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THE PROBLEM OF IMMORTALITY.

THE PROBLEM
OF
IMMORTALITY.

BY
E. PETAVEL, D.D.

WITH A PREFATORY LETTER

BY
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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY
FREDERICK ASH FREER.

LONDON:
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1892.



This translation of Dr. Petavel's work has been made by one who has long enjoyed the friendship of the author and of the Rev. Edward White, and shared their conviction that immortality is not inherent in man, but is a gift of God offered to all in the Gospel. His study of Mr. White's book, Life in Christ, strengthened that conviction in his mind, and confirmed his persuasion that by means of this doctrine only can the whole evangelical system of the New Testament be united in a complete and harmonious synthesis, capable of satisfying the logical and theological requirements of Christian thinkers in the present day.

This persuasion gained fresh strength and precision in the perusal of the advance sheets of Dr. Petavel's French work ; and, having obtained the author's permission, the translator feels it to be a duty as well as a privilege to introduce the book to English readers.

Dr. Petavel has closely followed the controversy which has been kept up with scarcely any intermission, on the Continent as well as in England and America, during the years that have elapsed since the publication of Mr. White's book, the latest English edition of which appeared in 1878 and the French in 1880. In the present volume that controversy will be found brought up to date.

The original is in two volumes, the first of which was published in the last days of 1890, and contained Chapters I. to VI. with corresponding Supplements and the prefatory letter of Professor Charles Secrétan ; the second, containing Chapters VII. to XII. with the remainder of the Supplements, was issued only last December. In this translation will be found all the twelve chapters, with as much of the supplementary matter as could conveniently be included in a single volume, preference having been given to that which seemed to be of chief importance to the English reader.

F. A. F.

Bristol, February, 1892.

TO MY HONOURED AND VERY DEAR FRIEND,

Rev. EDWARD WHITE,

The Christian apologist who has overcome many an objection of contemporary unbelief, the model controversialist whose fraternal arm has often sustained my weakness, while his love has cheered me in hours of darkness and his interpretation has enabled me more fully to understand the master-thought of the Scriptures,

I dedicate this book in its English form

With heartfelt gratitude.

E. PETAVEL.

*Haute Combe, Lausanne,
February, 1892.*

LETTER FROM PROFESSOR CHARLES SECRÉTAN.

MY DEAR SIR,

I could not thank you too much for the thought which induced you to communicate to me the sheets of your plea in favour of an acquired immortality.

Although I am not a competent judge in matters of exegesis, it yet appears to me clear that life must mean *life* and that death must mean *death* wherever the literal meaning is not absurd, and that a meaning cannot properly be declared absurd merely because it contradicts a dualism incompatible with all right understanding of real life. The idea of an immortality essential to spirit substance, making it impossible to assign to the existence of the creature either beginning or end, is a very near approach to pantheism, or else to polytheism.

The moral aspect of your doctrine is no less interesting to me. We need to believe in the end of evil, in the death of death, in the absolute triumph of God. The sentiment of justice implanted in our hearts by God himself does not allow us to accept an infinite punishment as the penalty of a finite fault. To pretend that the fault is infinite would be to attribute to ourselves an infinite power, and in any case the full capacity of doing the right, which is precisely what the defenders of such a system deny to us, claiming on that point the support of universal experience. They are thus also constrained to acknowledge that the perpetual existence of hell and of the damned is necessary to the perfection of the universe, to the manifestation of the divine perfections, which consequently are not summed up in love. The idea of God

which underlies this system is not a moral idea, his government can no longer serve us as a model, and if we should wish to apply to it the moral ideas according to which he intends that we should regulate our conduct, we should arrive at the most shocking blasphemies.

Under the influence of tradition, I endeavoured in my youth to explain the possibility of eternal torments by the possible persistence of rebellion; but that infinite persistence in the bad use of a free-will always maintained is only an unrealizable abstraction. Besides, this conception, itself a considerable deviation from orthodoxy, had the serious disadvantage, from the properly religious point of view, of imposing upon the divine power an impassable barrier, since it might happen that after all the world would never be that which the divine goodness wishes it to be. No; contingent evil may be explained by the positive value of liberty, but the religious consciousness cannot be reconciled to the presence of evil, unless it is affirmed that it has had a beginning and that it will come to an end.

On the other hand, the final salvation of all sinners, with or without their will, is no less repugnant to the moral consciousness, and the preaching of it could not fail to be mischievous to sinners, who are always looking out for reasons why they should not yet change their manner of life. At one time I inclined towards this hope, certainly not imagining that God could ever allow a rebel to enter paradise, nor that for the sake of reaching an end he would convert the rebel against his will, but thinking that at last, by means of chastisement and patience, he would be able to lead all souls to conversion, thus subordinating the hour of the glorious consummation to the obstinacy of a single soul. It was not long before I perceived the moral weakness and the logical fault of this point of view, which at the same time asserts and denies the moral liberty of the creature.

I was, in fact, a predestined candidate for your doctrine, since I had always seen in evil not merely an insufficiency, a defect of being, like the logicians to whom we owe infernal metaphysics, but a direction of the will—that is to say, of the very being—towards annihilation. I reproach myself for

having failed to carry out my principle to its logical consequence.

One word as to the gallery of ancestors and authorities that you lead us through. I do not see very clearly either the precise relation between the conditionalist doctrine and the connection of crime with atavism which was so pleasing to Edgar Quinet, nor the great advantage of counting Quinet among the number of your partizans.

I should like to caution you against the opinions of Professor Drummond. The great success of his work assuredly proves the existence in the religious public of a strong sense of the need to reconcile its convictions with science ; but it seems to me that before bringing Christianity within the bounds of evolution, it is needful to bring the fall within those bounds. If Christianity belongs to science, it is not as a chapter in biology, but rather as a chapter in medicine. Jesus Christ was a physician ; he remains our physician. The ideal of the natural man set forth by Professor Drummond is a false ideal ; the natural man is not a being of an inferior species to the believer, the natural man is an invalid ; and salvation is not offered to all with the reserve that a small number only are capable of receiving it. The system that makes of the elect a superior rank in the hierarchy of beings implies the most rigorous predestination and the express negation of human fraternity. Do not confound the survival of the worthiest with the survival of the fittest. Nature ends where liberty begins ; there is no moral order without liberty. Christianity belongs to the moral order, and the conscience has perceived that predestination cannot be reconciled with the appeals of the Gospel. Your accidental agreement with Professor Drummond on the particular subject of your book cannot prevent you from seeing the profound difference which separates you.

On the other hand, the extracts that you have brought together fully authorize you to reckon Vinet among your precursors. If he did not formally teach the extinction of unconverted sinners, it was because he did not write dogmatics. Possibly he had not sufficiently defined his position ; possibly he did not perceive clearly enough the supreme importance of the doctrine with which we are concerned, to feel himself

obliged to produce it in the pulpit, thus breaking away from the faith of the Church. It is well known how much reserve he imposed upon himself lest unbelief should use the divisions among Christians as a weapon against them. Besides, in order to judge Vinet it should never be forgotten, in the first place, that he was not a professor of theology, but of literature ; and, in the second place, that he died before he was fifty. It is enough that conditionalism is the only possible conclusion from the premisses that he laid down.

In short, it seems to me that you effectually extinguish the eternal fires, which are no longer believed in, since, as you say, they are no longer preached, and to dissimulate while believing in them would be to incur a most fearful responsibility. You will doubtless win over the majority of universalists, who cannot but feel the danger of their doctrine, and who in your company find satisfaction on the most important point.

But, without ignoring men's eagerness to believe, and the fact that doubt is very often only the mantle which covers negation, I should be glad to find in your second volume a conclusive word to meet the case of those who deliberately hold themselves aloof from eschatological questions, they being persuaded that it is impossible to attain an idea of a future existence both precise and rational, and led away also by the idea that we ought to will to do right for the sake of right, without regard to personal consequences ; a sentiment closely akin to the pure love which desires only to know God, and does not fear to lose itself in God.

Your purpose is to remove an obstacle placed on the threshold of the temple, which prevents the entrance of a large number. You would like, first of all, to constrain ministers to declare themselves openly on the question in dispute ; it is to the Church that you speak, and if you succeed in leading it to a decision you will have gained an important point. When once the obstacle is removed, your fifth chapter appears to me, so far as an opinion can be formed on a single reading, to be an excellent summary of religion. But will you not say anything to those who remain outside the temple, in the grave-yard ; to those who—perhaps trifling, perhaps also wishing to lead a good life, thinking perhaps of God and trying

to love him—are not at all anxious to quit this life, but for whom the prospect of complete annihilation is a subject rather of hope than of fear? Such people are often spoken of, and I have reason to think that they would not be spoken of if they did not exist.

These, my dear Sir, are the first reflections suggested to me by the reading of your volume, so full of fire and faith. Pray accept the expression of my most earnest desire for the success of your laudable efforts, and believe me always,

Very sincerely yours,

CH. SecrÉTAN.

VILLA PALEYRE,
29 Nov., 1890.

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THE PROBLEM OF IMMORTALITY.

CHAPTER I.

STATE OF THE QUESTION.

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I.

SUBJECT of a thousand desires, man in his best moments has an especial thirst for immortality. This is, at the same time, the highest and the deepest of our aspirations. An imperious instinct urges us to seek a better and more durable life beyond the shifting scenes of our actual existence. A fountain is open for the quenching of our thirst, but it is not known to all; and many are drinking from the bitter cisterns of ecclesiastical tradition. To lead back to the fountain will be the aim of our study.

This is the most vital of all questions. It was a wise saying:

In all affairs the end should well be kept in view.¹

What is to be our own last end? Are we really immortal? If

¹ "*En toute chose il faut considérer la fin.*"—La Fontaine.

so, in what measure are we? If not, can we attain immortality, and in what way should we seek it? Is the reign of evil to continue for ever? Are there to be eternal torments? These are so many enigmas to be solved; they command attention, as did those of the ancient Sphinx.

The implicit faith of the coal-heaver is sometimes held up for admiration. Simple and unquestioning, it is good for the coal-heaver, but knowledge imposes obligation. The instruction that we have received is a privilege which involves responsibility. Examining our faith, we should like to assure ourselves that it is well founded. In accordance with the exhortation of the apostle Peter, we desire to be in a position to give an answer to anyone who should ask for the reason of the hope that is in us. Now, in relation to immortality, the old foundations are overturned, and no man has a right to maintain an opinion without having thoroughly tested it. We ought to recognize it as our duty to make a searching examination of this question, which needs a course of dogmatic study. The undertaking is laborious, but can there be in this world a subject of inquiry more worthy of our attention?

II.

We shall have to stem the tide of present-day opinion, which even in the Churches treats theology, and especially dogmatics, with disdain. It is said that these are stale and sterile studies, and some are disposed to assert that any doctrine is good provided that a good use be made of it. Theology is out of date; theologians are extractors of quintessences, the last representatives of a race happily dying out, almost fossils. Really religious people have come to the conclusion that theology is an unnecessary extra. Many a young pastor says glibly: "I no longer study theology; to study theology would be acting like those monks of Constantinople who were disputing about the light upon Mount Tabor when the Turks entered the city. The great need of our times is that, while maintaining the grand truths of the Gospel, we should set aside theories and devote ourselves to practical questions." In our opinion this is a disastrous tendency; by

giving way to it, "numbers have slipped into the ruts of an unhealthy and obscurantist pietism, or else have become victims of those extravagant sects which seriously compromise the cause of religion by their eccentricities."¹

We are, in fact, fully convinced that the destiny of individuals, as of nations, may be traced mainly to their beliefs. Like unbelief, a dead faith leads to death, and erroneous belief produces disorder and perturbation; on the other hand, a living and healthy faith is a principle of health and life for individuals, and by the individuals for the whole body politic. Like theology, like people. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," said the prophet Hosea; and apparently it was to theological knowledge that he referred, the knowledge of religion. At the present time the Churches are turning their attention to social questions. This is to their credit, but the social ideal itself depends upon a certain theological conception of the Divinity.

In the troubled times through which we are now passing, theology is indeed more than ever important, it is always the queen of sciences, and, from a scientific point of view, he who is not acquainted with it is ignorant of that which he most needs to know. The death of theology would be the greatest misfortune, but its revival would be the revival of religion, the revived religion would elevate morality, and that in its turn would elevate humanity.

When a ship is driven by a storm, and the crew are busily working at the tackling and the pumps, the officer in command does not allow himself to be distracted either by the noise of the waves or by the shouts of the sailors. It is his duty to consult attentively the chart, the compass, the chronometer, the barometer, the nautical tables, the stars, if any are visible; he will endeavour to take his observation, make his reckoning, and fix the latitude and longitude of his ship, in order, if possible, to avoid the dangerous rock. In the universal Church, this duty of the ship's captain is that which is specially incumbent upon the theologian.

In support of our view we will invoke the testimony of witnesses whose authority is beyond question. The late eloquent

¹ A. Gretillat, *Chrétien Evangélique*, 20 Oct., 1889.

Pastor Bersier said not long ago to a minister of Lausanne, "What we especially need is a sound and strong doctrine." Pastor Recolin, of Paris, at the general conference of the Evangelical Alliance at Copenhagen, and the lamented professor Francis Bonifas, in the last article that he published, made the same avowal.¹ Adolphe Monod long ago protested, "in the name of reason and experience, as well as in the name of Scripture, against that contempt of doctrines which, so to speak, has itself become a doctrine."

Such as is the doctrine, said he, such is the disposition; as is the belief, so is the character; as are the principles in the mind, so are the sentiments in the heart. "Often, it is true, a man seems to contradict his belief by his life; but if that which he really believes be distinguished from that which he professes, he will always be found self-consistent." After all, a man is not two men; he is always at bottom consistent with himself. There is a necessary and eternal harmony between his understanding and his will. His inclinations, his character, his morality are produced by his opinions, his principles, his doctrines, as a tree is produced by its seed; and as the seed of a tree is the whole tree, trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, fruit, in the sense that it contains the germ of which all these are the developement, so a man's doctrine is the whole man, feelings, inclinations, speech, actions, in the sense that it contains the principle of which all these are the application. Therefore, let no one say that he desires sanctification if he cares nothing about the doctrine by which it may be attained. He might as well say: I wish to gather grapes in my field, but it matters little whether I plant in it vines or thistles. What folly! Each fruit grows on its own tree, the grape on the vine, the fig on the fig-tree; and so every disposition has its corresponding doctrine, there is a doctrine that leads to vice, another that leads to virtue, another that leads to sanctification, and it is this which must be sought for.²

Similar views have been recently expressed by a pastor of Switzerland. He writes:

"Tell me what you believe and I will tell you what you are." This saying indicates what a mistake is made and what a terrible responsibility is assumed by those who presume to say that doctrines are of no import-

¹ In our last chapter will be found their declarations to this effect.

² J. Pédézert, Honorary Professor in the Faculty of Protestant Theology at Montauban. *Souvenirs et Études*, Paris, 1888, p. 63, sq.

ance, that morality is everything. Morality may be everything, but that proceeds directly from the convictions, as the child from the mother. This being so, the indifference to doctrine affected by some people is one of the most profound errors that can be imagined ; if ever it should gain a footing in the Church, it would lead to moral paralysis.¹

A study of the past confirms this principle :

Inquire of history ; you will there perceive as an ever-recurring fact that everywhere and always the morals of the peoples have been in accord with their religious ideas. Such as is the divinity, such is the morality. Man has always a tendency to become like the object of his adoration. Vengeful gods who were honoured with cruel sacrifices, occasioned barbarous manners and favoured warlike passions. Notice, on the other hand, how under the smiling sky of Greece the worship of the voluptuous divinities of the most poetic of peoples favoured the developement of the arts, but at the same time caused the corruption of morals. In our own days, look at the nations won by the sword of Mahomet to the religion of Islam : the fatalist doctrine, which is at the foundation of that religion, has produced in those peoples a stupid resignation which paralyzes all energy, prevents all progress, and envelopes them in an enervating kind of atmosphere. And that which we observe with regard to religions, is true also with respect to systems of philosophy. Each different manner of regarding God and man and their mutual relations produces its own special morality. It has been said that ideas govern the world ; in order to be exactly correct, it should be said, *religious ideas*.²

A few lines from the late M. de Pressensé shall close this section ; they very concisely express our conviction as to the point that we wish to establish. He says :

History in every sense of the word is being prepared and elaborated upon those heights of thought where religious and philosophic evolution, silently at first, developes itself. It is there that may be found that parting of the waters which determines the great currents of history, carrying away with them men and things in a direction there determined.³

¹ Paul Chapuis, *Evangile et Liberté*, 24 Jan., 1890.

² *No more dogmas (Plus de dogmes)*, No. 478 of the *Paris Religious Tracts*.

³ *Revue politique et littéraire*, 12 April, 1884.

III.

We are in need of a settled doctrine, for there is now no such thing. The Roman Catholic doctrine sleeps in the tomb of scholasticism; and on the other hand, primitive Calvinism is a doctrine that is no longer taught. Anarchy prevails in the doctrinal region, a veritable Babel of contradictory views.¹ Many teachers are drifting without being conscious of it, and in more than one group of the so-called orthodox their agreement is based upon misunderstanding. Our Protestant Churches especially lack an eschatology, a serious deficiency. Eschatology, the science of the last things, is the band of the sheaf, or, to use another metaphor, the keystone of the arch, we do not say the corner-stone, of Christian dogmatics. On this subject, however, uncertainty is the order of the day, and future judgement is a weapon scarcely ever used in present-day preaching. The law of mathematical justice which regulates eternal retribution seems to be utterly ignored, and even unknown.²

¹ In an account of a pastoral conference held at Dieulefit, in the Department of the Drôme, in 1885, Pastor Auguste André made use of these terms: "The outcome and moral of all this is, as I asserted without contradiction, that when we seek to obtain definite convictions from modern scientific sources, we know not what to think for ourselves, nor what to say to our people. That which now bears the name of Evangelical theology is as yet only a transitory method. We do not want exaggerations on one side or the other, and, if I may be allowed the expression, we remain in a fix. . . . You have cleared the way which should lead to the new dogmatics; I beseech you then enable us speedily to reach the end. We are most anxious to find ourselves on solid and Christian ground, instead of under the shadow of a vanishing individualism."—*Evangile et Liberté*, 13 Nov., 1885.

On the 18th June, 1890, in a report presented to the local section of the Swiss Pastoral Society, at Lausanne, Pastor Vallotton spoke of the "chaos of existing dogmatics." M. Dandiran, professor of philosophy in the national Faculty, went even farther: according to him dogma as now formulated is effete, and the idea of authority which is at its base is ruined. Traditional dogmatics must be given up, and a new synthesis must be sought for. The reform needed is as important as that of the sixteenth century.—See *Evangile et Liberté*, 20 June, 1890.

² The late Pastor Bastie, Honorary President of the Consistory and Moderator of the General Synod in 1872, had a deep sense of the necessity for a renewal of eschatology. Shortly before his death, in circumstances of great solemnity, he declared that in his view it was the most urgent need of the Reformed Church of France.

What has led to this abandonment of the old doctrine in general, and of the old eschatology in particular? The answer is given by Professor Charles Secrétan in his admirable book on "Civilization and Belief." He tells us that Calvinism is abandoned because it "presents to us a hateful God."¹ John Stuart Mill had previously spoken of the traditional God as "this dreadful idealization of wickedness."² Calvinism, which in the sixteenth century was progress, is now behind the times. That is the reason why it is losing ground everywhere, but especially in France.

Since the eve of the Revolution of 1789, according to M. Paul de Félice, the number of French Protestants has diminished by more than a third, nearly a half. At that epoch they were a thirteenth part of the population, while now they would be only a thirty-sixth.³

Another equally significant fact: the distinguished thinkers in France who during the last quarter of a century have passed from unbelief or from Roman Catholicism to the Protestant faith might be counted on the fingers of one hand. Will it be said that the fault is altogether in the human heart, which is "desperately wicked"? But Jeremiah made the same complaint as to the human heart nearly three thousand years ago, and that fact did not prevent the successes of the apostles, of the reformers, of the men of the revival of sixty years ago. Will it then be objected that if the thinkers reject Calvinism it is because the truth is hidden from the wise and prudent? But there was a time when Calvinism was pleasing to many of the wise and prudent. It must, then, be admitted that if Protestantism is no longer advancing it is because in its present

¹ *Civilization and Belief* (*La civilisation et la croyance*), Lausanne, Payot; p. 409. M. Secrétan is the first philosopher of Switzerland, and one of the foremost philosophic writers in the French language; he is a corresponding member of the Institute of France, and of the Institute of Geneva; a striking demonstration was made in his honour in 1889, on the occasion of the completion of fifty years of his professorship at the Academy (now University) of Lausanne.

² *Essays on Religion*, p. 113. See the protest of Rev. Charles Kingsley in chap. i. of *Alton Locke*, which is understood to contain some autobiographical details.

³ *Christianisme au XIX^e siècle*, 1 Nov., 1888. See also the *Chrétien Évangélique*, 1888, p. 564. Alsace-Lorraine is naturally excluded from these calculations.

form it fails to satisfy the needs of our time.¹ This was the sad conviction of Vinet, as is proved by his correspondence. He wrote to Thomas Erskine :

My hope in Christianity is all the more lively that it is undivided. In nothing else do I hope ; but for me Christianity is not exclusively, nor even chiefly, that which has been preached to us these five-and-twenty years. That formula seems to me to be powerless and worn out so far as concerns the masses ; it is a sixteenth-century dish rewarmed and again become cold. That which was original in Luther's time is so no longer. We are speaking to this century in a dead language. Many people around me and elsewhere are willing to accept the result, considering that Christianity is not the business of the masses ; and I must admit that I do not know either in the past or the present a whole nation of converted persons ; but it is none the less true that Christianity has worked upon the masses, that it has created a Christian civilization, a Christian world (though I know in what a restricted sense that must be understood) ; and I see that to-day the masses remain apparently unmoved by our efforts. But, unless I am very much mistaken, the new form of the old and eternal truth is in course of preparation in men's minds.²

The fact is that the religious needs exist, and it is the suitable food that is lacking. As an indication of this state of things may be quoted the complaint of a well-known poet, François Coppée, of the French Academy. Formerly M.

¹ After these lines were written we met with an article by M. Ménégoz which confirms them. He says : "M. Dreyer is affrighted at seeing the cultivated classes forsaking the Gospel, whereas in ancient times as well as at the Reformation epoch the Gospel attracted the best thinkers. What is the cause of this desertion ? Must it be sought in the worldly spirit of our century ? Certainly the worldly spirit draws away the soul from God ; but among those who turn their backs upon the Church there are spirits profoundly religious, souls thirsting for righteousness and truth. How is it that these men of high aspirations reject the Church and Christianity itself, or that which they suppose to be Christianity ? Long experience has led M. Dreyer to the conviction that these men are driven away by the old dogmatic formulas which ecclesiastical tradition has identified with the Gospel, with the Christian faith. This unhappy identification of dogma with the faith is producing most disastrous ravages in our cultivated classes. This state of things urgently demands a remedy. . . . If not willing to fail in her mission, the Church ought to endeavour to give satisfaction to these religious cravings, without giving umbrage to the claims of reason."—E. Ménégoz, *Annales de bibliographie théologique*, 25 Jan., 1890, pp. 2, 3.

² *Lettres d'Alexandre Vinet*, No. ccxxi.

Coppée seemed indifferent to religious questions, but his recent poem, *Une mauvaise Soirée*, ends with a veritable cry of anguish. The author tells how he went one evening into a Socialist club and a Catholic church, and the priest's sermon roused his indignation more than the harangue of the communist orator.

