitors from another corps of the grand army. The sappers and miners may undervalue the flying artillery, and the cavalry may gird at the builders of earthworks; but as the campaign goes on each will come to recognize the value of the other, and perhaps, in some dark night of defeat when the forces of the common enemy are pressing them in the rear, they will welcome the skill of those who can throw a bridge across the fatal river in front to the unseen shore beyond.

But science has its phases and its progress. It held itself to its prescribed task of searching matter until it eluded its touch in the form of simple force — leaving it, so to speak, empty-handed. It had got a little deeper into the heavens with its lenses, and gone a little farther into matter with its retorts, but it had come no nearer the nature of things than it was at the outset. I may cleave a rock once and have no proper explanation of it, but I know as little when I have cleaved it a thousand times and fused it in flame. In these researches of science many useful facts have been passed over to man, so that easier answer is given to the question, What shall we eat and wherewithal shall we be clothed? But it came no nearer to an answer of those imperative questions which the human mind will ask until they are answered — Whence? How? For what? Not what shall I eat and how shall I be clothed, but what is the meaning of the world? explain me to myself; tell me what sort of a being I am — how I came to be here, and for what end. Such are the questions that men are forever repeating to themselves, and casting upon the wise for possible answer. When chemistry put the key of the physical universe into the hand of science, it was well enough to give up a century to the dazzling picture it revealed. A century of concentrated and universal gaze at the world out of whose dust we are made, and whose forces play in the throbs of our hearts, is not too much; but after having sat so long before the brilliant play of elemental flames, and seen ourselves reduced to simple gas and force under laws for whose strength adamant is no measure, we have become a little restive and take up again the old questions. Science

has not explained us to ourselves, nor compassed us in its retort, nor measured us in its law of continuity. You have shown me of what I am made, how put together, and linked my action to the invariable energy of the universe; now tell me what I am; explain to me consciousness, will, thought, desire, love, veneration. I confess myself to be all you say, but I know myself to be more; tell me what that more is. Science, in its early and wisely narrow sense, could not respond to these demands. But it has enlarged its vocation under two impulses. It has pushed its researches until it has reached verges beyond which it cannot go, yet sees forces and phenomena that it cannot explain nor even speak of without using the nomenclature of metaphysics. In a recent able work of science the word "spirit" is adopted into the scientific vocabulary. Again, physical science has yielded to the necessity of allying itself with other sciences—finding itself on their borders. Chemistry led up to biology, and this in turn to psychology, and so on to sociology and history and religion, and even to metaphysics, whose tools it had used with some disdain of their source. In short, it is found that there is no such thing as a specific science, but that all sciences are parts of one universal science. The broad studies of Darwin and Herbert Spencer have done much toward establishing this conviction, which has brought about what may be called a comity of the sciences, or an era of good feeling. The chemist sits down by the metaphysician and says, Tell me what you know about consciousness; and the theologian listens eagerly to the story of evolution. Unless we greatly misread the temper of recent science, it is ready to pass over certain phenomena it has discovered and questions it has raised to theology. And with more confidence we may assert that theology is parting with the conceit it had assumed as "queen of the sciences," and—clothing itself with its proper humility—is ready to accept a report from any who can aid it in its exalted studies.

This comity between the sciences, or rather necessary correlation, not only leads to good feeling and mutual respect, but insures a recognition of each other's conclusions. Whatever is true in one must be true in all. Whatever is necessary to the perfection of one cannot be ruled out of another. That which is true in man's spiritual life must be true in his social life; and whatever is true in social life must not contradict anything in his physical life. We might reverse this, and say that no true physiologist will define the physical man so as to exclude the social man; nor will he so define the social and political man as

to shut out the spiritual man; nor will he so define the common humanity as to exclude personality. He will leave a margin for other sciences whose claims are as valid as those of his own. If, for example, immortality is a necessary coördinate of man's moral nature,—an evident part of its content,—the chemist and physiologist will not set it aside because they find no report of it in their fields. If it is a part of spiritual and moral science, it cannot be rejected because it is not found in physical science. So much, at least, has been gained by the new comity in the sciences,—that opinions are respected, and questions that belong to other departments are relegated to them in a scientific spirit.