Alas! the doctrine preached in the Church was thoroughly Calvinistic, and may be traced back to St. Augustine. The priest promised to the elect only :

A distant paradise that tires the thought,
For all the rest, the God of kindly love,
In constant anger for a single fault,
For human weakness pitiless, decreed
The unjust, monstrous curse, eternal pain,
I know not what absurd and futile hell.

The poet thus concludes :

I left the church more sad than I went in.
The stars shone bright, the night was yet sublime,
And as I raised my anxious eyes to heaven,
Where, looking at me with their light serene,
Thousands of peopled worlds moved on in space,
I felt a mortal anguish seize on me.
Alas ! alas ! in both the club and church
In these few moments had appeared to me
The wanderings wild of reason and instinct,
And old despair of man's intelligence.
Then where is the true law ? Where certain faith ?
What should I hope, what think and what believe ?
My reason fails within its prison walls.
A need persistent of our helpless soul,
Justice, is absent from our lower world ;
A man must be or freethinker or slave.
For all that seems at first to be a truth
Is like the Dead Sea fruits that look so fine,
But when the stranger puts them to his mouth,
Are full of ashes and have bitter taste.
The spirit is a vessel, doubt a sea,
A boundless sea, and bottomless withal.

In view of that night-sky where all those stars
 Were fixed like silver studs in azure blue,
 A deadly sadness seized me, and I asked
 The silent Sphinx, the Isis under veil,
 If thus it was in all those starry worlds.¹

The poet's voice has found an echo in the article of a Parisian journalist :

We have now no chapel wherein to kneel, no faith on which to lean, no God to whom to pray. Our heart is empty, our soul bereft of ideal and of hope. You who have the happiness of believing in a sovereign

¹ The French words are as follows :

Un lointain paradis dont le nom seul ennuie.
 Quant aux autres, le Dieu d'amour et de bonté,
 Pour une faute unique à jamais irrité,
 Leur gardait, sans pitié des faiblesses humaines,
 L'inique et monstrueuse éternité des peines,
 On ne sait quel absurde et ridicule enfer. . . .
 Je sortis de l'église encore plus attristé.
 Les astres scintillaient, la nuit était sublime :
 Et, levant mes regards anxieux vers l'abîme,
 Où, lançant jusqu'à moi leurs sereines clartés,
 Vibraient les milliards de mondes habités !
 Je me sentis atteint par une horrible angoisse.
 Hélas ! hélas ! au club comme dans la paroisse
 Venaient de m'apparaître, en ces quelques moments,
 L'instinct et la raison dans leurs égarements
 Et le vieux désespoir de la pensée humaine.
 Où donc est la loi vraie ? Où donc la foi certaine ?
 Qu'espérer ? Que penser ? Que croire ? La raison
 Se heurte et se meurtrit aux murs de sa prison.
 Besoin inassouvi de notre âme impuissante,
 Du monde où nous vivons la justice est absente.
 Pas de milieu pour l'homme : esclave ou révolté.
 Tout ce qu'on prend d'abord pour une vérité
 Est comme ces beaux fruits des bords de la Mer Morte,
 Qui, lorsqu'un voyageur à sa bouche les porte,
 Sont pleins de cendre noire et n'ont qu'un goût amer.
 L'esprit est un vaisseau, le doute est une mer,
 Mer sans borne et sans fond où se perdent les sondes.
 Et, devant le grand ciel nocturne où tous ces mondes
 Étaient fixés, pareils aux clous d'argent d'un dais,
 J'étais triste jusqu'à la mort et demandais,
 Au Sphinx silencieux, à l'Isis sous ses voiles,
 S'il en était ainsi dans toutes les étoiles.

From the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1 Sept., 1887.

Ruler, pray him to reveal himself to us, for we hunger and thirst to suffer and to die for a belief and for an idea.¹

M. Emile Faguet, who may rightly be called "one of the princes of the younger criticism," declares that this century is closing as it began, with a very evident revival of the religious spirit, "by a return to the Christian idea."

After a long night march, the light that was not expected to reappear shines on the horizon, the faces are turned towards this bright dawning, and the most coldly hopeless recognize that they suffered chiefly from an unsatisfied hunger after faith and hope. This desire for faith, the most imperious of all desires, has caused many an eloquent cry to rise to heaven since Luther exclaimed: "What is righteousness, and how can I have it?"

M. Melchior de Vogüé tells that recently at St. Petersburg two well-dressed young men, commercial clerks apparently, presented themselves at one of the religious meetings instituted by Lord Radstock, and that addressing the unknown speaker in the tone of the street mendicant begging for bread, they earnestly cried to him: "Oh, make me believe! make me believe!" So too there are among us at the present time countless young men who are asking to be wrenched away from their negations.²

M. Jules Lemaitre (a leading French literary critic) on his part has searched for the causes of this psychological phenomenon; his reflections have all the greater value as they cannot be suspected of prejudice. He has expressed his views thus:

That to which Russian writers are led by the spontaneous movement of their religious and thoughtful minds, by the study of simple hearts, and by the spectacle of infinite sufferings and infinite resignation, we attain as I think by the bankruptcy of analysis and criticism, by the sense of the void caused in us thereby, and by the immense extent of the unexplained which they leave in the world. For these or other

¹ From *Christianisme au XIX^e siècle*, 1 Nov., 1888.

² *Le Temps*, May, 1887; article quoted in the *Semaine Religieuse* of Geneva, 11 June, 1887. — For further details see three articles by M. Réveillaud on *Signs of the New Times* in the *Signal* of May, 1890; and an equally interesting article by M. Lacheret in *Christianisme au XIX^e siècle* for 31 July the same year.

reasons it would seem that a softening of the human soul is taking place in this latter end of the century, and that we may be about to witness (who knows ?) a revival of the Gospel.¹

Everyone knows the hideous bankruptcy that alarmed Mirabeau. That of which M. Jules Lemaître here speaks is much more terrible. M. Bourget has shown the horror of it in his novel entitled *The Disciple*, which is a severe lesson for the upholders of determinism. Through denial of moral freedom the pupil is led to practical results of such an odious character that the teacher no longer dares to maintain his favourite doctrine. The working of his thought results in a lamentable contradiction; troubled, tortured by remorse, he feels the need of prayer, and his tears flow beside the corpse of his too faithful disciple. We note in passing that the absurd hell of the Abbé Martel is to a great extent responsible for the unbelief of the unhappy Greslou.²

M. Eugene Melchior de Vogüé, that eloquent "interpreter of present-day aspirations," has become, as it has been well said, the apostle and director of the minds which are endeavouring to regain the heights without running in the common ruts. At a banquet given by the Association of Students at Paris not long ago, he spoke of the two special tendencies of contemporary youth: a preoccupation with the ideal or the mysterious, and a decided taste for action. He also said: "It is necessary to believe, there is nothing so good as to believe. You feel the need of action; that is a virtue, but action should be guided by a principle. What principle? That of faith." Such language may well charm a youthful audience full of generous and noble aspirations, but it would not suffice for minds of a certain order; and for these M. Anatole France has replied in the

¹ *Revue politique et littéraire*, 12 Feb., 1887.

² Pages 116-126.—The *Revue des Deux Mondes* of 15 Aug. and 1 Sept., 1890, contains a drama which is a sort of pendant to the novel above mentioned. The title of the drama is *Neither God nor Master* (*Ni Dieu ni maître*), its author being M. George Duruy, a University professor and a novelist of considerable merit. It depicts the conversion of a free-thinking doctor, who, laid aside by illness, abandoned by his unbelieving friends, and consoled by the devoted attention of a truly Christian woman, opens his heart to divine grace. Such a publication is also a sign of the times. The *Imitation of Jesus Christ* is not often quoted at length in a drama.

Temps: "I admit that it is good to believe, but it is also necessary to have something to believe."

We understand the scepticism of M. Anatole France. His remark pointedly indicates the urgent need for a creed that can bear the bright light of full publicity.

To return to the verses of M. Coppée, it is evident that the author's despair is caused by the fact that the traditional Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, present God in a false light. Orthodox eschatology brings discredit upon Christianity. A dead fly will poison a whole vase of perfume; the dead fly must be removed. The stone that bars the way of faith must be put aside. God has to be revindicated. The clock of the Churches is too slow for the dial of the century. The Churches present to the world a caricature of the Divinity, and then they are astonished that the world fails to bow before their caricature! God might say to the obstinate adherents of tradition, as to the Jews of the Old Covenant: "My name continually all the day is blasphemed because of you."¹ The France of to-day seems positively decided to perish rather than accept the God of Torquemada or of Calvin. Gods such as these have too long been the occasion of bitter zeal; they are half pagan, and should be replaced as speedily as possible by the true God of the primitive Gospel. The nets of the old doctrine being broken, we need to sit down awhile on the shore to mend them.

Having had the privilege of meeting M. Coppée, we took occasion to express our sympathy, and made it our duty to set before him the true God of the Gospel. The poet assured us that he had not the least feeling of hostility to such a God. This he has since then made clear to the world, by writing his touching and profoundly Christian drama: *Le Pater*.

¹ Isaiah lii. 5 and Rom. ii. 24. Cf. Ezekiel xxxvi. 23.

IV.

In the field of Christian eschatology three rival systems dispute the ground: the traditional dogma, Universalism, and Conditional Immortality. We do not now speak of the systematic doubt which would set aside all system.

At the very foundation of the traditional theory we find the doctrine, of Platonic origin, which endows our first parents and all their descendants with imperishable personality; hence the triple effect of that which is called the fall: 1st, the death of the body; 2nd, that of the soul, by which is meant a moral separation from God; and 3rd, eternal death, which is said to be a conscious life in the endless torments of hell. By the fact of original sin, every man is supposed to be born subject to this triple doom.

It will at once be seen that in this theory the word *death* is employed in two contradictory senses. When it relates to the body, it designates the *cessation* of life, but when predicated of the soul, it bears the contrary signification of the *perpetuation* of life.

The hell of the Roman Catholics is still crowded with the tortures of a barbarous antiquity: gridirons, immense caldrons of brimstone and molten lead, and red-hot pincers. Horned demons, urged on by Satan their chief, chase the damned and inflict upon them a thousand torments. Centuries elapse, but eternity remains, and without any cessation executioners and victims make the vast prison resound with frightful howlings. These grotesque horrors do not figure in Protestant eschatology, yet there, too, along with the much misunderstood term *hell*, are retained some of the elements of the Roman Catholic notion. Protestants who are faithful to the traditional orthodoxy believe, or think they believe, in the existence of a place into which the wicked will be cast, not to be destroyed, but to suffer for ever the torments of unquenchable fire in the company of the devil and his angels, with rage in the heart and blasphemy on the lips.

According to the Universalist theory, as well as the so-called orthodox, the human soul is born in possession of absolute immortality, but there will not be eternal torments even for

the greatest culprits. The infinite power of God, in accord with an equally infinite mercy, will overcome the resistance of human liberty. Final salvation is inevitable, every sinner will eventually obtain admission to paradise.

The third doctrine is that of Christian Conditionalism. From this point of view man is a candidate for immortality. Perpetual life becomes the portion of the man who, by faith, unites himself to God. The immortalization of man is the purpose of the divine incarnation. The life of the obstinately wicked is transitory; even although prolonged beyond the tomb, it must finally be extinguished.

There is a Conditionalism which is philosophic rather than Christian, according to which the immortality of the conscient creature is not compulsory, but depends upon the good use of moral freedom. Such was the Conditionalism of the Stoics, and in later days that of the Socinians, of Spinoza in his last works, of Locke, of J. J. Rousseau, of Madame de Stael, of William von Humboldt, of Edgar Quinet, of Charles Lambert, and of Victor Hugo. The Conditionalism specifically Christian, which we hold, teaches that immortality depends upon the moral and spiritual union of the human soul with the God-man.¹

The supporters of this doctrine believe it to be exegetically in conformity with the letter and with the spirit of the Scriptures, in conformity also with the analogy of the faith and with universal analogy. They proclaim the good news of immortality offered to everyone who, uniting himself heart and soul to Jesus Christ, becomes transformed into his image. But it is possible to fail of this salvation; sin gnaws and kills the soul which makes no effort at self-control. Every sinner is threatened with moral suffocation; he is on the way to lose the very reason of his existence—nay, more, he has in principle already lost it, and must speedily regain it under penalty of death eternal.

Our purpose is to defend and to recommend this doctrine of attainable immortality, which in France is little known and is entitled to be rescued from the oblivion in which, like many another truth, it has long been buried. Risen from its tomb

¹ For information as to Philosophical Conditionalism, see a recent article in the great dictionary of Larousse, entitled *Conditionnalisme*.

only a few years ago, it has already in various countries conquered the conspiracy of silence, and has secured a place in the very sunlight of publicity; it has its recognized organs and its literature; it declares itself in the universities and seats of learning; proclaimed by great preachers, it has won the respect even of the most hostile and the attention of the most careless. By transforming the notion of God's character, it gives rise to the hope of a renewal of Christian dogmatics.

The clearness and straightforwardness of this doctrine give it a great advantage; it needs no alleviations, no dissimulations. The traditional dogma seems, on the contrary, to be ashamed of itself—it lives upon reservations. At the present time it hides itself, it becomes extenuated, volatilized. A modern Proteus, it is not to be caught. Through numerous alterations and ameliorations it will soon be nothing more than the soporific doctrine of a forced salvation, the final and vulgar fate of all, even the most worthless, who will attain it, whatever they may do or fail to do.¹ Modern orthodoxy borders upon Universalism, and Universalism also dreads the light; it is an esoteric doctrine, needing a semi-obscurity, and reticence on the part of preachers. By suppressing the necessity for effort, it deprives life of motive power. In place of the tiger of the middle ages, we have the siren by whose melodious voice souls are seduced and drawn into the depths of the abyss.²

V.

The hypothesis of the native, inalienable, and absolute immortality of every human soul is the mother of the two doctrines which we have to oppose. We believe that hypothesis to be false, antiphilosophical, antibiblical. It is not found in the teaching of the earliest Fathers of the Church. In our own time we can quote against it some of the chief theologians of contemporary Germany. The idea of an immortality to be acquired is at the centre of the system of Rothe,

¹ See Ch. ix., Sect. xiii.

² As illustrating the general relaxation of ideas relating to future punishment, see a remarkable article, entitled *Le Purgatoire*, in the *Figaro* of 19 April, 1889.

who has been called the most powerful dogmatician of our century. It is also found in the religious philosophy of Weisse.¹ To Dr. Hermann Schultz, now professor at the University of Göttingen, we owe a profound study of the true foundations of Christian teaching concerning immortality.² If we are rightly informed, no one has attempted a refutation of this book, and the author has maintained the same views in his recent *Dogmatics*.³ They are also found in the system of Ritschl and his numerous followers, in the dogmatics of Twisten, and in the works of the venerable Professor Gess, formerly General Superintendent of the ecclesiastical province of Posen.⁴

Long ago Rothe said : "It is no longer maintained that the human soul possesses immortality by virtue of a supposed simplicity of substance."⁵ "It is admitted," says Matter, "that the ontological argument is powerless to demonstrate the persistence of the personality."⁶ If the new edition of Herzog's "Theological Encyclopædia" be consulted, it will be seen that in his study of the subject, Dr. Runze does not trust to the old metaphysical evidences.⁷ He holds that personal immortality can only result from a living faith in the living

¹ *Die philosophische Geheimlehre von der Unsterblichkeit des menschlichen Individuums*, Dresden, 1834.—*Chr. H. Weisse's Psychologie und Unsterblichkeitslehre*, etc., by Dr. Rud. Seydel, Leipzig, 1869.

² *Die Voraussetzungen der christlichen Lehre von der Unsterblichkeit*, Göttingen, 1861.—See in *Supplement*, No. I., an analysis of this important work.

³ *Grundriss der evangelischen Dogmatik*, Göttingen, 1890.

⁴ In the preface to his French translation of *Life in Christ (L'Immortalité conditionnelle, ou la vie en Christ)*, by Edward White, M. Byse has quoted various declarations of German theologians in support of our point of view, to which we refer the reader.

⁵ *Dogmatik*, Heidelberg, 1870, vol. iii., p. 158.

⁶ A. Matter, *Encyclopédie des Sciences religieuses*, at the word *Immortalité*.

⁷ At the word *Unsterblichkeit*.—Dr. F. Brandes states very clearly the true foundation of Christian certitude respecting immortality. The believer, feeling himself a son of God, is confident that God could not allow his child to perish. "Our reconciliation in Christ! That is the foundation of all our certainty, and as such it should always be declared in the Christian Churches. There is no other foundation, and herein is the saying true, that we can lay no other than that which is laid (1 Cor. iii. 11). 'He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life,' because in him he has his reconciliation with God." From an article entitled *Des Christen Gewissheit in Betreff des ewigen Lebens* (The Christian's certainty with regard to eternal life), in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 1872, p. 550.

God. The love of God is our sole guarantee against the extinction which threatens contingent creatures. The believer feels the effects of God's love, and is therefore sure of his immortality; his assurance is not based upon a syllogism.

This kind of view is generally admitted in Germany. It hardly fits in with the traditional dogma of eternal torments, but unhappily the German theologians do not always carry out to their practical consequences the principles which they themselves lay down, and doctrinal reform scarcely reaches beyond academic circles.

It is otherwise, however, in Anglo-Saxon countries, where thousands of voices, lay as well as ecclesiastic, are impatiently demanding a revision of the ancient confessions of faith.

In the Churches of England and America there has been a considerable movement. The circulation of the *Christian World*, the most popular of English religious newspapers, was greatly increased when a discussion of this subject was admitted to its columns. Hundreds of volumes and pamphlets have been published of late years on both sides of the question, and a number of journals or reviews are almost entirely devoted to the defence of the doctrine of Conditional Immortality.¹

The principle of Conditionalism had been already advocated more or less by the philosophers Hobbes and Locke, the theologian Dodwell,² the hymn-writer Watts, and Archbishop Whately. For a long time confined to the thinker's study, it is now on the way to become thoroughly popular, thanks to the concurrence of a number of eloquent preachers: Rev. Edward White, of whom we shall have more to say, Dr. Dale of Birmingham, Rev. W. H. M. Hay Aitken, and in the United States, Dr. Lyman Abbott, editor of the *Christian Union* and successor to Henry Ward Beecher, who himself accepted the same point of view.

Among the supporters of Conditionalism in America may be mentioned: Revds. L. C. Baker of Philadelphia, L. W. Bacon

¹ Mr. E. Abbott, librarian of Harvard University, has published a catalogue of works relating to the soul and its destiny: some 5,000 volumes or pamphlets.

² Dodwell unhappily compromised his position by making immortality dependent upon the ceremony of baptism as administered by the authorized representative of an Episcopal Church.

of Norwich, Connecticut, H. L. Hastings of Boston, T. S. Potwin of Hartford, C. H. Oliphant of Methuen, Dr. W. R. Huntington, and among those deceased, Professor Hudson, Rev. Horace Bushnell towards the end of his career, and Rev. J. H. Pettingell.¹ In England its defenders include Revds. S. Minton-Senhouse, H. Constable, late prebendary of Cork, C. A. Row, prebendary of St. Paul's, J. B. Heard, W. T. Hobson, H. S. Warleigh, W. Griffith, and J. F. B. Tinling, various missionaries to heathen countries, the well-known Hebrew scholar Dr. Perowne, now Bishop of Worcester, chief editor of the Cambridge Bible for schools and colleges, and Greek scholars like Dr. Mortimer, formerly Head Master of the City of London School, and Dr. Weymouth, author of a critical edition of the Greek New Testament.² Special mention is due to two lay theologians, the late Henry Dunn, and Dr. T. Clarke of Interlaken.³

In a separate group we may place the names of several scientific celebrities: Sir George G. Stokes, Secretary and late President of the Royal Society, Professor Bonney, President of

¹ L. C. Baker, *The Mystery of Creation and of Man*, Philadelphia, 1884; *The Fire of God's Anger*, 1887; *Words of Reconciliation*, a monthly magazine. L. W. Bacon, *The Simplicity that is in Christ*, sermons, New York and London, 1886. H. L. Hastings, *Pauline Theology*. T. S. Potwin, *The Triumph of Life*, New York, 1886. Ch. H. Oliphant, *The Extinction of Evil*, the introductory chapter, Boston, 1889. C. F. Hudson, *Debt and Grace*, New York, 1862: this precious arsenal of dogmatic lore ought to be reprinted; *Christ our Life*, 1863, etc. J. H. Pettingell, *The Life Everlasting*, Philadelphia, 1882; *The Unspeakable Gift*, third edition, Yarmouth, Me., 1886.

² S. Minton-Senhouse, *The Glory of Christ*, London, 1869. H. Constable, *The Duration and Nature of Future Punishment*, sixth edition, C. E. Brooks, Malvern Link. C. A. Row, *Future Retribution*, London, 1887. J. B. Heard, *The Tripartite Nature of Man*, third edition, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh. W. T. Hobson, M.A., *Conditional Immortality*, London, 1889. W. Griffith, *The Entire Evidence of Evangelists and Apostles on Future Punishment and Immortal Life*, London, 1882. J. F. B. Tinling, *The Promise of Life*, London, 1881. J. M. Denniston, *The Perishing Soul*, London, 1870, etc.

³ Mr. Henry Dunn, *The Destiny of the Human Race: A Scriptural Inquiry*, London, Simpkin, Marshall and Co.; *The Churches: A History and an Argument*, 1872; *Christianity irrespective of Churches*, 1873: a French translation of this work has been published, with the somewhat too sweeping title, *Le Christianisme sans Eglises*, Paris, Sandoz and Fischbacher, 1878. T. Clarke, M.D., *A Gauntlet to the Theologians*, London, 1888; *The Fate of the Dead*, London, 1889.

the Geological Society, Professors Adams and Geikie, and in Scotland Professor Tait, Secretary of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, one of the authors of *The Unseen Universe*.¹

Professor Stokes occupies the chair of Newton at Cambridge and he represents the University in Parliament. His discoveries in relation to the refrangibility of light have made him famous. He is also a Churchman, a lay theologian. On the 30th March, 1890, he gave a lecture at the Finsbury Polytechnic on personal identity. Supported by the authority of three Anglican Bishops, he denied the absolute immortality of the human soul. The daily newspapers reported these declarations, which made an impression that has not yet died away.

In the front rank of professed theologians we have named Dr. Dale, who is certainly one of the principal representatives of English nonconformity, and a pillar of evangelical Christianity. His lectures on *The Atonement* received unstinted praise from *The Record*, which is proverbial for its intolerance. Seven editions of these lectures were published in four years.

At the risk of compromising his high position, Dr. Dale has not hesitated to make known the convictions to which he has been led by his study of the question of Conditional Immortality. In his acceptance of that doctrine *The Scotsman* of Edinburgh has seen "a sign of the times."

Some years ago the *North American Review*, the oldest in the United States, the *Christian Union* of New York, the *Contemporary Review* of London, and the *Homiletic Magazine*, published "Symposiums"² on the subject. Their success was so great that some of these numbers had to be reprinted several times. An elaborate symposium has recently appeared in America entitled *That Unknown Country*,³ in which fifty-one separate contributors maintain the most divergent opinions. Buddhism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism, Judaism, and Roman Catholicism are represented, Cardinal Manning speaking for the Vatican.

Scotland has been looked upon as an impregnable citadel of

¹ Having been forcibly struck by the ideas of Mr. White, this author soon accepted them, and gave them currency in his *Paradoxical Philosophy*.

² By *Symposium* is meant a series of articles in which various writers of different opinions treat the same subject from their several points of view.

³ A volume containing 943 pages, large 8vo, Springfield, Mass., 1889.

the traditional dogma, but various recent events show that it is not so. Even beyond the Tweed ecclesiastical obscurantism has lost ground. A revision of the Westminster catechism is demanded on all sides. Most of the theological professors and nearly all the younger ministers of the Free Church have joined in the demand. Those of our opponents who look to Scotland for guidance should prepare themselves to face about.¹

Then who has not heard of the book entitled *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*?² The author, Henry Drummond, is lecturer on science in the Free Church College at Glasgow; he has been associated with the evangelist Moody. More than a hundred thousand copies of his book have been sold. We shall see that its tendency is essentially Conditionalist.

A friend of Professor Drummond, Rev. Marcus Dods, D.D., has recently been called to the post of professor of New Testament exegesis in the Free Church Faculty at Edinburgh. This appointment is also a symptom of the fermentation now going on. Professor Dods thinks, as we do, that the evangelical Churches are in some measure responsible for the progress of atheism in our days. He maintained this opinion at the Pan-Presbyterian Congress in London.

Not long since the well-known preacher Dr. Philipps Brooks, of Boston, said: "We are on the verge, I believe, of a mighty revolution" in theology.³ In a book published in 1889 under the title *Whither?* the Rev. C. A. Briggs, D.D., editor of the

¹ The Westminster Confession has lately been notably modified by the English Presbyterians. Revision is under consideration by the Presbyterian Churches in the United States also. "At a recent meeting in Glasgow a Doctor asserted that the Westminster Confession of faith had ceased to be the heart of Scottish theology. Quoting the words of a friend, he added, 'The confessions of faith are already in their coffin, in a very short time they will be in their grave. Scotland will soon not only be free, but will take the lead among the free. That which is called high Calvinism is openly repudiated by all who think and reflect, even in the Churches where it is still the official creed.'" J. F. Astié, *Preachers: What they are, and what they ought to be; Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, Nov., 1887, p. 605.

² London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1883. This work has been translated into French by C. A. Sanceau, and published by Fischbacher, of Paris, under the title, *Les lois de la nature dans le monde spirituel*, with introduction by Eug. Réveillaud. A second edition of this translation has appeared.

³ *Words of Reconciliation*, 1890, p. 125.

American *Presbyterian Review*, declares that the necessity of reform is felt especially in the region of eschatology; he says: "All the faults of traditionalism converge at the point of eschatology, at which the entire Church is in a condition of great perplexity."¹

The proceedings against the five Andover professors, the threatened division in the American Board of Missions, the withdrawal of Mr. Spurgeon from the Baptist Union, are so many signs precursors of the coming renovation. In a discourse delivered at Boston before a thousand pastors, members of the Evangelical Alliance, Dr. Parker, of London, declared not long ago that among his colleagues in the Independent Churches none now preach the doctrine of eternal torments.

Even the Methodist body, that rear-guard of dissent, has been moved; it has softened down the expressions in the chapter of one of its catechisms relating to the final doom of the wicked.²

Dr. Dale has characterized in a few words the present situation of the British Churches. He says:

I believe that for the moment the main current of opinion is running strongly in favour of universal restoration; but that doctrine seems to me to be so destitute of all solid foundation that it is impossible for it to remain as a permanent article in the faith of the Church. I believe that in a few years the main body of opinion in the Free Churches, at least, in this country, will be in favour of that suspense of judgement which very many recommend; and I cannot but believe that, after that, the main body of opinion will be found substantially on the side of the doctrine of Life in Christ of which Mr. White has so long been the champion.³

Mr. White's name brings us to the starting-point of this controversy in its present stage in the English-speaking countries.

¹ *Whither? A theological question for the times*, by C. A. Briggs, D.D., New York, Scribner, 1889, p. 195.

² The leaders of the body of Primitive Methodists appear to find themselves in great perplexity. Heretofore they summarily expelled anyone who expressed doubt as to eternal torments, but the doubters have become so numerous that, in order not to depopulate the churches, a compromise has been invented: doubters may remain, but must not rank higher than teachers in the Sunday School. See *Christian World*, 24 July, 1890.

³ See in *Supplement* No. II. a fuller statement of the views of Dr. Dale.

Like Dr. Dale, Mr. White is a minister of the Congregational denomination. His book *Life in Christ*, published in 1846, forced upon public notice once more a truth which, although never without defenders, had long been obscured under a veil of false philosophy. But in vain did he appeal to the Bible and to the sacred right of free inquiry; he and his book were both tabooed, and he was enabled to taste plentifully of the unspeakable delight of suffering for a good cause. Endowed with a large measure of bodily and mental vigour, and sustained by a robust faith, Mr. White has outlived the storm.

While always faithful to his convictions, Mr. White has carefully avoided making a separate sect, having throughout his career maintained as close a connection as was possible with the Congregational body. Quitting the small country church of which he had been pastor some eleven years, he undertook the arduous work of evangelization in a populous London suburb. To this work he devoted thirty-six years of his life. Grown old in harness, he has now retired from the pastorate, but continues the ministry of preaching. His views have stood the test of experience; they have enabled him to cope successfully with the unbelief which, to so large an extent, has permeated the working classes. In his chapel at Kentish Town has often been seen that rare spectacle—a full audience of artizans. In his special addresses to this class, so difficult of access, Mr. White uses the freedom of speech that characterized the utterances of the apostles. In his ministry, this messenger of the good news is not encumbered with the fetters still worn by so many evangelists; his teaching neither revolts the conscience nor lulls it to sleep. To the human soul dying of thirst and of inanition, he presents Jesus Christ, the fountain of new life, the tree of life, the perpetual sustenance of the traveller wandering in the desert. In a word, his teaching is the revelation, in its most authentic form, of life and immortality in the Gospel.¹ The Church over which he so long presided has been distinguished by exceptional activity in

¹ Mr. White attributes much of his success to the fact that he has constantly presented his conviction as a doctrine of *life* in Christ, the correlative doctrine of punishment taking only a subordinate place, and to his persistent use of the language of Scripture in relation to that doctrine. [Note by the Translator.]

mission and philanthropic labours. Latterly Mr. White's colleagues have recognized the excellence of his work, not only choosing him as one of the Merchants' Lecturers, but also placing him in the chair of the Congregational Union for the year 1886.

The third edition of Mr. White's book consisted of ten thousand copies. Dr. Dorner of Berlin, one of the most pious and learned professors of contemporary Germany and a competent judge, if such exists, had the highest esteem for this work; he described it as "a scientific work, very weighty, serious, and profound."¹

The movement of ideas bears some analogy to that of the currents in the atmosphere. The progress of meteorology has made it possible to predict the drift of the wind towards a given point. The time could be foreseen when the controversy agitating the Anglo-Saxon Churches would make its way to the Continent of Europe. That time has arrived, and we are in the midst of it.

An excellent translation of Mr. White's book was published by M. Charles Byse in 1880,² replacing with advantage a little volume that we had issued eight years previously under the title *La Fin du mal ou l'immortalité des justes et l'anéantissement graduel des impénitents*.³ This modest little book was like the

¹ "Ich finde, es ist eine sehr respectable, ernste und gründliche, wissenschaftliche Arbeit." Letter to M. Byse.—Professor van Osterzee also in his *Religious Philosophy* speaks of Mr. White's book as a work "of great importance."

² Edouard White, *L'Immortalité conditionnelle ou la Vie en Christ*, ouvrage traduit de l'anglais sur la 3me édition, par Charles Byse, 8vo, Paris, Fischbacher, 1880.

³ Paris, Fischbacher, 1872, 214 pages, 16mo. This volume contained an essay presented to the Theological Society of Neuchâtel on 12 July, 1870. An English translation was published in London in 1875, under the title, *The Struggle for Eternal Life*, London, Kellaway. It has reappeared in a volume entitled *The Extinction of Evil*, published by Rev. C. H. Oliphant, Boston, 1889. We had previously touched upon the subject in a lecture on *The Law of Progress*, published in 1869.

A veteran of the movement known as the earlier revival, M. Ami Bost, was, we believe, the first to formulate Conditionalism in the French language. He prepared a pamphlet entitled *The Fate of the Wicked in the other Life* (*Le Sort des Méchants dans l'autre vie*, 32 pages, 8vo, Paris, Grassart, 1861). This was the last of his writings, a worthy completion of a career devoted to the propagation of truth; unhappily the sale of it was

swallow, which does not make the summer but tells of its coming.

In France, as in England, Mr. White's book has proved a powerful leaven. It has given occasion for interesting discussions at various annual conferences of pastors: in 1880 at Marseilles, introduced by Pastor Edw. Delon; in 1883 at Castres, where a paper was read by Professor Bruston; in 1884 at Montpellier, M. Babut presenting the report;¹ at the general conference of French pastors at Paris in 1885, when M. Byse submitted a statement which was afterwards published as a pamphlet, entitled *Notre Durée* (*Our Duration*).² In the discussion that followed the reading of this work there was not a single speech in support of the traditional dogma. In the following year M. Byse gave a course of lectures on the subject at Lausanne, closed by a sort of theological tournament. Public debates, in which various views were represented, took place also at Geneva and Neuchâtel. A whole series of essays have appeared in the columns of the periodical press.³ Candidates for the ministry in the eight Protestant faculties of the French-speaking countries have published numerous theses dealing with the same theme.⁴

prevented, and its light remained under the bushel, it is even doubtful whether it was noticed by a single newspaper.

¹ The papers of Messrs. Bruston and Babut appeared in the *Revue théologique* of Montauban, 1885.

² *Notre Durée*. What says the Bible of Conditional Immortality? Report read at Paris the 21 April, 1885, at the general conference of pastors. Paris, Fischbacher.

³ *Revue théologique*, 1876-1880; *Critique religieuse*, 1879-1885; *Chrétien évangélique*, 1881, 1882; *Alliance libérale*, 1882; *Évangile et liberté*, 1887, etc.

⁴ We give the titles of those which have come to our knowledge; they are for the most part conditionalist. N. Devisme, *On the fate of the wicked in eternity*. Montauban, 1869. E. Houter, *The perfectibility of man after death*. Valence, 1872. G. Soulier, *Final restoration and the destruction of the wicked*, Lausanne, 1873. J. Delisle, *The doctrine of retribution in the Old Testament*, Lausanne, 1874. E. Atger, *On personal survival*, Nîmes, 1877. E. Herding, *Essay on immortality in Christ*, Toulouse, 1883. J. Bach, *Study of the idea of the Kingdom of God in the synoptic Gospels*, Laigle, 1883. P. Poincenot, *Essay on immortality*, Laigle, 1884. T. D. Malan, *Eternal torments*, Geneva, 1884. A. Westphal, *Flesh and Spirit: An essay on the developement of these two notions in the Old and New Testaments*, Toulouse, 1885. E. David, *Study of conditional immortality*

It is, in fact, evident that a real thaw has begun in the domain of eschatology. No one now openly maintains the old orthodoxy. Several theologians of high standing have declared themselves in favour of Conditionalism; others, more numerous, are only waiting for a suitable opportunity. Messrs. Auguste Sabatier, Charles Babut, D. H. Meyer, César Malan, jun., Ad. Schaeffer, president of the consistory of Colmar, have all published works which place them in the category of defenders of this point of view.¹

The movement has extended to Italy, where Signor Oscar Cocorda has published a remarkable volume entitled *Pro Immortalitate; L'Immortalità Condizionata ed il Materialismo*.²

In Holland, too, Conditionalism has found a champion in the person of Dr. Jonker. We earnestly desire to see a translation of his masterly studies.³

This may seem a great array of names; in truth, names are not proofs, but, as it has been well said, "they represent proofs,"⁴ and they may produce a favourable presumption in impartial minds.

from the Biblical and philosophical points of view, Lausanne, 1885. F. Milhac, *Essay on the religious ideas of Locke*, Geneva, 1886. L. Vivien, *The doctrine of Final Restoration*, Neuchâtel, 1888. J. Wuithier, *After Death according to the Jews*, Neuchâtel, 1890, etc.

¹ A. Sabatier, *Mémoire sur la notion hébraïque de l'esprit*, Paris, Fischbacher, 1879. Ch. Babut, *L'enseignement de St. Paul sur la vie future*, *Revue théologique*, 1885. D. H. Meyer, *Le Christianisme du Christ*, Paris, Fischbacher, 1883. César Malan, *Les grands traits de l'histoire religieuse de l'humanité*, 2nd ed., Paris, Fischbacher, 1885; *Manuel d'instruction religieuse*, 1888. Ad. Schaeffer, *De la certitude de la vie future*, Paris, Fischbacher, 1879; *Au déclin de la vie*, 1883; *Le Bonheur: Esquisse d'une apologie rationnelle du Christianisme*, 1887; *Un Réveillon*, Paris, Grassart, 1888. An English translation of the volume *Au déclin de la vie* has been published by F. A. Freer, under the title *Sunset Gleams*, and a German translation, entitled *Auf der Neige des Lebens*. The *Réveillon* is a charming story, which we specially recommend to young people.

² A volume in large 8vo, 304 pages, Tipografia Alpina, Torre Pellice, 1883. *L'Ape biblica*, periodico mensile, Pinerolo.

³ Four articles in the Review of which he was one of the founders, *Theologische Studiën*, Utrecht, 1883, 1884.

⁴ M. Francis Chaponnière, *Eglise Libre*, of 9 Feb., 1883.

VI.

We have spoken of a renewal, a new spring-time of theology. To what is the simultaneous developement of so many similar germs in various countries to be attributed? The explanation is to be found, we believe, in the religious revival which, now and again breaking away from mere routine in the matter of interpretation, has assigned an honourable place to the impartial study of the Holy Scriptures. Biblical philology is a more rigorous science than is generally supposed. As the same texts form the recognized authority in all Protestant countries, an impartial exegesis must eventually reach everywhere the same conclusions. The day will come when the most tenacious traditionalists will have to pass through the Caudine forks of the authorized grammars and dictionaries.

Conditionalism has been regarded as a system of preconceived opinions, and even as a foreign importation. The recital of a personal experience will enable me to meet these accusations. It was a simple lexicological observation that led me into this line of thought. Formerly I preached the doctrine of eternal torments, and I therefore have this advantage over my opponents: that I know their point of view through having shared it, while they have not usually devoted much study to that which I defend.

It was the year 1854; I had just been admitted a student of the theological faculty at Neuchâtel, when the president of the commission directing the studies gave me as text of a first sermon this saying of Jesus Christ: "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."¹ The translation of the venerable Ostervald was at that time a sort of Protestant Vulgate, its version was: "Fear him who can cause the loss of the soul," etc. (*qui peut perdre l'âme*).² This

¹ Matthew x. 28.

² The more recent versions of Rilliet, Lausanne, Oltramare, and Second translate: *faire périr l'âme*. So also do those of Machet, Arnaud, the revised Ostervald, and Reuss. That of Darby has: *Craignez celui qui peut détruire et l'âme et le corps*. The old versions of Ostervald and Martin are so inexact that they ought never to be quoted in biblical controversies. It has been said that if Conditionalism be true Jesus ought to have said: "Fear

expression *perdre l'âme* led me astray ; it was at that time generally held to mean to torment the soul for ever, and I naturally made my sermon an echo of the traditional dogma. Yet it was this very text that became the starting point of my doctrinal evolution. One day in consulting Alexander's Lexicon I noticed that the verb in the original Greek (*apolesai*) signifies primarily *to destroy*. This was a ray of light. "To destroy the soul!" Then the soul must be perishable, I said to myself; and I very soon saw the whole Bible illuminated by this new light. At the same time I was utterly ignorant that unconditional immortality had ever been questioned within the churches of Christendom. Not one of our professors had ever spoken to us of Conditionalism ; nothing was known either of the name, which is of quite recent origin, or of the thing.

Some years later I went to London, where I was received into the house of an aged lady who has left a blessed memory among the poor and suffering of the great metropolis. I mean Mrs. Ranyard, the founder of the system of Bible women. She allowed me the use of her library, in which I met with a book bearing the title : *Life in Christ : Four Discourses*. This was an admirable exposition of the point of view at which I had secretly arrived. The author was the Rev. Edward White. "Do you know him?" I inquired of my hostess. "He is my brother," she replied. She introduced me to him, and that was the beginning of a most intimate friendship.

"When a man happens to be right," said M. Guizot, "he is often more right than he thinks." In my new convictions I have found very much beyond all that I could foresee. They have been to me from time to time a stimulant, a restraint, a hope, and a consolation. They have taken possession of my heart after having captivated my imagination, and I have

him who is able to kill (*tuer*) the soul," as if *kill* were a stronger expression than *destroy* (*faire périr*). Such is not, however, the opinion of Dr. H. Cremer, a philologist of the first rank. He says that *destroy* is a synonym of *kill*, strengthening the notion expressed by that verb. Moreover Jesus calls Satan a murderer (man-killer) John viii. 44 ; and it is not only the body but the soul also that Satan *kills*. Again it is said that the lord of the vineyard will miserably destroy (*apolesai*) the unfaithful husbandmen, Matt. xxi. 41. That evidently signifies that he will have them *put to death*, or *killed*.

gradually discovered that they are also defensible from the point of view of philosophy.

VII.

In the next chapter we will give some declarations of the eminent metaphysicians who have testified to the philosophic character of Conditionalism. For the present we will simply mention a few names, for example: in Germany, Professor Lotze; in France, Messrs. Renouvier and Pilon; in Switzerland, Professor Charles Secrétan.

Unique prerogative! Christian Conditionalism has found grace before the severe philosophy of the school of duty, of which M. de Pressensé quite lately said: "More than ever we need such a philosophy, for no other can have equal power to draw away our youth from sceptical dilettantism as well as from materialistic evolutionism."¹ The chiefs of the neo-criticism have given a gracious reception to the idea of an attainable immortality; they have considered it to be in conformity with practical reason, and it has become the un hoped-for pledge of reconciliation between theology and philosophy. The articles of M. Charles Renouvier dealing with the subject are like a treaty of peace between reason and the religious sentiment, those two rival powers whose hostility sets man at enmity with himself. At the request of M. Renouvier, we presented the theological aspect of the same subject in the *Critique religieuse*. We would here again thank our venerable friend for having provided us with such an opportunity of submitting, unfettered and without reserve, for the examination of the best thinkers, a conviction which is as dear to us as life itself, dearer, indeed, seeing that it is a question of the salvation not of an individual but of a great number.

In his book already quoted on *Civilization and Belief*, Professor Charles Secrétan explains the reasons why he too inclines to believe in an immortality that may be won.

These two patriarchs of French philosophy, M. Renouvier representing the philosophy of duty and M. Secrétan represent-

¹ *Revue Chrétienne*, 1890, p. 157.

ing that of liberty,¹ are excellent sponsors for Conditionalism, which, although apparently new-born, was in fact previously living in the cradle of the Gospel.

It is a curious coincidence that the doctrine which we maintain has obtained recruits even among the adherents of the experimental method. There are, in fact, Christian evolutionists who are opposing, not without success, the incomplete evolutionism of the materialists. More consistent and more logical than many learned Darwinists, they require that the evolution of each man should go on so as to bring him nearer to the likeness of Jesus Christ, the model man. Professor Drummond, of Glasgow, has been already mentioned; Dr. Armand Sabatier, professor in the Faculty of Science at Montpellier,² and M. Leenhardt, assistant professor of natural history at Montauban,³ are inclined in the same direction.

In the same class we may include another thinker, belonging to the old Bernese aristocracy, M. Henry de May, whose death took place in 1871. The *Bibliothèque universelle* of Lausanne published in 1885 four suggestive articles by M. Byse on M. de May and his book entitled *The visible and invisible Universe, or the Plan of the Creation* (*L'univers visible et invisible ou le plan de la création*).⁴ This book contains a philosophy of nature. In the author's view there is an exact correspondence between the material and the spiritual universe. The visible creation is the exact counterpart of the invisible universe.

It is a divine book wherein we may discover the secrets of the higher world. . . . As the dewdrop trembling on a blade of grass

¹ Messrs. Renouvier and Secrétan were born within a few days of each other: the former on New Year's Day, 1815, the latter the 19th January of the same year.

² Dr. Armand Sabatier, *Essais d'un naturaliste transformiste sur quelques questions actuelles*, 6th Essay, on Creation, physical evil, moral evil, death. *Critique philosophique*, 31 Dec., 1886, and 31 Jan., 1887. See especially pages 51, 60, 65, 71, 74. The author is now preparing a work entitled *Essais sur la morale de l'évolutionnisme chrétien*.

³ *Quelques réflexions sur les rapports du christianisme et des sciences*. Discourse delivered at the opening of the scholastic year at the Faculty of Montauban on the 6 Nov., 1884, by Prof. F. Leenhardt. *Revue théologique*, 1884.

⁴ *Un positiviste chrétien*. *Bibliothèque universelle*, 1885. These articles have been reprinted as a pamphlet, entitled *Henry de May, un positiviste chrétien*, Nyon, Switzerland, Kallenberg, 1889.

reflects now the silver moon, now the morning glow, and now the various colours of the meadow, so our planet is a mirror destined to reflect in our eyes the harmony of all things, the vastness of space, and the eternity to come.

By different ways Messrs. de May and Drummond have reached conclusions which are identical. They are two Christian positivists who, unknown to each other, starting from the same principle, have both arrived, as by a common accord, at the idea of Conditional Immortality.

According to Professor Drummond, the law of laws, the law which completes the universe and gives it perfect harmony is the law of continuity. There is not only analogy between the sensible and the spiritual worlds, but each law of which we can show the existence here below is like a line which extends indefinitely beyond the circle of our experience, throughout all economies; in other terms: every law of nature is universal. Twenty years earlier the Bernese philosopher had expressed the same conviction when he wrote: "The laws remain invariable, it is only the elements that change."

"Every life," said M. de May, "is changeable and destructible; the human soul, like all souls, is changeable and mortal. The life of a soul depends upon its conduct." To this idea M. de May attaches extreme importance. Notwithstanding a few contradictory passages, which may be explained by the difficulty of the subject and the long time occupied in the elaboration of his system, this recluse of the Black Forest rejects on the one hand the Platonic dogma of a natural and inalienable immortality of all human souls, and on the other hand the theological dogma of a damnation consisting in torments absolutely eternal. This important law of the mortality of souls involves the necessity of regeneration. Entrance into a world can only take place by a birth; we therefore need to be born anew in order to become citizens of the kingdom of heaven. This is exactly the teaching of Jesus Christ. He came to offer to all men and to deposit in the heart of believers the germ of that celestial life, to place within our reach that lost immortality which we were incapable of reconquering by our own efforts. Those who freely and resolutely unite themselves to God in filial submission participate in his eternal existence.¹

Professor Drummond has somewhat less explicitly indicated similar views; he says:

¹ Charles Byse, *Henry de May, passim*.

The soul, in its highest sense, is a vast capacity for God . . . without God it shrinks and shrivels until every vestige of the divine is gone, and God's image is left without God's Spirit. One cannot call what is left a soul; it is a shrunken, useless organ, a capacity sentenced to death by disuse, which drops as a withered hand by the side, and cumbrous nature like a rotted branch (p. 110). It ought to be placed in the forefront of all Christian teaching that Christ's mission on earth was to give men life. "I am come," he said, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." And that he meant literal life, literal, spiritual and eternal life is clear from the whole course of his teaching and acting. To impose a metaphorical meaning on the commonest word in the New Testament is to violate every canon of interpretation and at the same time to charge the greatest of teachers with persistently mystifying his hearers by an unusual use of so exact a vehicle for expressing definite thought as the Greek language, and that on the most momentous subject of which he ever spoke to men. It is a canon of interpretation according to Alford, that "a figurative sense of words is never admissible except when required by the context" (p. 235).¹ Reuss defines the apostolic belief with his usual impartiality when—and the quotation is doubly pertinent here—he discovers in the apostle's conception of life, first, "the idea of a real existence . . . an imperishable existence" (p. 236).