But this negative attitude of natural science toward immortality does not by any means describe its relation to the great doctrine. The very breadth of its studies has made it humble and tolerant of hypothesis in other fields. It is parting with a narrow and confining positivism, and is keenly alive to the analogies and sweep of the great truths it has discovered—truths which, as science, it cannot handle. More than this: while it has taught us to distrust immortality, because it could show us no appearance of it, it has provided us with a broader principle that undoes its work,—namely, the principle of reversing appearances. The whole work of natural science might be described under this phrase; it has laid hold of the physical universe and shown that the reality is unlike that which first appears. It has thus bred a fine, wholesome skepticism which is the basis of true knowledge and of progress. Once men said, This is as it appears; to-day they say, The reality is not according to the first appearance, but is probably the reverse. The sky seems solid; the sun seems to move; the earth seems to be at rest, and to be flat. Science has reversed these appearances and beliefs. But the Copernican revolution was simply the beginning of an endless process, and science has done little since but exchange Ptolemaic appearance for Copernican reality, and the process is commonly marked by reversal. Matter seems to be solid and at rest; it is shown to be the contrary. The energy of an active agent seems to end with disorganization, but it really passes into another form. So it is throughout. The appearance in nature is nearly always, not false, but illusive, and our first interpretations of natural phenomena usually are the reverse of the reality. Of course this must be so; it is the wisdom of creation—the secret of the world; else knowledge would be immediate and without process, and man a mere eye for seeing. Nature puts the reality at a distance

and hides it behind a veil, and it is the office of mind in its relation to matter to penetrate the distance and get behind the veil; and to make the process valuable in the highest degree, this feature of contrariety is put into nature. What greater achievement has mind wrought than to turn the solid heavens into empty space, and fix the moving sun in the heavens, and round the flat world into a sphere? Truth is always an achievement, and it becomes such by reversing appearance—turning rest into motion, solids into fluids, centers into orbits, breaking up inclosing firmaments into infinite spaces. The human mind tends to rest in the first appearance; science—more than any other teacher—tells it that it may not. But it is this premature confidence in first appearance that induces skepticism of immortality. No one wishes to doubt it; our inmost soul pleads for it; our higher nature disdains a denial of it as ignoble. No poet, no lofty thinker suffers the eclipse of it to fall upon his page, but many a poet and thinker is—nay, are we not all?—tormented by a horrible uncertainty cast by the appearance of dissolving nature, and reënforced by the blank silence of science? The heavens are empty; the earth is resolving back to fire-mist; what theater is there for living man? Thought and emotion are made one with the force of the universe, shut up for a while in a fleeting organism. What is there besides it? Brought together out of nature, sinking back into nature,—has man any other history? What, also, is so absolute in its appearance as death? How silent are the generations behind us. How fast locked is the door of the grave. How speechless the speaking lips; how sightless the seeing eye; how still the moving form. Touch the cold hand; cry to the ear; crown the brow with weed or with flower—they are alike to it. It is an awful appearance; is it absolute—final? Say what we will, here is the source of the dread misgiving that haunts the mind of the age. Science has helped to create it, but it also has discovered its antidote. The minister of faith stands by this horrible appearance and says: "Not here, but risen." He might well be joined by the priest of science with words like these: "My vocation is to wrest truth out of illusive appearances. I do not find what you claim; I find instead an appearance of the contrary; but on that very principle you may be right; the truth is generally the reverse of the appearance." I do not advance this as an argument, but to create an atmosphere for argument. For we still think of death under Ptolemaic illusion; we have not yet learned the secret of the world, the order of truth—inverting the landscape

in the lens of the eye that the mind may get a true picture. To break away from the appearance of death—this is the imperative need; and whatever science may say in detail, its larger word and also its method justify us in the effort. Hence the need of the imaginative eye and of noble thought. Men of lofty imagination are seldom deceived by death, surmounting more easily the illusions of sense. Victor Hugo probably knows far less of science than do Büchner and Vogt, but he knows a thousand things they have not dreamed of, which invest their science like an atmosphere, and turn its rays in directions unknown to them. Goethe was a man of science, but he was also a poet, and did not go amiss on this subject.

I pass now to more positive ground—speaking still of science, for the antagonist of immortality is not science, but a contagion or filtration from science that permeates common thought.

Assuming evolution,—it matters not now what form of it, except the extremest which is not worthy of the name of science,—I remark that the process of development creates a skepticism at every stage of its progress so great that one has no occasion even to hesitate when the claim of immortality is made. Doubt has so often broken down that it is no longer wise to doubt. Improbability has so often given way to certainty and fact that it becomes almost a basis of expectation. One who traces evolution step by step, and sees one wonder follow another, should be prepared at the end to say, "I will wonder no longer at anything; I have turned too many sharp corners to be surprised at another." Take your stand at any stage of evolution, and the next step is no stranger, no more to be anticipated, it is no broader leap than that from death to future life. Plant yourself at any given stage, with the knowledge then given off by phenomena, and report what you can see ahead. Go back to the time when the swirl of fire-mist was drawing into spheres and predicate future life;—the raging elements laugh you to scorn. Life from fire!—no dream of metempsychosis is so wild as that. You detect a law of progress; but to what are you now listening—to the elements or to mind? The elements can tell you nothing, but mind detects a law in the elements that affords a ground for expectation. The appearance silences you; the hint leads you on, and you become perhaps a very credulous and unscientific believer, confronted by entirely scientific facts to the contrary. If one is skeptical of the reality of the spiritual world on scientific grounds, or on the score of simple improbability, the best practi-