The professor's position in the midst of a very orthodox and keen-scented public has induced him to introduce a saving clause. He says (p. 117):

Should anyone object that from the scientific standpoint the opposite of salvation is annihilation, the answer is at hand. From this standpoint there is no such word.

Professor Drummond repudiates the term *annihilation*, but he admits the fact that the individuality of the obstinate sinner will be destroyed. This subtle distinction between *destroy* and *annihilate* had the advantage of throwing dust in the eyes of the sleuth-hounds of orthodoxy, it probably increased the success of the book a hundredfold; but it does not prevent us from claiming the author as on our side. His standpoint implies and postulates the suppression of the incorrigible rebel, but that is exactly the supreme chastisement in the view of the Conditionalist. We know full well that no atom, no substance

¹ *History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age*, vol. ii., p. 496.

is annihilated, but that does not affect the case ; it is a question of the maintenance or suppression of a *person*. The personal consciousness is the man. What can be the value for the individual of any possible remainder or detritus, even if of an immaterial nature, when once the personality is destroyed ?

Even in the camp of the rationalist Christians Conditionalism has met with sympathy. Pastor Gerold, a recognized representative of that tendency, has acknowledged it. He says :

The doctrine of attainable immortality has a grand moral aspect ; it puts life eternal, so to speak, within man's reach. We are free either to ascend to the eternal life or to descend to the eternal death ; immortality is not imposed upon anyone. . . . Without pronouncing an opinion as to the fate of those who die impenitent, let us from this solution of the problem of the future retain the incontestable truth that those only can be sure of immortality who here on earth have laid hold on eternal life.¹

On the ground of exegesis, the theologian Scholten, who has been called the father of independent theology in Holland, has reached exactly our conclusions. He says :

According to the Bible, the life which the sinner loses is his very existence. The dry branch that is burnt is an image of the annihilation of the sinner. What will remain of his person ? Will it be his spirit ? but, born of the flesh, the sinner does not possess the life of the spirit ; his flesh ? but that is destined to perish with the world and its lusts.²

A journal of rationalist tendency states that :

The Conditionalist theory realizes a progress and marks a step towards the union of all Christians.³

It is thus permissible to believe that in Conditionalism is to be found the meeting-point of the four main spiritualistic tendencies of our time : biblical Christianity, rationalist Christianity, Kantism, and evangelical transformism.

In his most recent attack, one of our principal opponents, Professor Frederick Godet, went so far as to admit that the

¹ *Le Progrès religieux*, 27 Aug., 1881.

² *L'Evangile de Jean*, vol. i., p. 47.

³ *Le Protestant*, a journal of the rationalist Protestants, 27 March, 1886.

Conditionalist solution was the most defensible from a purely rational point of view.¹

VIII.

On looking round we note that the battle in which we are engaged is half won, but it is only half won. To cease preaching the blasphemous doctrine of eternal torments is not enough: that doctrine needs to be replaced by teaching that will be at the same time more in accordance with the Bible, more moral, and more scientific. Only that which is well replaced is thoroughly destroyed, and, as we have seen, a system of dogmatics without eschatology is like a building without a roof, liable to be damaged by every change of weather. The fear of future punishment is now no more than a crumbling barrier, and in the moral life of many a soul, a false optimism being the fashion of the day, all is going from bad to worse. A member of the Supreme Court at Washington has perceived and indicated this fault. He said to a pastor:

You ministers are making a fatal mistake in not holding forth before men, as prominently as the previous generation did, the retributive justice of God. You have fallen into a sentimental style of rhapsodizing over the love of God, and you are not appealing to that fear of future punishment which our Lord and Master made such a prominent element in his preaching. And we are seeing the effects of it in the widespread demoralization of private virtue and corruption of public conscience throughout the land.²

With Jesus Christ we also demand the *fear* of "Him who can destroy both soul and body." The fact is that the Churches, which are passing through a period of intellectual feebleness, recoil from the necessary effort. The most zealous are deterred by a blind conservatism. They are not willing to discuss that teaching which Reuss called "the favourite doctrine of all orthodoxies."³ As an illustration of the existing deadlock

¹ "What are we to think of this reasoning? We cannot but be struck by its plausible aspect. And without the light of Christian revelation it would seem to me difficult to arrive at any other conclusion."—*That Unknown Country*, p. 405.

² *The Christian*, May 9, 1890.

³ *History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age*, 1852, vol. ii., p. 257.

may be cited the work of M. Ernest Naville on *The Problem of Evil*, in which there is not a word as to the eventual fate of the victims of evil. That leaves manifestly an immense blank.

Not long ago a Genevese pastor set forth in a humorous article the programme of rules of conduct imposed upon their spiritual leaders by many Continental Churches, just the converse of that which is required elsewhere. According to him :

The pastors must not make themselves familiar with the scientific theories and the philosophical speculations of the present day, nor even with the consequences that these may lead to in theology and religion. They must not be acquainted with modern criticism, and must take care not to acquaint their people with the latest results of critical investigations. They must be careful not to construct a new theology upon the ruins of the old. They are expected to avoid all application of Christian principles to burning questions, and all attempts to solve the delicate problems of the age.¹

On the other hand, the rationalists who have only two dogmas: God and the immortality of the soul, naturally dread an inquiry which would perhaps diminish by a half their already sufficiently poor religion.

Placed thus in face of a coalition of opposing forces, between the traditionalist hammer and the universalist anvil, Conditionalism would seem, humanly speaking, to have a gloomy prospect. It certainly rejoices the hearts of those who receive it, but in respect of worldly affairs it has caused them only worry and annoyances; they have been kept in quarantine, they have been so isolated and exposed to so many affronts that nothing but the sentiment of a sacred duty has kept them to the fore. They have even been accused of seeking to "please men." This accusation is indeed a climax. If such had been their ambition, would they have professed a doctrine which, to adopt the expression of the Jews at Rome in relation to the Gospel, "is everywhere spoken against"? Because of his Conditionalism M. Byse, in all other respects irreproachable as a pastor, was treated as a heretic by the Missionary Church of

¹ *That which is not required of the pastors. Semaine Religieuse, of Geneva, 8 Feb., 1890.*

Belgium.¹ In England and America similar cases have occurred, and in France preachers who are Conditionalists are obliged to tone down their teaching. In the Union of the Free Churches an estimable pastor who denied endless torments found himself obliged to gain his living by labour in the fields.

In this controversy, in spite of all our efforts, offensive insinuations have been persistently introduced. One highly-placed theologian has even assured us that certain persons are only waiting for the death of its first champions in order to embrace Conditionalism. In other terms, they reject a truth because it has been previously embraced and proclaimed by others with whom they are not in sympathy. If that were so, it would only remain for us to pray that God would withdraw us from this world where all our efforts to serve him seem to produce a contrary result. Seriously, however, we would entreat the critics to let alone the humble advocates of the doctrine and join us in the endeavour to solve the great problem.²

Come what may, "truth is great and will prevail";³ the name of the truth in the Scriptures of the New Covenant is the *unforgettable*;⁴ it baffles the most skilfully-planned conspiracies. Vainly do men bury it under heaps of error and falsehood, sooner or later it breaks forth from its grave and reigns, even over those who had buried it. If Conditionalism has truth on its side, it will one day share in the victory.

Some eight years ago M. de Pressensé said that "the best

¹ The injustice of this conduct was indicated at the time in a pamphlet, to which no reply has been made, entitled *Le Péril de l'Évangélisme*, a statement presented to the Society for Theological Science at Geneva, 1883. M. L. Durand, formerly pastor at Liège, who had cast doubt upon the correctness of the pamphlet, was obliged to acknowledge that he had been mistaken.

² With this object the critics ought to begin by expounding their own views. We are often left in entire ignorance of the opinion of our opponents on the point in question. They do not state it precisely; it is left in obscurity. This is no doubt a convenient method, controverting a definite view of immortality without taking the responsibility of any theory. The critic keeps himself out of sight so completely as to be intangible. He reminds us of Homer's gods, who, while taking part in the strife of the combatants, themselves remained invulnerable.

³ 1 Esdras iv. 41.

⁴ *He Alêtheia*.

minds in all the evangelical Churches are divided as to Conditional Immortality.”¹ At the same period an article in the *Semaine Religieuse* of Geneva declared that this doctrine attracted “an ever-increasing number of theologians and independent thinkers,” and that it was “a hundred times more acceptable than final restoration or eternal torments.”² During the last few years the adhesions to Conditionalism have become so numerous that the day is almost within sight when it will be accepted by all the best minds referred to by M. de Pressensé. When that time arrives there will no longer be any question of Conditionalism, or Universalism, or Traditionalism, but only of the glorious and pure primitive Gospel, which has been too long obscured by human inventions. We repudiate the name of innovators with which we are often reproached. It is with Conditionalism as with Protestantism, which is hastening the day when there will be no further need to protest.

Protestantism has had to combat the obstinacy of the Romish Church, the most sectarian, the most haughty, and the most backward of all the sects. Conditionalism has a better chance of success. While it professes to continue the work of the Reformation, and to return to apostolic teaching, too long forgotten, while it invokes the Bible and free inquiry, while it has eloquent advocates to plead its cause, the religious newspapers are obliged to make way for it, professors of dogmatics pay attention to it, pastors and people are anxious to listen to the public exposition of the doctrine. This state of things cannot long be maintained, Conditionalism must soon be either generally accepted or rejected. For the present the discussion continues; if it is wearisome we ought not to complain. Protestantism was born of discussion; if it were now to repudiate discussion it would be repudiating its own mother.

Will our opponents try to place themselves at our point of view? The traditional dogma, in a mitigated form it is true, is maintained by a great number of zealous laymen. Very few pastors attempt to set them right. In our eyes this dogma is a calumny upon the heavenly Father, it makes the divinity of Jesus Christ almost a superfluity, it discredits the Gospel; it

¹ *Revue chrétienne*, Nov., 1882.

² 9 Dec., 1882.

seems to us to have against it the Scriptures, the earliest Fathers of the Church, the conscience and reason. On the other hand, the doctrine of the assured final salvation of all men finds many supporters. This doctrine, too, seems to us false, and not less dangerous. Exposed to the attacks of the upholders of these two theories, and earnestly desiring to edify, Conditionalism is obliged to use at the same time both the sword and the trowel. If it were to keep silence, its adversaries would use that silence as a weapon against that which we believe to be a salutary truth. Strong convictions have never kept silence.

The French translation of Mr. White's book appeared in 1880. It has ploughed a broad and deep furrow, but after the plough comes the harrow¹ to break the clods turned up by the ploughshare. While presenting afresh in its essential features the thesis already developed by our venerable predecessor, we shall endeavour to remove the misunderstandings which are still common. It will be seen that some of our opponents would be Conditionalists if they were consistent with themselves. As the basis of our work we have taken the notes of a course of lectures delivered at the University of Geneva in 1886, and at the Academy of Neuchâtel in 1887. That course was attended by pastors, theological students, and simple laymen; many ladies, too, were present. We have, therefore, reason to hope that our book may be understood by all persons who interest themselves in the grand problem of the future life.

The Supplement is more especially for the use of professional theologians. It contains various extracts and articles which may serve to support our argumentation.

An unexpected contrast: the philosophers have shown themselves generally sympathetic, the opposition has come from among the Churches, both Catholic and Protestant.² To these,

¹ A harrow forms part of the armorial bearings of the Petavel family. [Note by the translator.]

² Passing beyond the limits of Protestantism, this controversy has shaken even the immobility of the Roman Catholic Church. Father Gratry accepted the principle of Conditionalism. In his view there are men "who are constantly going down towards non-existence with the consciousness of their increasing inanity and of their continual advance towards nothingness." See Ferraz, *Histoire de la philosophie en France au XIX^{me} siècle*, p. 415.—

therefore, we submit our reply, but we desire to reach beyond the Churches, and to win that large and increasing class of literary men, the head and heart of a people for whom we have a profound affection. Many among them, groaning under their scepticism, are stretching out their hands in desperation towards an unknown God. We desire to present to them the Gospel taken at the fountain-head, the most precious thing that we know. This testimony of our affection will surely be acceptable to them. More than any other modern people, the French have the noble passion for "glory, honour, and immortality."¹ In order to satisfy that passion they make astonishing sacrifices. "*Non omnis moriar*," I shall not utterly die; this saying of Horace seems to sum up their aspirations. The horror of utter death is with them a powerful motive; it is the highest form of the instinct of self-preservation, and to it we can make our appeal. But many noble spirits have gone sadly astray. They may be seen exhausting themselves in heroic efforts to hand down to posterity—what? The few letters that compose their name? An illusory and even derisive triumph, if he whose name endures no longer exists. By dissipating this illusion, by setting before men the true glory, honour, and immortality, Conditionalism may serve to reawaken the religious sentiment in France. Worldly glory is a smoke which is quickly dissipated, along with the intoxication that it procures; the true immortality is that of the person. This is the inestimable treasure which the Gospel puts within the reach of everyone who desires it, in a doctrine which, without contradicting our reason, completes the teaching of the most eminent philosophers. This we shall proceed to expound, as it presents itself to us in the purity of the primitive texts. Our zeal in the accomplishment of this task will be in proportion to the sadness caused by the frivolity of the multitude in respect of their eternal future, the involuntary blasphemy of the traditional theology, and the blind optimism which smilingly lulls so many souls into a fatal slumber.

The Abbé Méric, in his work entitled *L'autre vie*, 2 vols., 8vo, Paris, 1880; the Rev. Father Felix, S.J., in his volume *L'éternité*, Paris, 1888; and the Very Rev. Father Monsabré in his *Conférences de Notre Dame de Paris*, Lent, 1888, have all three, more or less, touched upon the study of Conditionalism.

¹ Romans ii. 7.

CHAPTER II.

IMMORTALITY AS VIEWED BY INDEPENDENT SCIENCE.¹

I. Biology and comparative physiology, geology and palæontology, and, indeed, all that is included in the term experimental science, fails to supply any proof of the immortality of the soul.—II. Experimental science tends to assimilate the final fate of man to that of the animals.—III. The study of nature seems to teach evolutionism, or at least the law of a survival of the fittest; if immortality were otherwise proved, that law might well suggest a Conditional Immortality.—IV. The Platonic proofs of the immortality of the soul are not conclusive.—V. Greater value of the moral proof.—VI. Admissions of spiritualist philosophers and theologians.—VII. The moral proof favours the hypothesis of an attainable immortality.—VIII. Conditionalist thinkers and metaphysicians.—IX. In view of the insufficiency of philosophy, the human soul cries out for a divine revelation.

I.

“MAN, who has scaled the heavens by the ladder of his astronomy, and by the study of the rocks divined the history of the globe, finds a more insoluble problem in his own nature and destiny. Though wearing so many crowns, as earth-subduer, legislator, soldier, poet, philosopher, and saint, this image of the infinite nevertheless scarcely arrives at the maturity of his powers ere death carries him away. He perishes like the moss or lichen beneath his feet.”

What is this mysterious doom of death which overshadows all, which awaits and engulfs us all? Is it indeed the end of our individual being? Does man, the “myriad-minded,” when he expires, close his eyes for ever on these star-lit heavens to which he has gazed upward so steadfastly and so wistfully for a few brief moments? Is our life like the

¹ The early sections of this chapter contain a summary of the first division of Mr. White's book, *Life in Christ*, previously mentioned.

bubble eddying around on the surface of a stream, appearing for a moment and then bursting and mingling its atoms with the water that bore it along? This is the belief of five hundred millions of Orientals. If, on the contrary, the individual survives, will it be for a moment, or for ever? Is our immortality absolute or relative, native or conditional? Shall we live again with the consciousness of our identity? If man is immortal, why the silence and the impenetrable night of the tomb? These are the most vital of all questions; as Pascal has well said: "Immortality is a thing of so much importance to us, touching us so nearly, that whoever is indifferent with regard to it must have lost all proper feeling."¹

There is such a thing as science, independent of religions and sects, modern science, to which we are indebted for a thousand admirable discoveries; we will inquire of it. Precise, profound, and rigorously exact, it is entitled to our confidence.

So long as man was studied apart from the system of living creatures around him, it was possible indefinitely to exalt his nature and destiny; poets and theologians gave free scope to their imagination. But since the progress of natural science has enabled us to embrace in panorama the whole range of animated creatures upon our globe, it has become impossible to found general theories upon the examination of a single species, or to affirm the exclusive immortality of man on the ground of attributes which are common to him and all living beings.

The ancient barriers have been removed. Comparative physiology teaches that man is, like every animal, the product of a germ which has power to build up his organism, his faculties, and his mental and sensitive capacities. The life cannot be separated, even in thought, from the being that it animates. Life independent of an organism cannot be scientifically demonstrated. In this respect there is not merely analogy, but identity, between the human race and the animals. A very ancient philosopher made the remark that "man is born as a wild ass's colt." In all animal organisms, from the lowest to the highest, may be traced sensation, per-

¹ *Thoughts (Pensées)*, complete edition, by J. F. Astié, Paris, 1883, p. 345.

ception, voluntary movement, instinct, thought, in a development always parallel with that of a nervous system consisting of brain or ganglia. The mind of man is developed in accordance with a universal law which connects with brain all intellectual phenomena. We observe the existence of thought wherever brain or ganglia are developed, but nowhere else. The heredity of qualities and capacities is subject to the same laws in all beings. If, then, the identity of the process of production indicates a corresponding identity of the process of dissolution, the final destiny of man will be exactly similar to that of the animals.

Comparative physiology does not furnish the least ground for hope that human intelligence can survive the brain. The mind seems to be one of the various manifestations of life. This superior power is developed with the brain, it is not developed if the growth of the brain is arrested, as in idiots; it lapses into insanity when the brain is inflamed; it becomes feeble when the brain grows old; and when the brain no longer fulfils its functions the mind ceases to act. A blow on the head affects the intellect, a fermented liquor stimulates or intoxicates it, a narcotic sends it to sleep. Mental maladies and peculiarities are hereditary in the same way as purely physical qualities. It is clear that the character of each child is the result of a great number of precedent individualities. Intelligence varies not only in accordance with the mass, but in accordance with the tissue and the convolutions of the organ of thought. In a word, the human mind is not to be conceived of as isolated; its vigour, its feebleness, its maladies, its birth, its decline, are in exact correspondence with the condition of the cerebral matter on which it depends; hence the legitimate conclusion—until the contrary is proved—that the soul dies with the body. Sentiment, as the biologists say, ought to give way in the presence of facts. Science no longer permits the isolation of man in the midst of nature; it sees in him only one link of the immense chain of organic beings, which, by an inevitable law, are being hurled into the abyss of nothingness.

There are in the world a million of living species, whereof 999,999 are mortal; science demands why man, the millionth species, should form the single exception, seeing that there is

nothing in his organism to warrant such a lofty claim. His birth is of the humblest, his genealogy uncertain. Transformism denies the intervention of a creative act in the appearance of man upon the earth. Palæontology opposes transformism ; but from the point of view of geology, physiology, prehistoric anthropology, and ethnology, a special creation of the first man still remains only an hypothesis. It is impossible to build up the dogma of immortality on this quicksand.

Not only individuals, but whole species perish ; geologists have dug up and described as many as sixty thousand extinct species. From the earth's earliest days death has followed on the heels of life ; like the Saturn of ancient fable, Nature devours her children. Her motherhood is similar to that of a volcano producing hosts of fugitive sparks which are speedily extinguished in the gloom of an eternal night.

The advocates of immortality bring forward the fact that the seeds of plants survive the plants themselves for an indefinite period, and that a butterfly emerges from the caterpillar's shroud ; and in the same way an invisible germ issuing from the human organism may perhaps survive the death of that organism. "It may be that under the appearance of a complete annihilation of the physical and spiritual life the very germ of the life still subsists, capable of reanimation under favourable conditions."¹

A *perhaps* is not a proof. Some biologists, putting aside as chimerical everything which is outside their experience, have gone so far as to propose agnosticism as the basis of a new morality. They say : "Would not men be more likely to have a deeper love for those about them, and a keener dread of filling a house with aching hearts, if they courageously realized from the beginning of their days that we have none of this perfect, companionable bliss to promise ourselves in other worlds, that the black and horrible grave is indeed the end of our communion, and that we know one another no more?"²

It must be admitted that the study of comparative psy-

¹ *On the Certainty of a Future Life (De la certitude de la Vie future, lettre à un ami)*, by Ad. Schaeffer, Paris, Fischbacher ; Grassart, 1879.

² *The Fortnightly Review*, 1873. Agnosticism, which is a kind of positivism, requires the evidence of facts ; we agree, but, with Mr. Edward White, we demand all the facts.

chology has been hampered, like all the other branches of science, by the traditional theology. The Bible has been supposed to teach the absolute truth in all departments of knowledge, and its texts, frequently interpreted in a most arbitrary fashion, have hindered the impartial study of nature. A few quotations from the popular or poetic language of the prophets prevented the reception of the true theory of the solar system during nearly two thousand years. The biblical story of the creation, wrongly regarded as a scientific cosmogony, caused the postponement of the marvellous discoveries of geology until the present century. The notion of a universal deluge, and a mistaken view of the tenth chapter of Genesis, even now arrest the progress of ethnology. The moral nature of God himself has been concealed behind clouds of sacerdotal metaphysics; it is, therefore, by no means surprising that the nature of man and that of the animals have been misunderstood. In this case, however, the excuse of being led astray by the primitive texts of the Old Testament does not exist, for, as we shall see, they conform in a remarkable manner to the facts of nature, and directly contradict the traditional psychology. In order to make them accord with a pretended orthodoxy, it has needed the extraordinary contortions of ecclesiastical exegesis.

II.

“Man,” says the Church, “has a soul, the animals have none; they have only instinct. Hence the diversity of their destinies. For the animal, death is the total destruction of the individual; but the soul of man is spiritual, is of the nature of God, and consequently indestructible, eternal as God himself. Being a simple and indivisible substance, it cannot be dissolved, and being once in existence it must exist for ever. Even in the material world nothing is annihilated, no atom is lost. Forms are changed, organisms are decomposed, but substance remains. So it is with spiritual substance. God has endowed spirit with endless existence, and our moral nature demands immortality.” Throughout Christendom man is regarded as possessing an inalienable immortality which distinguishes him

from the beasts that perish ; and this principle is maintained as a postulate of the religious life, co-ordinate with belief in the moral government of God. While holding such views, it has been difficult to do justice to the animal world. By the side of beings endowed with the divine attribute of eternal duration, these humble creatures have had small chance of consideration ; accordingly, the “immortal” bipeds have exercised a tyrannical government over their perishable slaves. A more attentive study of these enslaved races, however, is gradually dissipating the illusions of scholastic psychology. A new science, comparative psychology, is demolishing the metaphysical arguments on which theologians have rested their hope of life eternal.

In fact, if our prospect of a future life depends upon the possession of a soul, we must either be resigned to share that immortality with all our collaterals of the animal kingdom, or else forego our own hopes, admitting that we are mortal, like them. The beast, too, has a soul ; he possesses the organ of thought ; he has the power of receiving ideas ; his memory is subject to the laws of the association of ideas ; he reflects, he learns, he dreams, he sometimes invents ; he has a sense of the beautiful, manners often exemplary, a feeling and thankful heart ; he loves his kind and man, his relative and his superior in the hierarchy of the universe.