cal advice that can be given him is—to transport himself back into early geologic or chemic ages, and then attempt to use a positive philosophy to find out what shall or shall not be, on the ground of appearance. But I yield too much; the development of life from nebulous fire is a fact so immensely improbable, that mind cannot be conceived of as accepting it. Take later contrasts,—the headless mollusk glued to rock in a world of water, and an antlered deer in a world of verdure; or the huge monsters of the prime, and thinking man. Here are gulfs across which contemporaneous imagination cannot leap, but looking back we see that they have been crossed, and by a process of orderly development. We see the process and the energy by which it was wrought, but of the source of the process or of the energy we know nothing until we postulate it. But, shut off as we are at every stage of the process from the next by its improbability, and only able to accept it as we look back upon it, and even then with an essential unknown factor at work,—what right have we, with so confounding a history behind us, to cut it short and close it up with a doubt on the ground of improbability? Are we not rather taught to expect other wonders? I am quite ready to hear the answer of science, that the process under which immortality is claimed is unlike that of development,—that it cannot be gained under the same laws nor according to the same method. Evolution does not spare the individual nor the class. Life, as we see it, is a functional play of something—we know not what—set in favorable relations to an environment, and ending when the relations become unfavorable. When environment ceases to play well into the organization, and the organization fails to adjust itself to the changing environment, life ends; and the life of that organization cannot go on because it was simply a thing of relations which have been destroyed. This seems logical, and would be final if all the factors and all their processes were embraced and understood in the argument. This, we claim, is not the case, but, on the contrary, claim that there are factors and elements not recognized, which may involve other processes and another history. Science responds: This is all we find; we cannot go outside of the facts and the processes. Life is a functional play of something—we know not what; but, not knowing it, we have no right to deal with it, and so set it aside.

This is the crucial point upon which immortality as a speculative question turns. Shall it be silenced in its claim on such evidence? Is there no higher tribunal, of wider

powers and profounder wisdom, before which it may plead its eternal cause? We turn to that which is the substantial method of all ages—the necessary habit of the human mind—to philosophy.

We now have the grave question whether we are to be limited in our thought and belief by the *dicta* of natural science. In accounting for all things, are we shut up to matter and force and their phenomena? Science as positivism says: Yes, because matter and force are all we know, or can know. Another school says boldly: Matter and force account for all things—thought, and will, and consciousness; a position denied by still another school, which admits the existence of something else, but claims that it is unknowable. If any one of these positions is admitted, the question we are considering is an idle one, so far as demonstration is concerned; it is even decided in the negative. The antagonist to these positions is metaphysics. Faith may surmount, but it cannot confute them without the aid of philosophy. And how goes the battle? I think an impartial judge of this friendly conflict, in which a man is often arrayed against himself, would say that metaphysics not only holds, but is master of the field. At least, science is speechless before several fundamental questions that itself has put into the mouth of philosophy. Science begins with matter in a homogeneous state of diffusion,—that is, at rest and without action, either eternally so, or as the result of exhausted force. Now, whence comes force? Science has no answer except such as is couched under the phrase “an unknowable cause,” which is a contradiction of terms, since a cause with a visible result is so far forth known. Again, there are mathematical formulæ, or thought, in the stars, and in matter, as in crystallization. The law or thought of gravitation necessarily goes before its action. What is the origin of this law as it begins to act?—and why does it begin to act in matter at rest?—a double question to which science renders no answer except to the latter part, which it solves by polarization; but this is simply putting the tortoise under the elephant. Again, evolution, as interpreted by all the better schools of science, admits teleology or an end in view; and the end is humanity. But the teleological end was present when the nebulous matter first began to move. In what did this purpose then reside?—in the nebulous matter, or in some mind outside of matter and capable of the conception of man?

Again, how do you pass from functional action of the brain to consciousness? Science does not undertake to answer, but confesses that the chasm is impassable from its side.

What, then, shall we do with the fact and phenomena of consciousness? Again, what right has science, knowing nothing of the origin of force, and therefore not understanding its full nature,—what right has it to limit its action and its potentiality to the functional play of an organism? As science it can, of course, go no farther; but, with an unknown factor, on what ground can it make a negative and final assertion as to the capability of that factor? Again, you test and measure matter by mind; but if matter is inclusive of mind, how can matter be tested and measured by it? It is one clod or crystal analyzing another; it is getting into the scales along with the thing you would weigh.

These are specimens of the questions that philosophy puts to science—or rather, as I prefer to phrase it, that one's mind puts to one's five senses. The observing senses are silent before the thinking mind. But these questions are universal and imperative. No further word of denial or assertion can be spoken until they are answered. And as science does not answer them, philosophy undertakes to do so, and its answer is—Theism. The universe requires a creating mind; it rests on mind and power. Metaphysics holds the field, and on its triumphant banner is the name of God. Science might also be pressed into close quarters as to the nature of this thing that it calls *matter*, which it thinks it can see and feel; and how it sees and feels it, it does not know. When Sir William Thompson—led by a hint of Faraday's—advances the theory that all the properties of matter probably are attributes of motion, a surmise is awakened if matter be not a mere semblance or phantasm; and if force, or that which creates force, is not the only reality—a true substance upon which this play and flux of unstable matter takes place. Under this theory of advanced science, it is no longer spirit that seems vague, illusive, unreal, but matter—slipping away into modes of motion, dissolving into mere activity, and so shading off toward some great Reality that is full of life and energy—not matter, and therefore spirit. Science itself has led up to a point where matter, and not God, becomes the unknowable. A little further struggle through this tangle of matter, and we may stand on a "peak of Darien" in "wild surmise" before the ocean of the Spirit.

The final word which the philosophical man within us addresses to our scientific man is this: Stop when you come to what seems to you to be an end of man; and for this imperative reason, namely, you do not claim that you have compassed him; you find in him that which you cannot explain—some-

thing that lies back of energy and function, and is the cause or ground of the play of function. You admit consciousness; you admit that while thought depends upon tissue, it is not tissue nor the action of tissue, and therefore may have some other ground of action; you admit an impassable chasm between brain-action and consciousness. What right has science as science to leap that chasm with a negative in its hand? And why should science object to attempts to bridge the chasm from the other side? Physical science has left unexplained phenomena; may no other science take them up? Science has left an entity—a something that it has felt but could not grasp, just as it has felt but could not grasp the ether. May not the science that gave to physics the ether try its hand at this unexplained remainder? Let us have, then, no negative assertions; this is the bigotry of science. But a generous-minded science will pass over this mystery to psychology, or to metaphysics, or to theology. If it is a substance, it has laws. If it is force or a life, it has an environment and a correspondence. If it is mind and spirit, it has a mental and spiritual environment; and if the correspondence is perfect and the environment ample enough, this mind and spirit may have a commensurate history. This is logical, and also probable, even on the ground of science, for all its analogies indicate and sustain it. My conclusion is this: Until natural science can answer these questions put by other sciences, it has no right to assume the solution of the problem of immortality, because this question lies within the domain of the unanswered questions. Not to the Trojan belongs the wounded immortal Diomed, but to the Greek, who vindicates the claim of his heart by the strength of his weapons.

BUT has science no positive word to offer? The seeming antagonist of immortality during its earlier studies of evolution, it now seems, in its later studies, about to become an ally. It suddenly discovered that man was in the category of the brutes and of the whole previous order of development. It is now more than suspecting that, although in that order, he stands in a relation to it that forbids his being merged in it, and exempts him from a full action of its laws, and therefore presumably from its destinies. It has discovered that because man is the end of development he is not wholly in it—the product of a process, and for that very reason cut off from the process. What thing is there that is made by man, or by nature after a plan and for an end, that is not separated from the process when it is finished, set in entirely

different relations and put to different uses? When we build a wagon, we gather metal and wood, bring them together, forge, hew, fit, and paint till it is made; but we do not then break it into pieces, cast the iron into the forge and the timber into the forest; we trundle it out of the shop and put it to its uses which have little to do with the processes by which it was framed,—made under one set of laws but used under another. When a child is born, the first thing done is to sever the cord that binds it to its origin and through which it became what it is. And what is creation with its progressive and orderly development,—heat acting upon matter overshadowed by the Spirit; then a simple play of forces; at length a quickening into life, and then a taking on of higher and more complex forms, till at last the hour comes and man is born into the world,—what is creation but a divine incubation or gestation within the womb of eternity? The thought is startling, but I disclaim a rhetorical interpretation and offer it as a generalization of science. What then? The embryotic condition and processes and laws are left behind, and man walks forth under the heavens—the child of the stars and of the earth, born of their long travail, their perfect and only offspring. Now he has new conditions, new laws, new methods and ends of his own. Now we have the image of the creating God—the child of the begetting Spirit. It is to such conclusions that recent science is leading. Nowhere have they been indicated so clearly and ably as in the recent work of Professor Fiske, “The Destiny of Man.” It is indeed meager, though not weak, as a plea for immortality, not touching fields where the considerations are strongest, the moral nature and history of man; but it meets successfully and unanswerably the main point which, if not met, renders all after arguments vain, or leaves them in an empirical state. The march of Hannibal into Italy was a triumph of military genius, but the difficult part was a few miles on the summit of the St. Bernard pass. Mr. Fiske’s book conducts us over the Alps to the question. The imperative requirement is to take man out of the category of physical nature and the process of evolution as it has been going on, and put him into another category, and under laws that are the reverse of those heretofore acting in material and brute development. The author I have referred to does this through a broader generalization than his *confrères* in science usually indulge in. Briefly stated, the thought is this: Man is the end or product that nature had in view during the whole process of evolution; when he is produced, the process ceases, and its laws either end at once