For a long time it was the custom to attribute to instinct all that which in the animals resembles the manifestations of a spiritual principle, and by instinct was understood a natural impulse to pursue blindly some end, to do acts of which the agent does not perceive the purpose. Thus defined, instinct may certainly explain a considerable number of the operations of the animal mind, but not the whole of these phenomena, perhaps not the half. Instinct may to a large extent account for the activity of the bee, the spider, the mole, the beaver, and the first actions of the little child endeavouring to sustain its feeble life. But if it be asserted that no animal has the consciousness of a special aim, or uses means intended to attain a definite purpose, then the theory does not correspond with the facts. To say that an elephant, a horse, or a dog does

by instinct that which it has been taught to do would be almost as absurd as to speak of a child instinctively learning to read.

In the philosophical schools there has been a sort of general conspiracy to underrate the animals. Descartes went so far as to declare that they were mere automata, and he said this with the evident intention to exalt the supremacy of man. It has been said that thought involves the immateriality of the thinking principle, and that immateriality implies immortality. But, as we have just seen, there are animals that think, and they would, therefore, according to this reasoning, be immortal. But if this reasoning be false, if the beast possesses a certain faculty for thought without being therefore immortal, man cannot have any right to found a hope of future life on the possession of that same faculty.

So far as science can perceive, there is no exception to the general law of death. After a brief life of a few hours, days, or years, all the denizens of earth, water, and air "return to their dust"; their constituent elements are dissipated, and go to form parts of new chemical combinations, but the individual, as such, ceases to exist. Nature grants no privilege, in this respect, to the species that are distinguished either by the delicacy of their instincts or by the superiority of their intelligence. Each organism is developed, as we have said, from a germ, which produces at the same time both the energies and their instruments in a unity dissoluble only by death. Every part of the body is continually wearing away and being renewed by means of the blood; the blood is the vehicle of life, which circulates or stops with it. Death is the cessation of the organic functions.

The desire to find a natural basis for the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul has led some contemporary authors to attribute to the higher animals certain rights to a future life. Others have imagined the immortality of domestic animals; the soul of the dog would survive, while the wolf in death would utterly die. There are even some who have not recoiled from the idea of an immortality for the *infusoria*; then, since it is impossible to fix the line of demarcation between the animal and the vegetable, immortality has actually

been attributed to plants; a resurrection has been promised for all the rose-trees and oaks that have vegetated upon the surface of the globe! A step even beyond this can be taken by human fancy. Prehistoric men probably believed in the essential immortality of their bows and arrows, which they broke at the tomb of the hunter, so that their shades might accompany that of the deceased.

III.

The imagination of certain believers uses the supposed immortality of man as an argument in favour of that of animals. On the other hand, contemporary science contests human immortality on account of the evident mortality of all living beings. In view of the intimate relationship between man and the other mammals, many students of nature in our day think they see in man only the effect of a gradual advance from anterior races, called anthropomorphic. According to this theory, man would be by collateral descent a distant cousin of the ape, "a twig of the branch of the catarrhinian¹ apes of the ancient world." This is the theory of an ascending evolution, the triumph of which would place the name of Darwin on a level with those of Galileo and Newton; it forms part of the vaster hypothesis of transformism, which supposes a common cradle from which, by way of gradual modifications, have issued all the living beings on the face of the earth.

It is clear that this system can be supported by numerous arguments; its adherents include scientists of the first rank, and even spiritualists. It has been called the greatest synthesis hitherto conceived by the mind of man.² Dr. Virchow, its chief opponent in Germany, admits that it exhibits a certain verisimilitude. Professor Haeckel, in his work on the origin of man, supports his argument by reference to the morphology of the embryo, which in man seems to imitate in its changes the stages through which his ancestors would have passed in the progressive evolution of the animal races. In the human body, too, are found atrophied and useless organs which seem to be vestiges of a less perfect organization, while

¹ Catarrhinian; *i.e.*, with narrow projecting nose.

² *Journal de Genève*, 6 March, 1879; scientific correspondence. †

in certain animals these same parts have continued to attain their full developement.

Nevertheless, transformism still remains a disputable hypothesis. Not only has there not been found within historic times a single certain instance of transmutation of species, of the appearance of a new type really fertile and durable; but, as we have already seen, palæontology bars the way of this theory. If it were true that in the depths of the past all existing forms had been produced by way of evolution from anterior organisms, the earth's strata wherein lie the fossil remains of antediluvian beings ought surely to furnish at least some specimens of species in course of transition. So long as these links are missing in the chain, the Darwinist system will lack certainty. The testimony of geology is decidedly in favour of a creation of distinct groups by successive acts of divine power, or at least by successive acts of the plastic force of nature in numerous centres of formation. As for Haeckel's theory, according to which the organic cells of the *monera*, or primitive monads, would have issued spontaneously from inorganic atoms, it is as decidedly a leap into the supernatural as is the hypothesis of a creating God, for it is recognized that every life springs from a germ.

After all, as Professors Goldwin Smith and Secrétan have said, the theory of evolution does not necessarily exclude the idea of a personal God causing the formative influence of various environments in the accomplishment of his works. "By evolution may be understood the method adopted by the Almighty for the developement of the plan of the creation. In this sense the expression is in perfect harmony with faith in a personal and conscient God."¹

In relation to immortality, this system gives at least a presentiment of it. It teaches that man has arrived at the twenty-second degree of the zoologic scale; the very principle

¹ J. F. Astié, *La théologie des réunions de l'Alliance évangélique de New York*, 1873. Report of Professor Anderson (*Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, 1875). Professors McCosh, of the United States; Pfeiderer, of Berlin; Fairbairn, of Oxford; R. Flint, of Edinburgh; Sir Andrew Clark; and Messrs. C. Glaubrecht, Ernest Naville, Aug. Sabatier, Father Delsaux, D. Cochin; Professors Arm. Sabatier, Leenhardt, Doumergue, etc., have made similar declarations.

of evolution requires a new transformation, a higher ascension, and a twenty-third degree. If transformism truly excludes the notion of a native immortality of all men, it seems, on the other hand, to contain in germ the principle of Conditional Immortality. We are not disposed to speak slightly of this bold theory, which is perhaps the wild stock on which will be grafted the philosophical Christianity of the future; it at least contains one incontestable truth: the survival of the fittest and best conditioned species. Change is a condition of life, according to the law of nature; the species which do not develop, decay and disappear. There is "an aristocratic and moral side" of natural selection "which assures the victory to the fittest and best" morally. But, as we shall see, according to the law of the Gospel also, change is a condition of life. From this point of view we are all only candidates for immortality, and Darwinism, completed by moral freedom, leads us to Jesus Christ.

Professor Goldwin Smith considers that "Darwinism would be only faithful to its principle in admitting the possibility of a developement in the future as well as the reality of a developement in the past." If man has passed successively from the inorganic to the organic state, from the animal to the savage, and then to the civilized condition, why should not the evolution proceed still further, even to the transfiguration and immortalization of his being? A sudden and final arrest of the process of evolution would be contrary to the data of a doctrine which denies immobility in nature. We should find the law of transformism reappearing in theology. The fittest and best conditioned species survive, those which fail to conform to the law of progress decay and disappear; he who sins voluntarily does away with himself; so that the unregenerate wicked would one day be the fossils of the moral world, and divine election would be but the choice of the fittest, with wide scope left for the exercise of individual liberty.¹ We

¹ It would be possible to go so far as to say that the evolution of the visible universe is a condition of our moral liberty. The personal God, by withdrawing himself behind the laws which govern the evolutionary creation, perhaps wished to leave room for the birth and developement of human liberty. In fact, in the absence of evident and irrefragable proofs of the existence of a personal God, the spiritual birth and growth of man

mention this tendency towards agreement for what it is worth, not as a proof, but merely as being like one of the tothing-stones in an incomplete building, left projecting in order to be worked into the new part when added, and as furnishing a presumption in favour of an attainable immortality.

IV.

§ 1. But we will now resume the consideration of the proposition that immortality is unconditional. It has been treated as an axiom, while in reality it is only an opinion not merely very contestable, but actually widely contested. It does not even rest, like many other errors, upon almost universal consent. Not to mention materialists and atheists, there are in the world five hundred millions of Chinese and Hindoos who in perfectly good faith do not claim personal immortality.¹ One half of the human race believes in annihilation, and aspires no higher! The teaching which has come to us from ecclesiastical tradition inclines us to allow the Platonic hypothesis of the imperishability of individual souls to pass without examination. Stop it as it goes, stare it in the face, demand its title to acceptance, and it will be put out of countenance and reduced to beg of your bounty the place that it was accustomed to look upon as a right.

Too many people are unaware that profound thinkers, without being either atheists or Buddhists or Brahminists,

can only take place in the atmosphere of faith. Since it is possible, from the evolutionist point of view, for pure reason to contest, and even deny, the existence of a Creator, the love of man for God will have so much the more spontaneity, reality, and worth, and will be so much the more free. Faith postulates a living God, believes in him, in spite of the fatalism of natural law, just as every one believes in the sun hidden behind a veil of clouds on a rainy day. If the existence of the living God could be mathematically proved, there would be no room nor reason for faith; but if it be admitted that in God's view the faith of man, in spite of his forlorn condition in the midst of the vast universe, is like a pearl hidden in the ocean depths, it will then be understood that a world may have been created with a view to the production of that pearl more precious than the world itself.

¹ Strict, or orthodox Buddhism teaches expressly annihilation without residuum, *nirupadhi'sha nirvāna*. Qualified Buddhism and Brahminism simply announce the final loss by each individual of his personal identity, a return to eternal unconsciousness.

have denied this kind of immortality. Such sages, crowned with the double aureola of genius and moral purity, were the founders of Stoicism and Criticism, those two great schools of duty. Aristotle, for his part, scarcely mentions immortality; the little that he does say about it is very much like Conditionalism. Cicero, as we shall soon see, was very sceptical about it.

Many, too, are equally ignorant of the fact that the ancient Egyptians did not believe in the indestructibility of individual souls. They were, in truth, Conditionalists: "Annihilation of the being was among them held to be the chastisement awaiting the wicked."¹ "The torments were not eternal; they would be brought to an end by a second and final death."² M. Guieysse states that :

The ideal of the Egyptians was to be able after death to come back to earth, to live according to their wishes in the form that might suit them best. This appears from the funeral ritual, or *Book of the Dead*. . . . After a series of trials the deceased reaches the end of his journey, the great hall of Justice and Truth. There will his fate be pronounced without appeal. . . . The scales are prepared, the heart in one of them : will the faults outweigh it? The deceased then addresses his judges, enumerating the crimes that he has not committed; this is called the negative confession. But not to have sinned does not suffice, some good must also have been done. The wicked are plunged into fiery gulfs and delivered over to avenging demons. After a thousand torments they are subjected to a second death, for ever annihilated. To the righteous it remains only to pass through certain purifications in order to efface every trace of a stain. A glorious soul, he will then accompany Osiris everywhere, will live with his life, being born anew each morning with him, to traverse the earth at will under the form that he may choose to adopt.³

Ultimately, after many trials, if purity was not attained, the wicked soul underwent a final sentence at the hand of Osiris, judge of the dead, and being pronounced incurable, suffered complete and absolute annihilation.⁴

¹ Lenormant, *Manuel d'histoire ancienne*, vol. i., p. 367, Paris, 1868.

² A. Matter, *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, at the word *Annihilation of souls* (*Anéantissement des âmes*).

³ *L'Ancienne Egypte* (*Revue politique et littéraire*, 18 May, 1878).

⁴ *History of Ancient Egypt*, by Professor G. Rawlinson, M.A., vol. i., p. 318. — See also De Pressensé, *L'Ancien monde et le christianisme*,

§ 2. Kant in his *Rational Psychology* has weighed in the balance the Platonic proofs of personal and indefeasible immortality, and has found them wanting. The moral proof alone has weight, but that falls far short of proving such a forced and absolute immortality as it is put forward to establish. Several of the dialogues of Plato, among them the *Phædo*, *Gorgias*, and *Timæus*, have set forth these proofs; in modern times they have been taken up and developed, in the sixteenth century by Ficinus, then by Leibnitz, and at the end of last century by the Jewish scholar, Moses Mendelssohn. In our own days the same reasoning has been put forward by the lawyer Goeschel, who, in addition to the alleged proof from universal consent, which we have just reduced to its true value, enumerates three principal arguments, which are called the metaphysical proof, the ontological proof, and the teleological proof. Let us examine them.¹

I. THE METAPHYSICAL PROOF.—It is said that the soul is a spiritual substance, a spirit, and a spirit cannot be divided; therefore the soul is indissoluble, and indissoluble means imperishable. This conclusion seems to us illogical, for, as Kant has observed, if the indissoluble spirit cannot perish by way of decomposition, it can perish as the result of gradual enfeeblement, the effect of a persistent diminution of vital force; a final extinction of the soul is therefore within the bounds of possibility.² In order to strengthen this proof, the Platonists have felt it necessary to suppose that the soul is essentially divine. It is a defender of native immortality who has said that philosophically “the only guarantee of indestructibility for the soul would be to have always existed; and it was because Plato felt this that in his view the dogma of pre-

p. 108, sq.—“The second death figures in the first line among the punishments inflicted on the wicked. Horus, the avenging god, delivers their souls to be annihilated.” Viscount E. de Rougé; quoted by Mr. White, who has also printed in the *Homiletic Monthly* of March, 1885, part of a letter from M. Edouard Naville, in which that famous Egyptologist declares his conviction that in the belief of the ancient Egyptians the fate of the wicked is destruction.

¹ In this part we summarize the analysis of Professor Hermann Schultz (see *ante*, p. 17), with the addition of a few observations.

² *Critique of pure reason* (*Critique de la Raison pure*; traduction de J. Barni, t. ii., p. 15, sq.).

existence and that of immortality were inseparable from each other.”¹ The theologian Julius Müller had reached the same conclusion. But this doctrine of pre-existence has the inconvenience of leading straight to pantheism. As M. Ernest Naville has written in a private letter, which he allows us to publish: “Every doctrine which makes the soul immortal by virtue of its primitive essence is a covert pantheism. To me that is perfectly clear.”

No doubt the spirit of God gives to man his vital force; but that does not mean that the creature forms part of the Creator, and on that account possesses the immortality of God himself. The created soul has had a beginning; it may, therefore, come to an end; it will come to an end unless an express purpose of the Creator perpetuates its existence.

That the soul is a creation of God must be admitted, the only alternative being pantheism. If the soul possessed an independent and absolute immortality, it would not be a creature, but would form part of God himself. If a creating God be admitted, it must be recognized that he “can always return to nothingness that which he has taken from it.” Spiritualist philosophers, including Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, and in our days Messrs. Jules Simon and Charles Secrétan, have recognized this. But even without having recourse to this possibility, is it not allowable to conceive of a creature abusing his liberty to his own destruction? Doubtless, the individual exists by the will of God, and the decrees of God are unchangeable, but it seems to us that they may at the same time be conditional. God can have created a being with a view to his immortality, at the same time making the immortality subject to the free option of the creature.

Even putting the Bible and a Creator out of the question, if the soul were of the divine essence, that would not prove the immortality of any individual, but merely the imperishability of a substance without individual character; the perpetuation of a vital principle does not at all imply the perpetuity of individuals who are its ephemeral manifestations. The great pantheist Hegel was logical when he affirmed that the spirit of

¹ *Le Chrétien évangélique, Du châtiement à venir*, by Geo. Godet, 20 Jan., 1881.

man returning in death to the universal spirit at once loses its individuality ; but it is with personal immortality that we have to do ; who can feel any personal interest in an impersonal immortality ?

According to Schelling, in order to become immortal, man needs an act of will ; in the opinion of this philosopher, hardly one man in a hundred attains immortality. Schelling's system ends in dualism : man can set up his own will, can be in insurrection against God and defy him eternally : more than that, after having made himself immortal, by a fresh act of will man can destroy himself. It will at once be seen that this is far from being a necessary and inalienable immortality.

One more observation, addressed specially to those who believe in the soul as an imperishable substance. All will agree that a human being is not an indeterminate substance ; he has his individual characteristics, physical and psychical, more or less accentuated, and liable to be more or less effaced ; it is by no means inconceivable that these characteristics should be at some time entirely effaced. What would then remain ? A substratum, if you like. But the individual, who only existed as such by those distinctive characteristics, would have ceased to exist. The conditions of first and second childhood, sleep, drunkenness, brutalism, insanity, swoon, death—all these phenomena are in our view either symbols of that suppression of the individuality or steps leading to its complete obliteration. But that is all for which we contend, for it would be mere logomachy to contend for or against the indestructibility of a vital force common to men and animals, and even plants, an impersonal force, with which we have nothing to do in this discussion. Once more : the question is of individual survival ; any other conception of a future life would seem to be futile.

After the foregoing lines were written, we were pleased to find them confirmed by the authority that belongs to the name of Lotze. According to that philosopher :

There is no need for the soul to be immortal. . . . The soul is not simply a substance ; it has certain properties, and we have no guarantee that it will never lose them. Nothing prevents us from admitting that

the soul, like the body, may be composite, and may develop itself according to laws of which we are ignorant.¹

In another passage Lotze asks very reasonably, "Where is found inscribed that right of substances in virtue whereof that which has once been real must necessarily always exist? We cannot well see what answer can be given to this question of one of the most remarkable thinkers of contemporary Germany."²

2. THE ONTOLOGICAL PROOF is founded on the fact that man has the notion of immortality. Every notion, it is said, corresponds to a reality; man would not believe himself to be imperishable if he were not really imperishable. To such reasoning we at once oppose Kant's argument. The notion of a thing is far from always implying the possession of the thing; a man may have the idea of a sum of a hundred pounds, but that does not prove that he possesses a hundred pounds. A man has the notion of immortality; that may well prove that there is such a thing as immortality somewhere, that it is the portion of some being or other; but it does not prove that the individual who has the notion of it possesses immortality personally.

3. THE TELEOLOGICAL PROOF is the most popular of the three traditional proofs of a native immortality. It rests upon the reasonable idea of a conformity between the nature of a being and the object assigned to his existence. The aspirations of man, the ideal towards which he is tending, suppose immortality. So also the inequities of the present life lead to the anticipation of compensations in a life to come, otherwise the lot of the animals would be preferable to that of man. We reply that the necessity for compensations in the future does not imply the need for an absolute immortality, for a temporary survival would suffice for the reparation of the inequities of the present life.

As for the desire to possess immortality, we know that a

¹ Henri Brocher, *Le Microcosme de H. Lotze. Théologie et philosophie*. Geneva, 1870, p. 442.

² *Une Philosophie de l'histoire: La Philosophie de la liberté*, par Charles Secrétan.—Article by M. George Godet in the *Revue théologique*, October, 1873.

wish is very far from being a prediction of the accomplishment of the wish. Moreover, the wicked do not feel such a desire, so that even in accordance with this argument advanced against us, the wicked would not be destined to immortality.

It is averred that man aspires to holiness, and that the present life is too short to enable him to attain to that ideal; for that purpose immortality would be needful. So be it, but what is there to prove that this ideal must be attained by all men? Will it not suffice for an individual to be a link in the chain of humanity? Can he not disappear cherishing the consoling thought that humanity does not die, and that he has to some extent helped forward the sublime purpose pursued by our race? The Scripture speaks of men who died "old and full of days"; these men did not feel that their lives were incomplete. Besides, as we have already noted, this need of moral perfection is not felt by thousands of individuals who, far from tending towards perfection, are every day going farther from it. Aspirations after an imperishable life are, as it were, germs of immortality; but the man may smother these germs, he may become altogether earthly, an absolute stranger to the heavenly life. If the germs of immortality perish, whence shall the immortality come? It will be admitted that in that case there is no value in the teleological proof.

Conclusion: The traditional proofs of the absolute immortality of individual souls have not a decisive value; they lead only to the admission that man is susceptible of immortalization.¹

V.

As we have said, the strongest proof is based upon our imperious need of justice. We all have at bottom a more or less distinct idea that in death we shall survive to be judged. The righteous hope for this "something after death"; the wicked fear it. This is the moral proof, of which the biologists take no account.

In all times and in all lands there have been men who testi-

¹ The presumptions favouring the possibility of survival have been set forth with persuasive grace in a recent article by M. Ernest Naville: *Les conclusions de la psychologie*. *Bibliothèque universelle*, August, 1890.

fied their faith in a future life. The tombs of the ancient Egyptians show that they expected in the other world felicity for some and suffering for others. As we only just now mentioned, on every funeral papyrus and on the coffin of every mummy may be seen the scales of justice. In one scale is the image of Truth, in the other the soul is weighed. Final annihilation was the lot of the great criminals only. The ancient literatures of China and India testify to a similar faith. Even the religions of *nirvâna* admit an intermediate survival in metempsychosis. In Greece, Socrates expressed the belief of all virtuous men, and that belief was widely spread over all barbarous Europe long before the establishment of Christianity. In modern times, too, the irresistible instinct of survival declares itself in spite of scientific materialism; no reasoning silences completely the oracle which tells us of a judgement after death.

Man has the consciousness of his personality; he studies it, and sets it in opposition to that which is not himself; he has also the idea of God and that of an account to be rendered to him, three important notions which seem to be absent among the animals. We feel ourselves free, but at the same time under a moral obligation; we seek after indefinite progress, we aspire to immortality, we ask for a supreme sanction for our acts, we call God our Father, sometimes our spirits and our emotions reach forth even to his bosom, and will he for ever banish us from his presence? Our wearisome pilgrimage in the desert of this world and our unsatisfied thirst are positive realities, and should the life to come and the Father's house be nothing better than a mirage? No; if there be a God his justice and his goodness imply the reality of a future life. It is the natural faith of the human race, and has asserted itself with indomitable energy. Our deep instincts of justice are not a delusion. "What science could ever force man to believe that death swallows him up entirely, that his miseries are hopeless, and that all justice is consummated here below?"¹

This proof forms part of the *placita* of the conscience; it attests the survival of the individual personality; but it does

¹ *Etudes sur la théorie de l'évolution*, by L. Carreau, p. 132, Paris, 1879.

not prove a perpetual immortality. The metamorphosis of the caterpillar does not give immortality to the butterfly. It is possible that a final abolition of being may be the capital punishment reserved by God for incorrigible offenders. The immortality of which we get here a glimpse is not absolute nor unavoidable; it is conditional. In some minds it leaves room for doubts; it becomes clouded in the eclipse of the moral sense. Idealist scepticism counts it among those truths of the conscience which, according to the expression of a brilliant writer, "are beacons with changing lights. Sometimes they seem quite evident, then again it seems astonishing that anyone can believe in them."¹

VI.

John Stuart Mill, in a book which may be called his spiritual testament, while he does not reject this moral proof, points out the abuse to which he thinks it open. He reasons in this manner :

The common arguments are: the goodness of God; the improbability that he would ordain the annihilation of his noblest and richest work, after the greatest part of its few years of life had been spent in the acquisition of faculties which time is not allowed him to turn to fruit; and the special improbability that he would have implanted in us an instinctive desire for eternal life and doomed that desire to complete disappointment. These might be arguments in a world the constitution of which made it possible without contradiction to hold it for the work of a being at once omnipotent and benevolent. But they are not arguments in a world like that in which we live. . . . One thing is quite certain in respect to God's government of the world; that he either could not or would not grant to us everything we wish. We wish for life, and he has granted some life. That we wish, or some of us wish, for a boundless extent of life, and that it is not granted, is no exception to the ordinary modes of his government. Many a man would like to be a Croesus or an Augustus Cæsar, but has his wishes gratified only to the moderate extent of a pound a week or the secretaryship of his trade-union.²

¹ M. Ernest Renan, *Discours de réception à l'Académie française*, 3 April, 1879.

² *Three Essays on Religion*, 1874.