or gradually, or take on a form supplementary to other laws, or are actually reversed. Thus, the struggle for existence ceases, and a moral or humane law of preservation takes its place. The secret of history is the dethronement of the strong by the weak, or rather the introduction of a force by which the meek become the inheritors and rulers of the earth. Natural selection gives way to intelligent choice. Instinct ends, and thought determines action. The whole brute inheritance is being gradually thrown off; its methods constitute evil—the serpent whose head the seed of woman is bruising and shall finally crush. The imperative conclusion follows that man is not to be regarded as in the process, nor under the laws, nor even under the analogies of the order from which he has been evolved or created. The leaden suggestion of nature, as it destroyed the individual and the type, no longer has even scientific weight. The thing that has been is the very thing that shall not be; and Tennyson, with this fresh page of science before him, could now stretch out towards his great hope hands no longer lame, and gather something more than dust and chaff as he calls to the Lord of all; for it is the appearance and analogy of nature that crush our hope. But science itself bids us turn our back upon physical nature, or but look to it to find that we are no longer of it.

The importance of this generalization or revelation of science cannot be exaggerated. Canon Mozley, in his great sermon on Eternal Life, says substantially, “It does not matter how we came to be what we are; we are what we are,” and from that builds up his masterly argument for immortality. Still, it does matter whether we face the great question weighted by our previous history or freed from it. It is possible, indeed, to scale the heights of our hope burdened with the clay out of which we were made; but why bear it, when friendly science offers to take it off? Besides, man is a logical being, and he cannot be induced to leave unexplained phenomena behind him, nor to leap chasms in his thought; nor will he build the heavenly city upon reason while it is confused by its relations to physical nature. So freed, we have man as mind and spirit, evolved or created out of nature, but no longer correlated to its methods,—correlated instead to contrasting methods,—face to face with laws and forces hitherto unknown or but dimly shadowed, moving steadily in a direction opposite to that in which he was produced.

Receiving man thus at the hands of science, what shall we do with him but pass him over into the world to the verge of which science has brought him—the world of mind and spirit? From cosmic dust he has become

a true person. What now? The end of the demiurgic strife reached, its methods cease. Steps lead up to the apex of the pyramid. What remains? What, indeed, but flight, if man be found to have wings? Or does he stand for a moment on the summit, exulting in his emergence from nature, only to roll back into the dust at its base? There is a reason why the reptile should become a mammal: it is more life. Is there no like reason for man? Shall he not have more life? If not, then to be a reptile is better than to be a man, for it can be more than itself; and man, instead of being the head of nature, goes to its foot. The dream of pessimism becomes a reality, justifying the remark of Schopenhauer that consciousness is the mistake and malady of nature. If man becomes no more than he now is, the whole process of gain and advance by which he has become what he is turns on itself and reverses its order. The benevolent purpose, seen at every stage as it yields to the next, stops its action, dies out, and goes no farther. The ever-swelling bubble of existence, that has grown and distended till it reflects the light of heaven in all its glorious tints, bursts on the instant into nothingness.

The question is, whether such considerations are subjects for thought; whether they have in them an element of reason that justifies a conclusion; whether they are phenomena, and may be treated scientifically; whether they do not address us in a way as impressive as physical science could address us at any particular stage of evolution. Having thought up to this point and found always a path leading through the improbabilities of the future, shall we think no longer because we face other improbabilities? We cannot, indeed, think facts out of existence—the world is real; but natural science justifies us in regarding man as under the laws of the intellectual and moral world into which it has delivered him. It has shown us the chemical coming under the subjection of the dynamic, and the dynamic yielding to the organic, and the organic, with man in it and over it, working miracles of his own—a power over nature, under laws that are neither chemical nor dynamic nor organic, but creative in their essence and spiritual in their force. He is therefore to be measured, not by the orders behind him, but by that into which he has come.

Proceeding now under theistic conceptions, I am confident that our scientific self goes along with our reasoning self when I claim that the process of evolution at every step and in every moment rests on God, and draws its energy from God. The relation, doubtless, is organic, but no less are its proc-

esses conscious, voluntary, creative acts. Life was crowded into the process as fast as the plan admitted; it was life and more life till the process culminated in man—the end towards which it had been steadily pressing. We have in this process the surest possible ground of expectation that God will crown his continuous gift of life with immortal life. When, at last, he has produced a being who is the image of himself, who has full consciousness and the creative will, who can act in righteousness, who can adore and love and commune with his Creator, there is a reason—and if there is a reason there will be found a method—why the gift of immortal life should be conferred. God has at last secured in man the image of himself—an end and solution of the whole process. Will he not set man in permanent and perfect relations? Having elaborated his jewel till it reflects himself, does he gaze upon it for a briefer moment than he spent in producing it, and then cast it back into elemental chaos? Science itself forces upon us the imperious question, and to science also are we indebted for a hopeful answer—teaching us at last that we are not bound to think of man as under the conditions and laws that produced him,—the *end* of the creative process, and therefore not *of* it. Such is the logic of evolution, and we could not well do without it. But we must follow it to its conclusions. Receiving at its hands a Creating Mind working by a teleological process toward man as the final product, we are bound to think consistently of these factors; nor may we stop in our thought and leave them in confusion. If immortality seems a difficult problem, the denial or doubt of it casts upon us one more difficult. We have an intelligent Creator starting with such elements as cosmic dust, and proceeding in an orderly process that may be indicated under Darwin's five laws, or Wallace's more pronounced theism, or Argyll's or Naudin's theory of constant creative energy,—it matters not which be followed,—developing the solid globe; then orders of life that hardly escape matter; then other orders that simply eat and move and procreate; and so on to higher forms, but always aiming at man, for "the clod must think," the crystal must reason, and the fire must love,—all pressing steadily toward man, for whom the process has gone on and in whom it ends, because he—being what he is—turns on these very laws that produced him and reverses their action. The instincts have died out; for necessity there is freedom; for desire there is conscience; natural selection is lost in intelligence; the struggle for existence is checked and actually reversed

under the moral nature, so that the weak live and the strong perish unless they protect the weak. A being who puts a contrast on all the ravaging creation behind him, and lifts his face toward the heavens in adoration, and throws the arms of his saving love around all living things, and so falls into sympathetic affinity with God himself and becomes a conscious creator of what is good and true and beautiful—such is man. What will God do with this being after spending countless eons in creating him? what will God do with his own image? is the piercing question put to reason. I speak of ideal man—the man that has been and shall be; of the meek who inherit the earth and rule over it in the sovereign power of love and goodness. How much of time, what field of existence and action, will God grant to this being? The pulses of his heart wear out in less than a hundred years. Ten years are required for intelligence to replace the loss of instinct, so that relatively his full life is briefer than that of the higher animals. A quarter of his years is required for physical and mental development; a half—perchance a little more—is left for work and achievement, and the rest for dying. And he dies saying: I am the product of eternity, and I can return into eternity; I have lived under the inspiration of eternal life, and I may claim it; I have loved my God, my child, my brother man, and I know that love is an eternal thing. It has so announced itself to me, and I pass into its perfect and eternal realization. Measure this being thus, and then ask reason, ask God himself, if the pitiful three score and ten is a reasonable existence. There is no proportion between the production of man and the length of his life; it is like spending a thousand years in building a pyrotechnic piece that burns against the sky for one moment and leaves the blackness of a night never again to be lighted. Such a destiny can be correlated to no possible conception of God nor of the world except that of pessimism—the philosophy of chaos—the logic that assumes order to prove disorder—that uses consciousness to show that it is a disease. But any rational conception of God forces us to the conclusion that he will hold on to the final product of his long creative struggle. If man were simply a value, a fruit of use, an actor of intelligence, a creator of good, he would be worth preserving; but if God loves man and man loves God, and so together they realize the ultimate and highest conception of being and destiny, it is impossible to believe that the knife of Omnipotence will cut the cords of that love and suffer man to fall back into elemental flames; for, if we do not live when we

die, we pass into the hands of oxygen. Perhaps it is our destiny—it must be under some theories; but it is not yet necessary under any accredited theory of science or philosophy to conceive of God as a Moloch burning his children in his fiery arms, nor as a Saturn devouring his own offspring.