In short, [we have only twilight glimpses of immortality. The uncertainty underlying the thought of those two great men of faith, Socrates and Plato, may be understood if closely scanned. In their eyes immortality was rather a beautiful hope than a demonstrated truth. They said in effect: It is a thing that is worth the hazard of believing; it is a splendid risk to run, a noble hope with which we may rightly be enchanted. Cicero wrote as follows:

I have read and re-read Plato's *Phædo*, but, how it is I know not, while I read I assent; when, however, I have put aside the book and have begun to cogitate for myself on the immortality of souls, all my assent slips away.¹

Professor Ulrici has said: "We speak of *faith* in immortality, for it is self-evident that in this matter there can be no question of knowledge in the strict sense of the word."² According to Archbishop Whately, "No arguments from reason, independent of revelation, have been brought forward that amount to a decisive proof that the soul must survive bodily death."³ Bishop Perowne has declared that in the absence of faith "the immortality of the soul is a phantom which eludes your eager grasp."⁴

Professor Bois, late Dean of the Protestant Theological Faculty at Montauban, whose orthodoxy is unquestioned, has arrived at the same result. He says:

I do not wish to deny that in philosophy fine reasons may be found in support of immortality; I think I am acquainted with them, and God forbid that I should try to diminish the force of any one of them.

¹ *Quæst. Tusc.*, i. 11, and elsewhere: "Death puts an end to everything. . . . If I die I shall no longer have the consciousness of anything" (*Ep. famil.*, vi. 21, 3, etc. Cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 102).—"The future life is for Cicero not a demonstrated principle, says M. Denis, very truly; it is only a hope" (Doumergue, *La foi à l'immortalité. Christianisme au dix-neuvième siècle*, 11 April, 1884).—Again, when Cicero has just lost a cherished daughter, the letter that he writes to an intimate friend, Servius Sulpicius, on the subject of her death, does not contain the least ray of hope concerning a life to come. So it is also with the letter of condolence to which Cicero replies.—*On Greco-Roman Scepticism*, see Victor Duruy, *Histoire des Romains*, Paris, 1883, vol. v., *passim*.

² Herzog's *Real-Encyclopædie*, 1st ed., at the word *Unsterblichkeit*.

³ *Future Life*, p. 17.

⁴ *Hulsean Lectures*, 1868, p. 31.

But I shall be saying nothing which will not be admitted by every student of philosophy who keeps himself acquainted with the drift of contemporary thought, if I affirm that with our own intelligence alone we can only attain to presumptions, to conjectures, I may even say to desires. After all, what necessity is there that we should be immortal?¹

"Innate immortality is a doctrine rejected alike by philosophy and theology," wrote Chevalier Bunsen.² The most orthodox Christians can hardly object to the declaration of the venerable Professor Gaussen, of Geneva, who has said: "It would be temerity to wish to establish the immortality of the soul, as some have tried to do, by arguments founded upon its spiritual nature."³ Neither does Professor F. Godet, of Neuchâtel, appear to lay much stress upon the traditional scholastic proofs, for he has recently expressed himself thus: "When once the hope of resurrection is given up, there remains no very solid guarantee of the survival of the personality after death."⁴ The late M. Dupont-White shortly before his death wrote:

The important matter is to know whether we shall utterly die. With regard to this, science and metaphysics have this in common, that they cannot teach us anything that is of real use, anything that carries conviction. . . . The weakness of spiritualism appears especially in this: that the spirit, even if a part of ourselves, and an indissoluble part, is not the whole man. Our spirit will live, it is said; our spirit will not be annihilated. Be it so; but we have to do with the individual, who is body as well as spirit, with our own individuality, our identity, which exists only under this double condition. . . . The main point is not the immortality of the soul, but the immortality of the man. This evidence is such that the Christian religion constantly speaks to us of the resurrection of the body, because apparently there is no duration, no identity, if the body and soul do not revive together, the one bearing the other, the other animating the one, as they have always done in the condition that we call life. . . . Let us have done with it; nothing anywhere promises us an eternal existence, neither God, nor metaphysics, nor natural science. To the human intellect nothing seems less natural than this ardent desire of the human heart. It is that which we most wish for and least meet with in the

¹ *De la valeur religieuse du surnaturel*, p. 34.

² *Le Christianisme et l'humanité*, vol. iv., p. 336.

³ *Cours de dogmatique*, vol. i., p. 485.

⁴ *Commentaire sur la première Épître aux Corinthiens*, vol. ii., p. 395.

path of our reasonings. We are therefore driven to this conclusion : the immortality of the soul is credible only as a formal article of a revealed religion, and such a religion is only credible if based upon miracles. Everything with the supernatural, nothing without it, and we die outright. If metaphysics teach us nothing at all, and if natural science teaches us nothing of any use, the only thing left for us to do is to turn ourselves towards religion.¹

VII.

We quite understand M. Dupont-White's difficulty, and we will follow his counsel. Still, while we yet remain on the ground of independent science, we will take the opportunity of recording the declarations of several contemporary thinkers respecting Conditional Immortality. Their lively and numerous sympathies are doubtless due to the fact that, the old scholastic foundation having broken down, the hope of immortality has now no other basis than the moral proof. Morality itself is based upon liberty, and liberty, in order to be complete, seems to require a non-compulsory immortality ; in other words, an attainable immortality.

We are about to make these inquirers speak for themselves. If, later on, we succeed in demonstrating that the primitive Gospel was Conditionalist, it will be found that these will have prepared an independent support for the Gospel. In the midst of the darkness of the human spirit they will shine like torches on the way that leads to the sanctuary of truth.

VIII.

§ 1. An honourable place, at the very beginning of our list, is due to Vinet. By a sort of happy accident this independent thinker has, as it were, come forth from his tomb to lend to this discussion the great weight of his authority. Thanks to the recent publication of his letters, we have been enabled to

¹ *La grande question, ce que dure l'homme (Critique religieuse*, April, 1878). The death of the eminent writer occurred in the very year of the publication of this article, the tendency of which was towards the point of view that we maintain. It may be interesting to mention that a daughter of M. Dupont-White is wife of M. Sadi Carnot, President of the French Republic.

salute in his person a pioneer whose genius, which forestalled Mr. Henry Dunn in respect of the ecclesiastical question,¹ also forestalled the revival of Anglo-Saxon eschatology. Long before our time Vinet was virtually one of us. At first subservient to the traditional dogma, he became its interpreter in a discourse which has been quoted without mention of the fact that it was published in 1833.² At that time Vinet had not yet "reconquered himself." He had not then called the current theology "a sixteenth-century dish rewarmed and again become cold." From Vinet the traditionalist of 1833, we appeal to Vinet ripened and reconquered in 1845.³ From his latest writings it appears :

1st. In opposition to Plato, Descartes, and the ecclesiastical dogma, he formally denied the immortality of the soul separate from the body.

2nd. He made the immortality of man to depend upon the resurrection of the body.

3rd. Universalism made him uneasy. He did not encourage the publication of an essay favouring that doctrine.

4th. He admitted the possibility of salvation beyond the tomb for those who have not been reached by the appeals of the Gospel.

5th. Like Zwingli, like Mr. White, he speaks of the implied and eventual salvation of pious men among the non-Christians.

6th. He "had little hesitation" in affirming that "a life of sin wears away the soul and weakens it" to such an extent that "the renewal of the soul could only be the cessation of its identity." But, as we have seen in dealing with Professor Drummond, there is no true immortality without the maintenance of the individual identity, and we reckon among the Conditionalists all those who admit that sin may cause the loss of that identity. Vinet "had little hesitation" in recognizing

¹ *Critique religieuse*, Oct., 1881, p. 255. See also the preface to the volume entitled *Le Christianisme sans Eglises*, 1878, p. xxxvii., sq.

² *L'indifférentisme religieux*, quoted in the *Chrétien évangélique*, 1882, p. 504. "Sermon preached in the French church at Basle the 29 Sept., 1833 . . . reprinted in the *Nouvelles études évangéliques*." E. Rambert, *Alexandre Vinet*, vol. ii., p. 330, sq.; Lausanne, 1876.

³ See M. Astié's study of Vinet in the *Encyclopédie des sciences théologiques*, vol. xii. This article has been separately published.

this relation of cause and effect, and on our part we have little hesitation in putting his name on the list of Conditionalists of the day before yesterday.¹

§ 2. Invoking the analogy of natural laws, some thinkers have seen in an attainable immortality the moral completion of the "struggle for life" and a certain "survival of the fittest." We have already made passing reference to some Christian scholars who are of that way of thinking. From a purely philosophic standpoint, evolutionist Conditionalism is represented by M. Charles Lambert. He has left a work entitled *Spiritualism and Religion*.²

M. Lambert delights to bring out the analogy presented by the Conditionalist doctrine of immortality, as it relates to the human species, with that general law of nature which consists in the elimination of an infinity of germs, of beings or agents that, so to speak, have remained behind as being surplus or useless for the developement of nature as a whole. From this point of view Conditionalism would be a particular and the most important case of the general process of selection employed by nature, of the prodigality which is to be observed in all nature's works. It would come very near to Darwinism.³

According to this philosopher, the world bears a harvest of innumerable human beings, some of whom allow themselves to drift towards the destiny of perishable animal life, while others are preparing themselves for a higher life.⁴

If this is Darwinism, the famous law of vital competition, it must be recognized as a Darwinism perfected by an element of liberty and the sublime evolution of choice individuals on the other side as well as on this side the tomb.

§ 3. The thoughts of Edgar Quinet were turned in the same direction. He asserted that :

¹ See in *Supplement*, No. III., some fragments taken from the *Lettres d'Alexandre Vinet*, Lausanne, 1882, and our remarks upon the interpretation that has been given of those fragments.

² And as sub-title : *Le système du monde moral et l'immortalité selon le Christ*, Paris, Calmann Levy, 1877. A first edition had appeared in 1864.

³ The great Dictionary of Larousse, second supplement, article *Conditionnalisme*.

⁴ Prévost-Paradol, *Essais de politique et de littérature*, 3rd series. *A New System of Philosophy*, p. 317.—M. Paul Janet seems to have had some sympathy with this theory. See his account of M. Lambert's work in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of 15 May, 1863 : *Un nouveau système sur la vie future*.

Man has power to turn back, to fall below himself. . . . He can at certain moments renounce even his manhood and debase himself to the level of the inferior animals. . . . When thou doest evil, what doest thou? Know that thou returnest to the ages of the world when conscience did not yet exist. . . . The old nature continues to mutter at the bottom of human nature ; if man makes no effort to maintain his position, he falls back among the inferior beings that have preceded him, from whose midst he has emerged. . . . By crime he precipitates himself from the summit of the scale of being and falls below the very worm of the earth.¹

§ 4. In a recent volume a well-known astronomer, M. Camille Flammarion, has shown himself equally favourable to Conditionalism. He makes an inhabitant of the planet Mars express himself thus :

Among the dwellers on the terrestrial planet the greater number are either ignorant, or indifferent, or sceptic, and not prepared for the spirit life ; they are fixed on the earth, and that for a long time. Many souls are completely asleep. Those only who are alive and active, who aspire to the knowledge of what is true, are destined to conscious immortality, those only are interested in the spiritual world, and are capable of understanding it.²

§ 5. By an intuition of genius, one of the greatest poets of our age, Victor Hugo, arrived as though in play at this conception, which others have only reached after years of patient study. One of his whilom guests, M. Paul Stapfer, now Professor in the Faculty of Literature at Bordeaux, has related a familiar conversation in which Victor Hugo expounded in his own fashion his conception of Conditional Immortality. He said :

The butterfly is the grub metamorphosed ; it is so completely the same that each part of the creeping thing is to be found by analysis in the winged insect ; but the metamorphosis is so complete that it might be thought a new creature. Thus in our existence beyond the tomb we shall not be pure spirits, for that is a meaningless expression for both reason and imagination ; what is life without the organs of life, or a personality without the form that defines and fixes it ? But it would seem that we shall have another body, radiant, divine, and, so to speak, spiritual, which will be the transfiguration of our terrestrial body.

¹ *La Création*, Book xii., ch. ix. and x., *passim*.

² *Uranie*, 1890, p. 227.

The chief difficulty for friends, relatives, and old acquaintances will be to find and recognize each other in the costume of the angels . . . but, after all, it will probably be an easier matter than might be supposed, on account of the relatively small number of the empyrean travellers. I can hardly imagine that all the human caterpillars will become butterflies; I can hardly believe that all men, simply because they have lived as men, must be immortal. That second birth, that resurrection which is the hope of humanity, is it not more likely to be the acquisition or the reward of some than the natural condition of all? And why save so many idlers who have not spun their cocoon? Is it not reasonable and just that such caterpillars, I mean men who have not spent their life in some useful and honourable work, who have left behind neither monument nor example, and who have lived only for their belly, should die outright and return to the dust out of which, as the preachers say, they have crept forth for an instant? . . .

I know that I am immortal. If others have no sense of their immortality, I am sorry for them, but that is their own affair; why should I contend against their sentiments. No doubt they are right; their instinct does not deceive them. One day I heard an address by a materialist, a zealous man of strong convictions, who denied the soul and God with as much force and faith as they are affirmed by an ardent believer. He said to me: "It is vain for you to pretend that you have a soul and that it is immortal, that you know and feel it. For my part, I know, I feel that there is nothing of the sort in me, and I hold it for certain, for evident to the interior sense, that when once the body is deprived of life we shall be dead out and out, altogether gone back to nothing. My persuasion is as strong as yours; to your sentiment I oppose a sentiment no less clear, no less firm; which of us is right?" I answered: "We are both right." "But how can that be?" "Nothing easier to understand; only listen to a parable: A poet, a great genius, call him Dante, Æschylus, Shakespeare, what you will, writes two verses; he then goes out, he goes to think. During his absence the two lines converse together. 'How happy we are,' says the first; 'we are now immortal! What glory, O my friend, and what a duration: it is for ever, eternity is ours. So long as the human mind shall last, so long as human language shall remain, we shall live in the memory of men.' Says the other: 'Dost thou believe that? What an idea! I have no such sentiment. I live; but, oddly enough, it seems to me that I shall soon be dead. Yes, my friend, believe me thou art deceiving thyself; put away the illusion, I beg; in a moment there will be no more thought of us than if we had never existed, and it will be all over

for me and for thee, my poor dreamer, all over, I am sure of it.' Thereupon the poet returns, advances slowly towards the table, reads over the two verses, takes his pen, strikes out one and maintains the other. So you see how both were right."

This parable reappears in a poem by the same author.

Two verses Dante writes, then leaves, and those two lines
Converse together.—Heaven is open, says the first,
Good heavens, I am immortal !—I, the other says,
Am mortal.—I, a star.—And I, a grain of sand.
—Thou doubtest then, although the child of heaven's own son !
—I feel myself but dead.—But I, eternal feel.
Then Dante comes again, and reading o'er the lines,
Allows the first to stand, but blots the second out.
The severance between them by that blot is made ;
One dies, and one still lives, and so they both were right.¹

As M. Renouvier has observed, this passage is the more characteristic as it comes at the close of a long dialogue upon human destiny. The idea seems, indeed, to have made a deep impression upon Victor Hugo, for he returned to it at the grave of his friend Louis Blanc, where he said : " The heavenly law aims at the continued existence of such men." M. Leconte de Lisle, Victor Hugo's successor at the French Academy, in the discourse delivered by him at his reception by that body, thus formulated what might be called the favourite thought of his predecessor :

According to the poet, God, being all justice and goodness, and the souls that he created being fallen and corrupt only through ignorance of the truth, an ignorance in which they are contented to stay or which

¹ *Religion et religions*, p. 127, Paris, 1880. The French words are :

"Dante écrit deux vers, puis il sort ; et les deux vers
Se parlent. Le premier dit :—Les cieux sont ouverts ;
Cieux ! Je suis immortel.—Moi, je suis périssable,
Dit l'autre.—Je suis l'astre.—Et moi le grain de sable.
—Quoi ! tu doutes, étant fils d'un enfant du ciel !
—Je me sens mort.—Et moi, je me sens éternel.
Quelqu'un rentre et relit ces vers, Dante lui-même ;
Il garde le premier et barre le deuxième.
La rature est la haute et fatale cloison.
L'un meurt, et l'autre vit. Tous deux avaient raison."

is imposed upon them, has determined that all of them should be called, if they desire it, to a definitive restoration ; but their immortality is conditional, and many among them are doomed to total annihilation. Such was the faith of Victor Hugo.

§ 6. The religion of M. Renan has been made the subject of study.¹ Most ethereal of religions, it suggests the idea of the aroma left by a liquid perfume in an empty vase. The system of the celebrated academician is as though suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth ; yet it may be said that a certain Conditionalism is clearly discernible at the summit of the vapoury edifice.

The thesis of the *Phædo*, says M. Renan, is nothing but a subtilty. I rather prefer the Judeo-Christian system of the resurrection. . . . The resurrection would be the final act of the world drama, the act of an almighty and all-knowing God, capable of being just, and meaning to be so. Immortality would not then be, as Plato would have it, a gift inherent in man, a consequence of his nature ; it would be a gift reserved by the being who had become absolute, perfect, omniscient, all-powerful, for those who had contributed to his developement. It would be an exception, a divine selection, a reward granted by the triumphant good and true to those consciences only in which the love of the good and the true had in the past been dominant.

It may be supposed that all that which has existed still exists somewhere in an image that may be reanimated. The negatives of all things are kept. The stars at the extremity of the universe are receiving at the present time the image of facts which occurred centuries ago. The imprints of all that has existed live stationed at the various zones of infinite space. The supreme photographer has only to print from them new proofs. Surely he will revivify only that which has promoted the good and consequently the true. That will be our recompense. Inferior souls will have had theirs in the low enjoyments which they have sought after.

These are questions which I should have much liked to discuss with that poor Amiel, if I had had the pleasure of his acquaintance.²

The learned and graceful writer seems not to lose an

¹ *La Religion de M. Renan*, an essay presented to the Academy at Lausanne by Maurice Millioud, a candidate for the licentiate in theology, 1890.

² *Journal des Débats*, 7 Nov., 1884.

opportunity of recurring to his favourite theme. He says again :

If God exists he must be good, and he will at last be just. . . . We have no other foundation for our hopes than the great presumption of the goodness of the supreme Being. All will one day be possible to him. Let us hope that then he will desire to be just, and that to those who have contributed to the triumph of the good he will restore sentiment and life.¹

The same idea reappears also in the preface at the beginning of one of his latest volumes :

According to the first Christian idea, which is the true one, those only will rise again who have aided in the divine work ; that is to say, in promoting the reign of God on the earth. The punishment of the frivolous and the wicked will be nothingness.²

§ 7. To pass from M. Renan to M. Renouvier is to cross an abyss. An easy-going dilettantism gives place to a conviction resting upon the rock of the moral consciousness. We shall cross that abyss on the bridge of Conditionalism. This continuator of Kant has made the doctrine in question a subject of profound study. He tells us that :

It is in harmony with the spirit of the critical school, which bases immortality not on the indestructibility of the soul substance, but on the rights of the person to persistence and progress, and upon the natural laws regulating the functions of the conscience which are postulated by those rights. The solution given to the question of exegesis appears to have strong reasons to support it if the essential position occupied in Judaism and in primitive Christianity by the dogma of the resurrection as a condition of the future life be taken into consideration. The importance assigned to this position diminishes in proportion to the increasing distance from apostolic times, and the developement of the notion of the natural immortality of the soul.³

More recently M. Renouvier has expressed himself in much more categorical terms. Like ourselves, he thinks he can find in

¹ *Examen de conscience philosophique* (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 Aug., 1889).

² *L'Avenir de la religion*, preface, p. xx., Paris, Calmann Levy, 1890.

³ *Critique philosophique*, 24 April, 1873.

the doctrine of Conditional Immortality the unhopèd-for pledge of a reconciliation between theology and philosophy :

The false rationalistic doctrines of the immortality of the soul being put aside, the philosophic point of view is brought into harmony with the religious standpoint.

The religious method and the philosophic method follow their separate ways which lead to the same goal ; the one inspired mainly by the sentiment of holiness and sin, of faithfulness and unfaithfulness, of blessedness and damnation, and for proof looking to Christ risen again and living ; the other directed by the moral law and seeking support in the necessity of a complete accord between that law and the future order of the universe.¹

The religious doctrine of Conditional Immortality has the merit of setting aside both the pantheistic tendencies and that sort of demoralization which is caused by a lack of fixity in the ideas of life, liberty, trials, sanction. It relegates to the domain of mythology the barbarous fiction of interminable torments, which had attached itself to tradition in the system of a limited probation and definitive judgement.

This important movement in conjunction with the fact that the dogma of eternal torments is voluntarily left in the shade by the majority of pastors, who may still think themselves obliged to maintain it as a tradition, but dare not for shame display it, leads us to think that the future of Christian teaching, outside the Roman Church, belongs to Conditionalism.²

§ 8. The eminent colleague of M. Renouvier, M. F. Pillon, has given expression to similar views.³

M. Lionel Dauriac, Professor in the Faculty of Literature at Montpellier, who by his convictions is also attached to the neo-criticism, has been good enough to authorize the quotation of a few lines from a letter which he has addressed to us :

The reconciliation between supreme pity and perfect justice, the only reconciliation intelligible to us, is in Conditional Immortality. The last page of my *Introduction* on the Stoic morality will explain to you my adhesion.

¹ *Critique philosophique*, 31 Oct., 1878.

² *Idem*, 19 Jan., 1884. See also the articles of 2 and 23 Feb. of the same year, as well as the work entitled *Esquisse d'une classification systématique des doctrines philosophiques*, by Ch. Renouvier, Paris, 1886, vol. ii., p. 335, sq. The author there presents his Conditionalist theory in a new form.

³ See chap. xii. of this work.

§ 9. On this point M. Renouvier and his school are in agreement with the German psychologist Lotze, one of the most profound metaphysicians of our time, who says :

There is no doubt that the hypothetic notion of an indefinite pre-existence of souls, in whatever form it may appear, as well as that of an unlimited duration of all souls, ought to be condemned ; it is evident that souls appear at one given moment and disappear at another. Our previous hypotheses are in conformity with this view. We have distinctly declared ourselves opposed to the idea of real beings who on account of a pretended right inherent in their substance could demand for themselves an eternal existence. . . .