I am well aware that just here a distinction is made that takes off the edge of these horrible conclusions,—namely, that humanity survives though the individual perishes. This theory, which is not recent, had its origin in that phase of nature which showed a constant disregard of the individual and a steady care for the type or class. It found its way from science into literature, where it took on the form of lofty sentiment and became almost a religion. It is a product of the too hasty theory that we may carry the analogies of nature over into the world of man, and lay them down squarely and without qualification as though they compassed him. Science no longer does this, but the blunder lives on in literature and the every-day thought of the world. But suppose it were true that the individual perishes and humanity survives, how much relief does it afford to thought? It simply lengthens the day that must end in horrible doom. For the question recurs, how long will humanity continue? For long, indeed, if man can preserve the illusion of immortality and the kindred illusions of love and duty and sacrifice that go with it, and can be kept apart from an altruism that defeats itself by cutting the nerve of personality. Humanity will stay long upon the earth if love and conscience are fed by their proper and only sustaining inspirations; but even then how long will the earth entertain that golden era when the individual shall peacefully live out his allotted years, and yield up the store of his life to the general fund of humanity, in the utter content of perfect negation? I might perhaps make a total sacrifice for an eternal good, but I will sit down with the pessimists sooner than sacrifice myself for a temporary good; the total cannot be correlated to the temporary. If such sacrifice is ever made, it is the insanity of self-estimate, or rather is the outcome of an unconscious sense of a continuous life. How long do I live on in humanity? Only till the crust of the earth becomes a little thicker, and days and nights grow longer, and the earth sucks the air into its "interlunar caves"—now a sister to the moon. Chaos does not lie behind this world, but ahead. The picture of the evolution of man through "dragons of the prime" is not so dreadful as that foreshadowed when the world shall have grown old, and environment no longer favors full life. Human-

ity may mount high, but it must go down and reverse the steps of its ascent. Its lofty altruism will die out under hard conditions; the struggle for existence will again resume its sway, and hungry hordes will fish in shallowing seas, and roam in the blasted forests of a dying world, breathing a thin atmosphere under which man shrinks towards inevitable extinction. Science paints the picture, but reason disdains it as the probable outcome of humanity. The future of this world as the abode of humanity is a mystery, though not wholly an unlighted one; but under no possible conception can the world be regarded as the theater of the total history of the race.

A modification of this view is the theory that sets aside personality and asserts a return of the individual life into God. Mr. Emerson in his essay, the suggestive value of which is very great, says: "I confess that everything connected with our personality fails." It would be easy to quote Emerson against himself, but that were no gain. He wrote this sentence too early to have the advantage of recent science. In that play of nature on which he fixed his gaze years before Darwin, he saw indeed that "nature never spares the individual," but his prophetic soul did not reveal to him the things to be. The interpretation of science, as now given, tells us that when man is reached in the process of development nature does spare the individual, or, more properly, the person. It is the very thing nature has been aiming at all along, namely, to produce a person and then preserve him. The whole trend of the laws in social and intelligent humanity is toward securing a full personality, and a defense and perpetuity of it. Emerson apparently never caught sight of the fact that in humanity there is a reversal of those laws by which matter and brute-life led up to man. He looked at nature more closely than Plato dared, and was dazzled.

This altruism that assumes for itself a loftier morality in its willingness to part with personality and live on simply as influence and force, sweetening human life and deepening the blue of heaven,—a view that colors the pages of George Eliot and also some unfortunate pages of science,—is one of those theories that contains within itself its own refutation. It regards personality almost as an immorality: lose yourself in the general good; it is but selfish to claim existence for self. It may be, indeed, but not if personality has attained to the law of love and service. Personality may not only reverse the law of selfishness, but it is the only condition under which it can be wholly reversed. If I

can remain a person, I can love and serve,—I may be a perpetual generator of love and service; but if I cease to exist, I cease to create them, and leave a mere echo or trailing influence thinning out into an unmeaning universe. Such an altruism limits the use and force of character to the small opportunity of human life; it is so much and no more, however long it may continue to act; but the altruism of ideal and enduring personality continues to act forever, and possibly on an increasing scale. This altruism of benevolent annihilation cuts away the basis of its action. It pauperizes itself by one act of giving—breaks its bank in the generosity of its issue. It is one thing to see the difficulties in the way of immortality, but quite another thing to erect annihilation into morality; and it is simply a blunder in logic to claim for such morality a superiority over that of those who hope to live on, wearing the crown of personality that struggling nature has placed on their heads, and serving its Author for ever and ever. The simple desire to live is neither moral nor immoral, but the desire to live for service and love is the highest morality and the only true altruism.

I shall not follow the subject into those fields of human life and spiritual experience—it being a beaten path—where the assurances of immortality mount into clear vision, my aim having been to lessen the weight of the physical world as it hangs upon us in our upward flight. We cannot cut the bond that binds us to the world by pious assertion, nor cast it off by ecstatic struggles of the spirit, nor unbind it by any half-way processes of logic, nor by turning our back upon ascertained knowledge. We must have a clear path behind us if we would have a possible one before us.

There are three chief realities, no one of which can be left out in attempts to solve the problem of destiny: man, the world, and God. We must think of them in an orderly and consistent way. One reality cannot destroy nor lessen the force of another. If there has been apparent conflict in the past, it now seems to be drawing to a close; the world agrees with theism, and matter no longer denies spirit. If, at one time, matter threatened to possess the universe and include it under its laws, it has withdrawn its claim, and even finds itself driven to mind and to spirit as the larger factors of its own problems. Mind now has full liberty to think consistently of itself and of God, and, with such liberty, it finds itself driven to the conclusion of immortality by every consideration of its nature and by every fact of its condition,—its only refuge against hopeless mental confusion.

Not from consciousness only,—knowing ourselves to be what we are,—but out of the mystery of ourselves, may we draw this sublime hope; for we are correlated not only to the known, but to the unknown. The spirit transcends the visible, and by dream, by vision, by inextinguishable desire, by the un-

ceasing cry of the conscious creature for the Creator, by the aspiration after perfection, by the pressure of evil and by the weight of sorrow, penetrates the realms beyond, knowing there must be meaning and purpose and end for the mystery that it is.

T. T. Munger.

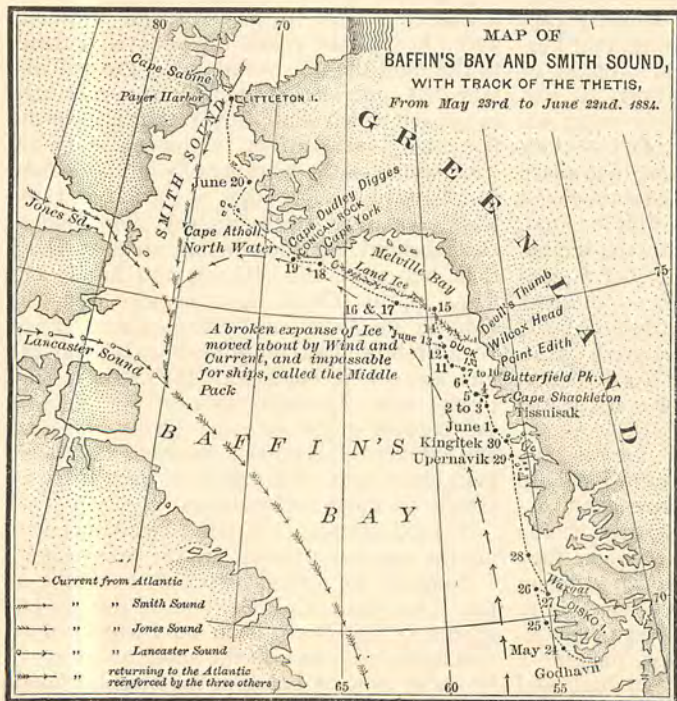
GREELY AT CAPE SABINE.

NOTES BY A MEMBER OF THE RELIEF EXPEDITION.

EARLY in the morning of June 18, 1884, the Greely Relief ships *Thetis* and *Bear*, in company with the whalers *Aurora* and *Wolf*, passed the last floe in Melville Bay and pushed into the "North Water" towards Cape York. From Godhavn to Hare Island, among the bergs off the Waigat, at Upernavik, through the island passages to Kingitek, in the pack, at the Duck Islands, slowly winding and twisting through the narrow leads, or racing at full speed through the broader channels, with many a shock and many a bruise, often repulsed by the ice, but always hopeful, we had struggled for twenty days against tremendous obstacles, and at last found ourselves within sight of the bold

headland called Cape York, which is only two hundred and fifty miles from Upernavik. A study of the diagram on which our course is marked will explain why it required so many days to traverse these few miles. In that part of Baffin's Bay which lies in the immediate vicinity of Cape York, the opposing forces of three strong currents meet, one setting to the southward through Smith Sound, and bringing with it immense fields of ice from the northern glaciers; a second setting to the eastward through Jones Sound, while the third, starting on the eastern coast of Greenland, rounds Cape Farewell and forms a loop in Baffin's Bay. Repeated observations have

demonstrated that the right branch of this loop keeps close to the Greenland shores, sweeps round to the westward in Melville Bay, and meeting the Smith and Jones Sound currents, returns close by the Labrador coast. The eddy that forms where these three currents meet is generally free from ice, and is known among whalers as the North Water. The floating ice that these currents gather and carry with them is swirled about between the two branches of the loop and forms what is known as the "Middle Pack." It is almost impassable, as well as exceedingly dangerous. Now in all the tidal bays and fiords of the Arctic Seas a fringe of ice remains fast to the shore, like a shelf at low water, and joined to the floe, or traveling ice, at high water. It varies in width according



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