If, therefore, we speak of the soul as a substance, it is only in this relative sense : that in the world that is to be, which we are studying, it is a relatively stable centre of divergent and convergent actions ; and by this we do not mean that it is an element not subject to conditions, which would thereby be assured of eternal duration. On the contrary, it has only a conditional position. It has its beginning when the creative power, which alone is unlimited by conditions, confers existence upon it ; it comes to an end when that existence is taken from it. There is then nothing to prevent us from making the general assertion that souls are mortal ; but it is at the same time possible that a perishable soul might yet not perish, and that being conformed to the ideal, it might enjoy a perpetual existence to which in itself it has no right. If in the developement of spiritual life there is formed a personality of such value as to deserve an indefinite existence, we may well believe that such an existence would be maintained. If, on the contrary, there is nothing in the soul rendering it worthy of that individual permanence, the conclusion is inevitable that it is destined to perish.¹

§ 10. Like Lotze and like M. Renouvier, M. Charles Secrétan, corresponding member of the Institute of France, belongs to the school of the moral consciousness of which Kant was the illustrious founder. In his great work on the philosophy of liberty M. Secrétan inclined towards Universalism. It was with agreeable surprise that we perceived, in his book on *Civilization and Belief*, that our old professor had himself reached convictions very much like our own. It is evident

¹ *Grundzüge der Psychologie* ; see also *Principes généraux de psychologie et de physiologie*, p. 163, sq., Paris, Germer Baillière, 1876. *Metaphysik*, p. 487, etc.

that his adhesion is all the more important as being the result of a victory of his thought over a previously adopted point of view.¹

Dealing with the greatest problems of our day, the political, social, philosophic, and religious problems, taking, as we may say, the bull by the horns, the author indicates solutions which are fitted to raise the hopes of all friends of humanity. The firm hand that lays bare the wound also applies the balm that may heal it. Full salvation is to be found in *the Gospel better understood*, which will prevent the foundering of civilization in the ocean of barbarism. But M. Secrétan shall speak for himself :

The Gospel, all through, relates to the life to come ; no Christian can deny such a life ; and in order to believe in it there is no need for a full understanding of its possibility ; the science that thinks itself warranted in setting it aside is no less transcendental in its negation than is faith in its affirmations, and has not faith's excuses. But how is this future life to be understood ? According to some passages in the holy Scriptures, it would seem that the fate of each one is to be irrevocably decided at the very moment of death, and that he is to pass immediately to his definitive condition. Other passages seem to indicate that the dead are to await in "the night in which no man can work," the solemn hour of a general judgement when the sheep will be separated from the goats, these to go into the eternal fire and those to eternal joy, joy and torment of which it is impossible to form a definite conception. In the present day we are taught that the passages in which our fathers thought they found eternal sufferings were wrongly translated. However that may be, the doctrine of eternal sufferings cannot be reconciled with the texts that teach the end of evil and the establishment of a final order of things in which "God will be all in all." Without discussing the question of exegesis, we hold to that which in the primitive documents and in tradition answers to the needs of the conscience, and we reject the eternity of sufferings. Not, however, without some difficulty. The purpose of religion is not, in our opinion, to console humanity under its present evils by the prospect of imaginary delights ; its ambition is to heal the corruption of humanity. The

¹ Since these lines were written, M. Secrétan has given a more definite adhesion in the prefatory letter printed at the beginning of this work. Just fifty years ago, however, he indicated in principle that the effect of the fall must be annihilation. See *Supplement*, No. IV.

conscience is our rule of interpretation. That cannot admit the infringement of liberty ; a forced conversion would be equivalent to a substitution of person. If the sinner, whose amendment becomes day by day more difficult, persists in his rebellion, he cannot enter into a state the conditions of which he rejects. But in whatever mode it may be viewed, the eternity of suffering is the eternity of evil. We have seen how a temporary evil may be consistent with the existence of God, but the eternity of evil would certainly be the negation of God in that attribute of omnipotence which to us seems inseparably bound up with the idea of a first cause. It is impossible to understand the eternity of that which ought not to exist ; it is a contradiction. Nor is it logic that is principally involved. Experience assuredly does not incontestably prove that the future will be better than the past, but in spite of experience we cannot forego the idea that all will end well. We should indeed be wrong to abandon that hope, for it is the power that sustains us in our task. The pretence that moral order is based upon an illusion is the wisdom of corrupt minds.

Evil must come to an end, the spirit of God must pervade all things. But how ? The dead-lock in which we find ourselves between two solutions equally contrary to the needs of the conscience is the result of their common supposition of an essential immortality of the individual spirit. This doctrine, which the whole Church has accepted, and popular theism (known as spiritualism and natural religion) has carefully maintained, comes to us from Greek philosophy, and we are not absolutely obliged to receive it. In fact, the difficulties involved in the doctrine of a pardon unaccompanied by repentance, and a constrained liberty, and in that of the eternity of evil, will be avoided if we admit, with a school of thought now making itself heard, that impenitent sinners are to be destroyed, either in natural death or after further trials. Without here examining which of these three doctrines accords best with the texts to which they all appeal, it seems to us that the third escapes from the moral impossibilities against which the two others have been shattered, and they are perhaps not more ancient. Moreover, the third is very naturally justified by analysis. Moral evil is in fact not a simple deprivation of being, as it has been represented by a theology too abstract and too prompt in its conclusions, but evil is not without relation to non-existence ; it is a movement of the being towards non-being ; a tendency towards self-destruction. A created being, a derived being, wishes to place himself or to keep himself away from the basis and source of his being ; such is the common character of all forms of evil. By virtue of its definition, therefore, evil seems to tend towards its own

extinction, its own annihilation. Thus the consideration of evil in itself leads us to the same conclusion as the study of the divine perfections: "The wages of sin is death." . . . We therefore incline towards an immortality to be won.¹

§ 11. M. Adolphe Schaeffer, pastor at Colmar, has more than once set forth the philosophical side of Conditionalism in the attractive form of stories. A short quotation from this charming author will serve to illustrate his point of view:

The future life once admitted, it will be readily agreed that it is impossible that the same fate should be reserved for all men at the time of their death; otherwise liberty, moral struggles, qualms of conscience, would be nothing but empty words. There is no standing still; when separated from the great mass that we call humanity, there must be either progress or retrogression.

What then would you do with those who choose indefinite retrogression? . . .

Ah well, give them time. They will come back. . . .

Very well. There are some who will come back, if not on earth, at least elsewhere. That is possible. Prodigal sons have been known to return. I am willing to admit that beyond this life, in some world of an inferior order, a prodigal son might be deemed worthy to begin again the trial of his first stage . . . But if we are not to play upon the word "liberty" it must be granted that the final "restoration" of all is inadmissible. There are men who, by their own fault, become worthless. These become immortal! They have no more thought of such a thing than the hard pebble beneath their feet. They would then be immortal in spite of themselves.

¹ *La Civilisation et la Croyance*, 399, sq., 406. "The proposition of this remarkable book is that there is an intimate connection which unites civilization to morality, and through morality to religion, and that the great, or rather the unique, problem of political and social science is the moral and religious problem. The work is divided into three parts: 1. The situation; 2. The problems of philosophy; 3. Religion. In the first part the author indicates the contradictions inherent in our political and economical civilization; and the danger with which it is threatened by the lack of harmony in its institutions and manners; in the second and third parts he points out the beliefs which sustain and aggravate the evil, and those which might bring the remedy. Hence the title of the work, *Civilization and Belief*. The negative beliefs of atheism and materialism are causes of ruin for civilization, which would find safety in the positive beliefs of Christian theism, reconciled with the scientific spirit and with ascertained scientific facts."—From the *Grand dictionnaire universel du dix-neuvième siècle* of Larousse. Second supplement, p. 835.

I conclude : I believe in attainable immortality. Immortality is the result of choice, a reward granted to those who more than the rest have loved that which is true and good. The hypothesis of Conditional Immortality alone satisfies both justice and charity ; it alone respects both human liberty and divine love.¹

§ 12. In a volume which very soon followed that of M. Secrétan, M. Ott arrives by a different route at the same solution as M. Schaeffer :

We have thus far spoken of offenders who, unworthy and incapable at the moment of their death to enter the abode of felicity, might nevertheless by means of repentance and fresh trial obtain admittance afterwards. But suppose that there were some who would not repent, whose obstinate pride should still defy the divine goodness, and whose incorrigible perversity should be recognized by God ? Some thinkers, filled with ardent charity, have believed that all would be saved at last, that none would be finally excluded from the celestial kingdom. I willingly share that hope. Still, it must be admitted that the contrary is possible, that free will exists, and that an individual who should persist in an intractable egoism could not for that very reason be admitted into the society of the blessed, nor participate in the happiness which they enjoy, since reciprocal love forms the very basis of that society and the essential condition of the felicity of its members. For such confirmed egoists a new trial can be imagined only in case they should be called to an absolutely new life, without any remembrance of that which had gone before, a fresh start *ab initio*. In that case there would be in substance the same soul, but no longer the same person, no longer the same *ego*, no longer the same conscience ; it would be another man. Moreover, with liberty remaining, it would still be possible for the will to be equally perverted in the new life as in the old, and the same in all others that might succeed. Under such conditions, in order that all men should be saved, it must be supposed that none of them would reach that absolute perversion from which he would not wish to be delivered. Such a result is not impossible, and it may be that God has foreseen it. It would no doubt be the most desirable solution. But in the contrary case what would happen ?

The situation before described would then appear in all its horror. To the sentiment of isolation would be joined that of universal reprobation ; to the consciousness of a destiny missed, that of happiness irrevocably lost ; to the deprivation of egoistical enjoyments, the

¹ *Un Réveillon*, p. 108, sq.

torments of humiliated pride and powerless hatred ; and this frightful condition would have to be endured with all appearance of its perpetuity without a possibility of change. This, it is true, is not the material hell, with its fiery furnaces, but it is the outer darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth, it is the dwelling-place of despair. Such a situation, lasting only a short time, would seem equivalent to the greatest sufferings, and if prolonged the misery of the sufferer would soon exceed the most horrible miseries that the ill-will of man could inflict.

It would thus be absolutely in opposition not only to the goodness, but also to the justice of God, to condemn to an eternity of such suffering the sinner guilty of even the worst of crimes. We have seen that justice would not allow the suffering inflicted on the culprit as punishment to exceed the measure of the fault committed. He would here be smitten with a punishment atrocious in its nature and indefinite in its duration. Now, every human action is finite, and he who has performed it could not be responsible for the indefinite consequences that might follow. By the very fact that this action would be punished with infinite suffering, the limits of justice would be exceeded, the punishment would be indefinitely greater than the crime. Besides, such an arrangement could not in any fashion be reconciled with the goodness of God. The duration of human life being infinitely little in relation to eternity, it would follow from the eternity of sufferings that those on whom such a doom were to be inflicted would really have been created for their misery ; for the mere power of making a choice during a lifetime so short, and the free and voluntary character of that choice, would not suffice to justify the enormity of the consequences attached to it ; it would always be inconceivable that a God in whom goodness is the dominant character should cause an eternity of frightful sufferings to depend upon the action of an instant.

How, then, is to be avoided the antinomy produced on the one hand by the necessary and definitive exclusion from the kingdom of heaven of the individuals who do not wish to become worthy and capable of entering it, and the perpetual sufferings supposed to result from that exclusion, and on the other hand the justice and goodness of God, who cannot doom even the greatest criminal to iniquitous punishment ? A good deal of attention has of late been paid in Protestant circles to an hypothesis which seems to solve this grave problem in a plausible manner, the hypothesis of Conditional Immortality.¹ It is supposed that only those souls that have become worthy and capable of future

¹ On this question see the *Critique philosophique*, 1883, vol. ii., and 1884, vol. i. ; also the *Critique religieuse*, supplement to the *Critique philosophique*.

life will enjoy the gift of immortality, and that the others will either come to an end with the body and be definitively annihilated, or else will not die until they have suffered the punishment of their misdeeds, but will all the same be annihilated after having paid their debt to divine justice. Evidently these souls would not be able to bring any reproach against God. He gave them being, that is to say, a condition better than non-existence, and granted to them many passing enjoyments, as well as the promise of eternal felicity under certain conditions ; they have absolutely refused submission to those conditions, and, doing evil, they have incurred the penalty of the law, and have borne sufferings not exceeding those which they have themselves caused. They die at last because they have not been willing to enter into the only combination in which it was possible for them to live. The justice and the goodness of God are thus equally satisfied, and the general plan of the world attains full realization. Unless all should be saved, and not one will should be found perverse enough to be finally struck out of the book of life, this solution seems in fact to be the best answer to the difficulties of the question.

Such are the ideas which, with our imperfect knowledge, we are able to form as to the future destiny of the good and of the wicked. It is possible that most of these ideas may be false, and that the reality may be altogether different from that which we imagine. But that which is certain is the future life itself. It is an indispensable wheel in the universal machinery. It is impossible to deny it without denying God himself, and reducing all to the blind fatality of an aimless mechanism.¹

IX.

“It is possible that most of these ideas may be false,” says M. Ott. Thus far the only thing certain is the interior voice which tells us of a beyond. This voice, at least, is an undeniable fact. It is not entirely drowned either by the noises of the world or the discordant cries of passion. We have the foundation of the edifice, and a few of the principal stones, but we still remain without a shelter. The innate hope of immortality is a delicate plant ; smothered by the briars of life or battered by the tempest, it survives with difficulty when it does not succumb. The plaintive accents of the conscience seek an echo ; the feeble plant demands a support. This is the senti-

¹ *Le Problème du mal*, p. 314, sq., Paris, Fischbacher, 1888.

ment that provoked the despairing cry of M. Dupont-White in the passage before quoted.¹

The Gospel comes as an answer to the cry. Shall we accept it? Certainly if it is that which it claims to be, our joy will be as deep as is the trouble in which we are plunged by the thought of death. But there have been, and are still, so many false religions which anathematize each other! The Christian religion presents exceptional claims; we will examine them, not without using all the precaution needed in a matter of so much importance. Our philosophical research, which has produced so little in the way of positive results, will at least enable us to set up the criterion of an immortality in accordance with the best aspirations of our nature; we are at an epoch in which religion has to justify itself at the tribunal of morality, and in which morality itself needs to find confirmation in the natural laws of the universe.

A religion truly divine will not contradict the data of a reason which itself is the gift of God. It will satisfy our legitimate hope of personal survival; but, establishing that hope upon a moral basis, it will lay down conditions for the perpetuation of that survival. In conformity with the incontestable laws of an incessant evolution, that survival will be a progress, an ascending march towards God, or a decline, a retrograde and descending march towards the nothingness whence we have sprung. If, moreover, the doctrine that we wish to test makes the future life dependent upon an organism, it may not exactly agree with the old spiritualism; but, on the other hand, it will have the acknowledgement of modern science, which conceives of individual life only under a form cognizable by the senses.

A religion two thousand years old, which would fulfil these conditions, would, in our opinion, bear the character of a revelation, for it would have anticipated, and even gone beyond, the results of twenty centuries of study.

It is from this standpoint that we shall study immortality in the sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments. We shall not take the Bible for a book of which the inspiration is proved, but as the document of the religion proposed to us.

¹ Pp. 60, 61.

If the doctrine should commend itself to our acceptance, its very excellence will enable us to believe in the inspiration of the volume.

Who will solve for us the enigma of life and the darker enigma of death? Who will cause the brazen door which closes to us the temple of immortality to turn on its hinges? All the efforts of human genius have not discovered its key. The builder of the edifice alone, as it seems to us, could give it. If a key is handed to us which fits the lock and opens the door we shall be disposed to admit that it has come from God himself. This very key the Gospel claims to bring to us. We will try it.

CHAPTER III.

IMMORTALITY ACCORDING TO THE OLD TESTAMENT AND IN JUDAISM.

- I. Fundamental principle of historical and grammatical interpretation—
- II. Literal and ontological sense of the words *life* and *death*; in the Old Testament death always indicates a cessation of functions—
- III. Adam a candidate for immortality, and the necessary conditions of immortality—
- IV. The doctrine of the unconditional immortality of the human soul neither taught nor assumed in the Old Testament—
- V. Israelitish piety has a glimpse of Conditional Immortality—
- VI. Lethargic slumber of the shades in the night of Sheol—
- VII. Gleams of hope in relation to a future life—
- VIII. First allusions to the possibility of a resurrection—
- IX. Summary of the doctrine of immortality in the Old Testament—
- X. Subsequent infiltrations into Judaism of the Platonic doctrine—
- XI. Apocryphal books of the Old Testament—
- XII. Pharisees and Sadducees—
- XIII. The Talmud—
- XIV. Maimonides—
- XV. The Kabbalah—
- XVI. Conclusions.

THE true biblical teaching in relation to immortality is now to be the subject of our study. This inquiry is all the more important as it involves the estimation in which we shall hold the documents of the Christian religion, and even that religion itself. Is it easy to admire and to love a God who would destine a portion, if not the great majority, of his creatures to endless torments? Yet a pretended orthodoxy imagines that it finds such a destiny taught in the holy Scriptures. The same prejudice is found very generally in the camp of our opponents. Some of these, otherwise well instructed, declare that the Bible, in both Old and New Testament, teaches eternal sufferings.¹

¹ "The preaching of John the Baptist dealt only with judgement and eternal sufferings" (Ed. Stapfer, *Les idées religieuses en Palestine au temps de Jésus-Christ*, p. 208, second edition, Paris, 1878).—With all respect for M. Stapfer, the only punishment spoken of by the Baptist is death, symbolized by the axe, the fire, and the water. The expression "eternal sufferings" (*peines éternelles*) was only admitted into the old French versions

Careful examination of the records will prove that under the powerful influence of Platonic philosophy the Scriptures and the God therein revealed have been calumniated; they have been obscured by the dismal tint of the darkened glass through which they have been regarded. Our proof will be supported by competent authorities. Our conclusions will be those of exegetical scholars who have made the point in question the subject of special study. Following the chronological order, we shall begin with the Old Testament, the deep soil in which are to be found the very roots of Gospel teaching.

I.

One of the most illustrious preachers of the latter part of the middle ages, Geiler of Kaisersberg, who is buried under the pulpit of Strasburg Cathedral, could say without irony that the holy Scripture is treated as though it were like wax for everyone to mould according to his own fancy.¹ Thanks to the reformers of the sixteenth century, that is no longer exactly the case. They had force enough to restrain the aberrations of traditional principles of interpretation; they introduced into the study of the sacred text the fundamental principle of a sound philology: the historico-grammatical interpretation, which simply consists in admitting the literal sense wherever it is not manifestly absurd.² This principle was the powerful war-horse of the Lutherans and of the reformed Churches in their struggle against the superstitions of centuries. In the middle ages the mystical meaning had become the pest of exegesis.

of the New Testament by a falsification of which we need not now seek the origin. The Greek text of Matth. xxv. 46 has *eternal chastisement*, not *eternal sufferings*. The chastisement consists in the deprivation of life (cf. 2 Thess. i. 9); it is eternal in its effect, which endures even after the culprit has ceased to suffer. The versions of Lausanne, Rilliet, Segond, and M. Stapfer himself give the correct translation, abandoning the plural of the traditional rendering. [The English A.V. is not disfigured by this error, but it has an unwarranted variation in the adjective applied equally to the punishment and to the life; this has been rectified in the R.V.]

¹ *La Bible au seizième siècle*, by Samuel Berger, p. 32, Paris, 1879.

² Exception must be admitted for the prophecies, the application of which to history is far from being always literal; this exception may also be extended to the parables.

Luther said : " We ought to be most careful to search out the certain and veritable meaning, which can only be that of the letter, of the text, of the history."

Luther, the child of the people, the mendicant monk, fought valiantly against the middle age ; Calvin, that son of the *Renaissance*, that thoroughly French intellect, that conquering genius, eventually triumphed over it. Speaking of allegory, he said : " By this means many of our predecessors have taken leave to play with Scripture as with a ball." And again, in condemnation of allegory as the conquered enemy of the natural sense of Scripture : " As for me, I acknowledge that the Scripture is an abundant fountain of all wisdom, one which is inexhaustible ; but I deny that its riches and abundance consist in a diversity of meanings, which each one may hammer out at his will. Let us, then, know that the true and natural meaning of the Scripture is that which is simple and artless. This, then, let us receive and hold it fast. As for fabricated expositions, which turn us away from the literal sense, let us not merely leave them alone as doubtful, but let us boldly reject them as pernicious corruptions."¹

M. Berger calls allegory a conquered enemy. Would to God that it were so ! We should not then have taken the trouble to write, nor would our readers have the trouble of perusing, our book. Although conquered in theory, the mystical interpretation still reigns in practice, and on the point which now concerns us. It still keeps the door of hermeneutics, it is this which maintains the scholastic sense of the fundamental terms of our discussion : those words *life* and *death* which are found in the prologue and the epilogue of the Pentateuch, on the first page of Genesis and in the last chapters of the Revelation, and which are, as it were, the two poles of the biblical sphere. Everything turns upon these great antitheses.

II.

When man is in question, *life* in the historic and grammatical sense is an existence composed of action and sensation ; *death* is the cessation of that existence, the end of all action and all sensation. But it has come to pass that in consequence of the preconceived notion of the absolute immortality

¹ Samuel Berger, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

of the human soul, and in defiance of the formal declarations of Scripture, the traditional exegesis starts from the principle that the life of the soul cannot possibly cease. The result has been to give to that which is called in Scripture *death*, in relation to the soul, the sense of *perpetual life* in the midst of sin and sufferings without end. For ever dying, the soul would never die. The painful death spoken of in Scripture is replaced by mortal pain, which is yet interminable. On the other hand, the *life* of the soul is made synonymous with *holiness* and *blessedness*. These contradictory meanings have passed from the biblical commentaries into the European languages, which have been thereby more or less falsified.

If we remain faithful to the principle of historic interpretation before laid down, we see that the traditional exegesis is false, for there is nothing absurd in supposing the cessation of the existence of a soul. The total suppression of such and such an individual is a notion very easy to conceive. If the existence of a soul separate from the body be admitted, the death of that soul will be the cessation of all individual functions. The possibility of this is not at all an inadmissible hypothesis. Every being that has had a beginning may have an end. This, as we have seen, is an incontestable principle.¹

It is vain to argue that when the soul is in question death is only an image. Were it even so, the image ought to correspond with the reality. An image reproduces the salient features of the object represented; the characteristic and principal feature of physical death is neither disorder nor suffering, it is the *complete cessation of all organic functions*, immobility, and insensibility. If the death of the soul consisted in a life of suffering or disorder, the image that would most naturally be used to represent it would be an *illness* or *persistent agony*. *Life* and *death* are opposites, like *black* and *white*. To say that death is a kind of life, a certain "state of life," is like declaring that black is a kind of white, a certain state of white.

¹ Infatuated with himself, man is too ready to forget that, being a contingent creature, he exists only by the good pleasure of the Creator. "*Contingent*: that which is not necessary; that which may be suppressed in thought without producing any contradiction; that which our thought can represent as not existing."—Franck, *Dictionnaire des sciences philos.*, at the word *Contingent*.

If death were a certain *state* of life, it would be a *manifestation* of life: the contradiction is evident.

The usage of all language protests against such violence done to the words. To die, when the predicate is something inanimate, means to cease to exist. When the unbelieving materialist tells us that after death all is dead, there is no doubt as to the meaning of the word; it signifies that the dead person no longer exists at all. So also in the negative term “immortal” as applied to the soul: everyone will admit that the meaning is *indestructible, imperishable*. If to *die* when spoken of the soul is to signify *to suffer far away from God*, souls that are *immortal*, or that *cannot die*, could not *suffer far away from God*; their very immortality would prevent their liability to that fate, and the very terms of the traditional dogma would thus be contradictory.

Life and happiness are two distinct notions, although often brought together. The author of the Pentateuch does not identify them. In the book of Deuteronomy we read: “Ye shall walk in all the way which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you.”¹ In the same way, when death is spoken of it is not confounded with suffering: in case of rebellion the Israelites were to be afflicted by various maladies until they should *perish*.² There is, then, here a double distinction of ideas, which needs to be restored in both Old and New Testaments from one end to the other. In the Israelites’ view life is, first and foremost, existence and duration; that is clearly indicated in the Psalmist’s declaration: “The king . . . asked life of thee, thou gavest it him; even length of days for ever and ever.”³

Moses said: “I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.”⁴ For the faithful Israelite these four notions are the cardinal points of his spiritual horizon. In order to ascertain our own position we need to define them in their mutual relation, which is that of cause and effect. Moral good tends to the perpetuation of life, physical as well as moral; moral evil leads to death, physical as well as moral.

¹ Deut. v. 33.

³ Psa. xxi. 4.

² *Ibid.*, xxviii. 22.

⁴ Deut. xxx. 15.

The sentence just quoted is a summary of the teaching of the five books of the Pentateuch; it sets forth the principal terms of the problem propounded at the very beginning of Genesis.¹

III.

"The Lord God commanded the man, saying: 'Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' . . . And the serpent said unto the woman: 'Ye shall not surely die.' . . . When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband, and he did eat. . . . And the Lord God said: . . . 'Lest the man put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever,' therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim and the flame of a sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."²

Like the learned Oehler, Dr. Hermann Schultz, and M. Bruston, Professor of Hebrew in the Theological Faculty at Montauban, we see in this narrative a symbolical teaching. M. Bruston calls it "a beautiful and profound allegory of the Jehovist author."³ Be that as it may, the psychological truth of the story is independent of its historic or non-historic character. In a form suited to the infantine simplicity of the early ages of humanity, we find in it the principal data of the

¹ The Serpent, who is Satan, promises to man an unconditional immortality. See in *Supplement* No. V. our separate study of *Evil*, and of the necessary conditions of both present and future existence.

² Gen. ii., iii., *passim*.

³ *L'idée de l'immortalité chez les Phéniciens et chez les Hébreux*, discourse pronounced at the opening of the scholastic year, 1878-79 (*Revue théologique*, Jan., 1879). This discourse has been separately published.—It is admitted by all that the prophecy relating to the bruising of the Serpent's head by the posterity of the woman is symbolical. It seems, therefore, natural to assign to the whole narrative a character which is evidently that of one of its parts.

question before us. Let us pause awhile before this picture, so that we may the better understand its teaching.

Man is here set before us as a candidate for immortality. As a candidate, he is subjected to a test : if he overcomes the temptation, he will raise himself to the rank of the immortals and will never die ; if he revolts, he will lose life, and with it all the good things which enhance its value. To man the Creator gives existence and offers immortality. So long as Adam remains in the garden of Eden he is allowed to eat the fruit of the tree of life ; but his immortality is conditional : as soon as he infringes the condition laid down he is devoted to death, and he no longer has access to the tree which alone could render him immortal. In short, man is susceptible of immortalization ; he was created “in view of immortality,”¹ but he is not imperishable ; he does not enjoy a native and inalienable immortality.

Man was created good, says Oehler, that is to say, he answered to God's purpose in his creation. But the good that was in him was not yet the product of his free determination, thus he had not yet the *knowledge of good*. . . . Holiness is not given to man all at once, and without his doing anything towards acquiring it, for that is impossible. . . . It is possible for man not to die. . . . The possibility of attaining to immortality was put within his reach, it was a benefit reserved for him in case he should persevere in his communion with God. . . . An innocent being can attain to holiness only by an act of free decision. . . . Death is the sequel of sin. It was only in the state of innocence that it was possible for man not to die, that he possessed that *posse non mori* and that relative immortality of which we have spoken.²

Although not so explicit, Professor F. Godet seems to teach the same doctrine. He says :

The natural condition of man was such as would end in dissolution. Remaining on the level of the animals by the preference given to desire over moral obligation, man has remained subject to that law. But if

¹ *Ep' aphtharsia*.—Wisdom of Solomon, ii. 23.

² *Théologie de l'ancien Testament*, by G. F. Oehler, Doctor in theology, professor at Tübingen, translated into French by M. H. de Rougemont, vol. i., pp. 223-239.—Compare the English translation, *Theology of the Old Testament*, Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1874, vol. i., pp. 227-229. See also later on the remark of M. Zietlow, chap. iv., sect. iv., § 6.

he had raised himself by an act of moral freedom to a level above the animals, he would not have had to share their fate.¹

The fate of the animals is apparently the cessation of individual existence. Vainly does the eminent professor desire to reserve the immortality of the soul. He himself says elsewhere, "The soul is corrupted in its lusts." To corrupt is to dissolve, destroy. Corruption is the breaking up (rupture) of a whole, the complete disorganization of a substance which has ceased to be what it was, and presents no longer any of its distinctive essential characteristics.² The propriety of the image requires that the corruption of the soul should produce an analogous result. According to the same author, the second or eternal death is caused "by the separation of the *soul* from the *spirit*, that sense of the soul for the divine. The soul and body, thus deprived of that superior principle, that primary element of the soul, become the prey of the *worm that dieth not*."³ We would ask what remains of the individual after these successive separations. An individual exists as such only on condition of the principal parts not being separated. Further, as we shall have occasion to notice, the worm spoken of by the prophet Isaiah and by Jesus after him attacks dead bodies only. It must therefore relate to the destruction of an unconscious remainder.⁴

We will now quote M. Bruston, who says :

According to the Jehovist author, man has violated the law of God ; he has allowed himself to be seduced by the attraction of the senses and by pride ; therefore is it that he suffers and dies. But if he had persevered in the way of obedience, he would have been able to eat of the fruit of the tree of life which was in the midst of the garden of Eden ; that is to say, he would have been immortal, as well as exempt from

¹ *Commentaire sur l'Épître aux Romains*, vol. i., p. 444.

² Littré, Bescherelle.

³ Godet, *op. cit.*, vol. i., pp. 256, 442, *sq.*

⁴ Oehler teaches that the soul attains consciousness of itself by the spirit : "*Causa quidem, cur homo sui conscius sit, ex spiritu est repetenda. . . . Homo, ut ex spiritu et per spiritum omnino vivit, ita per eundem agit, cogitat, intelligit.*" etc. (Veteris Testamenti sententia de rebus post mortem futuris illustrata, p. 15.) The *spirit* spoken of by Oehler is surely the "superior principle" mentioned by Professor Godet. According to Oehler, the soul separated from this principle loses consciousness of itself. That is a thesis essentially Conditionalist.

pain and suffering. He was not so, then, by nature, but he could become so by continuing in union with the author of life. It was sin that made him mortal.¹

From the Old Testament point of view, the sinner must sooner or later perish, body and soul; the mortality of his being extends to the whole individual. This appears from the following considerations :

1. God said to Adam, not: "Thy body shall die," but "Thou shalt die," thy *self* shall perish. For Adam death could only signify that which he had been used to call by that name in relation to the animal world which surrounded him, and which had been subject to death throughout the geologic ages.

By death, says John Locke, some men understand endless torments in hell fire; but it seems a strange way of understanding a law, which requires the plainest and directest words, that by death should be meant eternal life in misery. Can anyone be supposed to intend by a law which says: *for felony thou shalt surely die*, not that he should lose his life, but be kept alive in exquisite and perpetual torments? And would anyone think himself fairly dealt with that was so used?²

2. In the Levitical sacrifices the victim represented the sinner; yet those who offered it were not required to inflict upon it a long series of tortures. Death pure and simple was all that the law of sacrifice demanded. In the rite it was not the suffering, but the suppression of the life, that was accentuated. In practice, if the execution was prolonged, the sacrifice had to be rejected. In our own days even, if the *shochet* (the Jewish butcher) makes use of a blade with ever so small a notch in it likely to cause the least useless suffering, the flesh of the slain animal is *terepha*, forbidden to the faithful; it is only allowed to be sold at a low price to non-Jews. The burning of the victim, too, was not a symbol of suffering, since it took place only after the immolation; but was rather an emblem of the utter destruction which menaces the incorrigible sinner.

3. So also in the penal code of the Israelites, the heaviest chastisement prescribed is the death, pure and simple, of the

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 214.

² *Reasonableness of Christianity*, § 1.

offender ; there is never a word to indicate that the sinner may have to endure eternal pains. It is an extraordinary fact, and a divine characteristic, that long-continued tortures are foreign to Old Testament legislation. In the republic of Israel there is no executioner, nor rack, nor torture, nor gallows, nor special place of execution. The numerous and odious means of torture, which have dishonoured both ancient and modern civilizations, have no equivalent in the Divine code of Sinai.¹ Crucifixion is well known to be of Roman origin. In executions by stoning, it was usual, in order to shorten the suffering, to take care that the first stone cast should be large enough to crush the culprit's breast. The contemporaries of Noah, the inhabitants of Sodom, and the infamous Canaanites, were in turn overtaken by the water, the fire, and the sword ; their chastisement was terrible, but the accompanying anguish did not long endure. Nothing can be quicker than lightning, symbol of celestial vengeance.

IV.

The Old Testament never mentions a native and inalienable immortality. The expression *immortal soul*, that favourite formula of ecclesiastical phraseology, is not there to be found. Nor is it said that God will immortalize sinners in view of eternal torments. So far from it, the clearest terms and the most striking images are used to teach the final and total suppression of evil and of obstinate evildoers. In the Hebrew language there are more than fifty roots which habitually or occasionally relate to the destruction of animated beings. In the Old Testament they are almost all employed to announce the doom of the impenitent.²

To these words should be added a multitude of proverbial expressions, a long succession of images which sometimes seem to exclude each other, but which always, by association of ideas, and like fractions reduced to a common denominator, are found to be in accord when used to describe the end of the

¹ In Germany the torture of the wheel was maintained until the present century ; it was abolished in France in 1790.

² See in *Supplement* No. VI. a table of these roots, with the corresponding Greek terms used in the Septuagint and the New Testament.

existence of evil and of obstinate evildoers. Everywhere we find the notion of a final cessation of being, of a return to a state of unconsciousness, never that of a perpetual life in suffering. It is with the symbolism of the Bible as with its vocabulary: the sacred writers seem to have exhausted the resources at their command in order to affirm that which we maintain.

It may now be asserted as a fact in biblical science: "There is nothing in all the Bible which implies a native immortality."¹—"The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is not to be found in the Bible, nor even its name."²—"Moses said not a word of it. . . . Not one Palestinian document speaks of it."³

Professor Vuilleumier, of Lausanne, has expressed his views as follows:

There is one point on which we regret to find ourselves in complete disagreement with M. Bruston. We refer to the notion of "the immortality of the soul" as applied to the idea, or, as it would be better to say, to the ideas of the Hebrews as to the future destiny of man. We still think that to speak of *immortality of the soul* with reference to the ideas, beliefs, hopes, presentiments, intuitions, etc., which were current *among the Hebrews* relative to an existence after this life, is to commit a veritable anachronism. The idea of the immortality of the soul is not a plant indigenous to Israel. It is an exotic seed, brought by a wind from the west at a later date. The land in which it originated is not the old Semitic soil, but the Greek soil fertilized by philosophic culture. That abstract distinction between body and soul, and that doctrine of the primitive and natural immortality of the human soul, are foreign, not, it is true, to later Judaism, but certainly to the ancient Israelites. Nothing could well be less in conformity with Hebrew anthropology, as we understand it, than the thought "that if (by the fault of primitive humanity) we have lost for ever the immortality of the body, we ought, at least, to be able by a pure life to reconquer the immortality of the soul."

. . . We are firmly convinced that no exact idea of biblical anthropology and eschatology in the Old Testament and in the New will

¹ F. Delitzsch, Commentary on Gen. iii. 22, sq. *Die ganze Schrift weiss nichts von einer in der Natur der Seele begründeten Unsterblichkeit.*

² Olshausen, Commentary on Luke xvi. 24-26, and I Cor. xv. 19, 20.

³ M. Michel Nicolas, *Des doctrines religieuses des Juifs*, chap. vi., pp. 317, 323. As we shall presently see, the lethargic sleep of *Sheol* is not true immortality, but a state of existence nearer to death than life.

be acquired until the use of terms and conceptions foreign to the Bible, such as "the immortality of the soul," are discarded. In any case, that particular idea is only one—the latest and the least Hebraic—of the ideas which were current among the Hebrews (and the Jews) as to the fate of man after the present existence.¹

Towards the exoneration of M. Bruston we will add that in speaking of "an immortality of the soul to be reconquered by a pure life," he leaves to be understood the final destruction of obdurate sinners.²

As additional evidence we will further record the declaration of M. Th. Henry Martin, whose very orthodox work was approved by Pius IX. He says :

We willingly admit that the philosophical doctrine of the simplicity and immortality of the soul is not found anywhere in the Bible.³

V.

Does this mean that all notion of a future life is absent from the Old Testament? Not at all; but the hope of it does not rest upon a metaphysical *à priori*. It is not a dogma; it is an aspiration of the religious and moral consciousness. Two factors concur in its production: faith in the living God, and

¹ *Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, Lausanne, March, 1879.

² *Revue théologique*, p. 215, Jan., 1879.

³ *La Vie future*, p. 76, third edition.

Moses says so little about life beyond the tomb, that some have gone so far as to deny that he had the notion of a future existence. It is forgotten that he had been "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and that for those worshippers of Ammon and Phtha, kings, priests, and people, the life to come and the resurrection were subjects of constant concern. The mummies, the paintings and inscriptions on the coffins that enclose them, are there to prove how lively and profound was that faith; but it had degenerated into superstition. According to M. Th. Henry Martin, in Egypt recourse was had to the *good dead*, who were supposed to counteract the baneful influence of the *evil dead*. "Moses reduced all to the belief in the one God, who rewarded or punished men on the earth; as for the rest, he systematically avoided speaking about it." The body of Moses, buried in secret, was put out of the way of the worship which the Israelites might have offered to it. Thus at Geneva the precise place of sepulture of the reformer Calvin is unknown. In these facts there is a tacit protest against the abuse of relics, which already existed in the time of Moses, and which was rampant during the Middle Ages. In keeping absolute silence respecting the future life, the Hebrew legislator may have meant to cut short the idolatry of which the shades of the dead were the object.

the experience of the ages. Under the sometimes crushing burden of life, the belief in immortality bursts forth from the piety of the Israelite like virgin oil from the oil-press. For a long time indistinct and confused, these aspirations would only at a much later date find their definitive formula in the term "resurrection." It is with immortality in the Old Testament as with the seed in the plant. Stalk, leaves, flowers, fruit, first appear, then comes the seed, symbol and pledge of a future life.

The key of the problem has been given to us in the story of the fall. Man has gone astray ; yielding to the tempter's voice, he stifled the voice of God, which spoke to him in the recesses of his conscience. The attraction of sensual enjoyment led him into the way of death. Still, all is not lost ; all may be restored ; man may make his way back again. Faith, obedience, and self-denial may lead him back into the way of life. An all-powerful and perfectly good God will save those whom he loves and by whom he is loved. Man is not born immortal ; he may become so. Immortality is a privilege granted to the righteous, a favour offered to the penitent believer. It is conditional. The righteous will live again ; the impenitent will be finally destroyed. Such is, as we shall see, the doctrine which gradually becomes visible in the canonical books of the Old Testament, as in dawning light.

VI.

The Pentateuch and the subsequent books make mention of an abode of the dead called *Sheol*.¹ It is a very long way from this belief to that which is called the immortality of the soul. Without being confounded with the grave, *Sheol* can scarcely be distinguished from it. The dead who are there give no sign of life. It is a subterranean abode in which thick darkness and the deepest silence reign. In *Sheol* nothing is seen, nothing heard ; there is no perception there, nor activity of any sort. Good and bad are there together, confined in bonds and darkness ; it is the suspension of life, a state bordering upon

¹ Probably from *shāal*, not used, *to bury one's self*, in speaking of excavations of the soil. In German, *Hölle* comes from *Höhle*, a cavern. The English *hell* is from the Anglo-Saxon *helan*, to cover to hide.

nothingness. In Sheol "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom," neither pain nor pleasure, neither fear nor hope; everything is forgotten. God is no longer adored or known there. It is a heavy and endless sleep.¹ In the book of Isaiah the shades are represented as awaking for a moment at the coming of the King of Babylon; but this can only be a case of *prosopopœia*, since in the same passage the prophet makes the fir-trees and the cedars of Lebanon to speak.²

The apparition of Samuel to Saul takes place in the suspicious abode of a sorceress; the shade of the old prophet wears a mantle, about the origin of which some information would be desirable.³

Exulting in life, the pious Israelite is saddened at the prospect of Sheol. He puts aside the thought of it, and delights himself by cherishing the hope of such a prolongation of existence as would come very near to immortality. His faith cannot admit the idea of the descent into and a definitive abode in the eternal prison-house of death. Even to his last hour he remains full of confidence; he has vague glimpses of a victory over the tomb by means of a miraculous intervention of the Almighty in his favour.⁴

The wicked, on the contrary, when once they go down to Sheol, will never again see the light.

The glory of the wicked ends in sudden night,
The dreadful tomb devours them utterly for aye.
It is not so with him who feareth thee aright,
He will revive, O God, more brilliant than the day.

Ye sinners disappear! the Lord awaketh now.⁵

¹ Gen. xxxvii. 35; Job xiv. 12, 13; Ps. xlix. 19; lxxxviii. 11, 12; Eccl. ix. 5-10; Isa. xxxviii. 18; Ecclus. xvii. 26.

² xiv. 8-10.

³ 1 Sam. xxviii.

⁴ Ps. i., vi., xi., xvi., xvii., xlviii. 14, cxxxix. 24, cf. i. 6; Prov. xiv. 32, xv. 24, xxiii. 14.—The words of Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous" (Numb. xxiii. 10), attest, even in the Pentateuch, the hope of a life to come.

⁵ Racine. *Esther*, act ii., scene ix.; *Athalie*, act iii., scene viii. The French words are:

La gloire des méchants en un moment s'éteint,
L'affreux tombeau pour jamais les dévore.

VII.

The notion of earthly prosperity indefinitely prolonged, Sheol being disregarded, is found in a large number of the Psalms. The thirty-seventh is composed entirely on this basis. Our translation of it follows the original text as closely as possible.

PSALM XXXVII.¹

Fret not thyself because of the wicked,
Nor be thou envious of evil doers,
For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.

Trust in the Lord and do good,
Dwell in the land quietly and cherish righteousness ;
Delight thyself also in the Lord,
And he shall give thee the desires of thy heart.

Cast off upon the Lord thy care,
Trust also in him, and he will act for thee ;
He will manifest thy righteousness in the daylight,
And thy judgement in the brightness of noon.

In silent submission unto the Lord
Await him !
Fret not thyself because of the prosperous man,
Because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

Cease from anger and forsake wrath,
Fret not thyself, it would lead only to evil ;
For the wicked shall be cut off,
But they that rest upon the Lord shall inherit the land.
Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be,
Yea, thou shalt search his place, but he shall not be there ;

Il n'en est pas ainsi de celui qui te craint,
Il renaîtra, mon Dieu ! plus brillant que l'aurore.

Pécheurs, disparaissez ! le Seigneur se réveille.

¹ The 22 strophes of the original text began with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet in consecutive order. By means of this acrostic arrangement the so-called alphabetic psalms were the more easily committed to memory.

While the meek shall be in possession of the land,
And in peace shall enjoy abundant prosperity.

Against the righteous the wicked plotteth,
Gnashing his teeth ;
The Lord laugheth at him,
For he seeth that his day is coming.

The wicked draw the sword and bend their bow
To cast down the poor and needy,
To slay those who are upright in the way ;
Their sword shall pierce their own heart,
And their bows shall be broken.

Better is the little of the righteous
Than the abundance of a thousand wicked ;
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
But the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

The Lord knoweth the days of the upright,
Their inheritance shall last for ever ;
They shall not be overthrown in the time of calamity,
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

But the wicked shall perish—
The enemies of the Lord ;
They shall vanish like the beauty of the meadows,
In smoke shall they vanish away.

The wicked borroweth and payeth not again,
But the righteous is bountiful with gifts ;
Those who are blessed of him shall possess the land,
Those who are cursed of him shall be cut off.

The Lord upholdeth the steps of the man
Whose way is pleasing unto him ;
Though he fall, he will not be utterly cast down
For the Lord holdeth him by the hand.

I have been young, and now am old,
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his children begging their bread ;
He is always gracious and lendeth,
And his posterity is blessed.

Depart from evil and do good,
And thou shalt dwell in peace for ever ;

For the Lord loveth judgement,
And forsaketh not those who worship him.

Those who do evil shall be destroyed for ever,
The posterity of the wicked shall be cut off;¹
The righteous shall inherit the land,
And dwell therein for ever.

The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom,
And his tongue upholdeth judgement;
The law of his God is in his heart,
None of his steps shall slide.

The wicked watcheth for the righteous,
And seeketh to slay him;
The Lord will not leave him in his hands,
Nor allow him to lose his cause.

Stay thyself upon the Lord,
Keep in the way that he showeth thee;
He shall exalt thee and cause thee to inherit the land;
Thou shalt see the extermination of the wicked.

I have seen the wicked in his power
Spread himself like a well-grown tree
That has never been removed;
Yet he has passed away, and lo! he is not;
I sought him, but he was not to be found.

Mark the perfect man and observe the just,
For the upright a future is reserved.²
As for the sinners, they are utterly destroyed;
The future of the wicked is cut off.

But the Lord saveth the righteous,
He is their stronghold in the time of trouble;
The Lord helpeth and delivereth them,
He delivereth them from the wicked and saveth them,
Because they put their trust in him.

¹ There is a change here necessitated by the alphabetic order. The conjecture of a word missing at the beginning of this strophe put forth by M. Reuss seems to us unavoidable, if an attempt is made to restore the pre-masoretic text.

² Cf. Prov. xxiii. 18, xxiv. 20.

So also in Psalm xvi. 10, 11 :

Thou wilt not deliver my soul unto Sheol ;
 Thou wilt not permit him that loveth thee to see the grave ;
 Thou wilt make me to know the path of life.

The book of Job also sets forth the contrast that often exists between the latter end of the righteous even here below and that of the wicked :

The triumphing of the wicked is short. . . .
 His roots shall be dried up beneath,
 And above shall his branch be cut off.
 His remembrance shall perish from the earth ; . . .
 He shall be driven from light into darkness ; . . .
 He shall be chased away as a vision of the night. . . .
 And, chased from the world,
 He shall perish for ever.¹

The trial of the righteous, on the contrary, is only temporary. Job receives the double of that which he lost ; satisfied with days, he sees his sons and his sons' sons, unto the fourth generation.

For all this, it could not but be noticed that the wicked not only may enjoy long life, longer even sometimes than that of the righteous, but also that the righteous are frequently carried off before their time, or they succumb under the weight of unmerited misfortunes. "In that very day the old doctrine of exclusively earthly remuneration and the vulgar idea of Sheol were shaken with the same blow, at least in intelligent and reflective minds."

The sage of Ecclesiastes seems to have had a presentiment of a future retribution. "There," says he, speaking no doubt of that which is beyond the tomb, "will God judge the righteous and the wicked." His book closes with the declaration that "God shall bring every work into judgement, with every hidden thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

Certain psalms of comparatively late date connect the hope of a future life with the taking away of the patriarch Enoch. The fifth chapter of Genesis, in which that story is found, is like a funereal hymn of which each strophe ends with the same

¹ xviii., xx., *passim*.

dismal phrase, "and he died." At the seventh recurrence the sequence is interrupted and the usual refrain is replaced by the mysterious statement: "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God *took* him."¹ The same expression is found in Psa. xlix. 15:

The wicked are appointed for Sheol . . .
But God will redeem my life from the power of Sheol,
For he shall *take* me.²

So again in Psa. lxxiii.:

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel,
And afterwards *take* me to glory. . . .
My flesh and my heart may be consumed;
God is the rock of my heart and my portion for ever,
For lo! they that go far from thee perish.
Thou destroyest those who are unfaithful to thee.
But as for me, to be near to God is my good.³

With these prospects may be connected the passages which represent the faithful under the Old Covenant as "strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Considering themselves pilgrims, they "made it manifest that they were seeking after a country of their own." As the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says further: "If indeed they had been mindful of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But no, they desired a better country, that is, a heavenly."⁴

VIII.

The book that bears the name of the prophet Isaiah is the first to mention a coming resurrection. The notion of a carry-

¹ Gen. v. 24.—The story of this carrying away necessarily supposes belief in a future life, otherwise, the fact being admitted that the Israelites were tenaciously attached to the present life, the shortening of the earthly career of the holy Enoch would have been a great scandal. Who will maintain that the author of the sacred story wished to scandalize his readers!

² Second seems to us to weaken the sense by the addition "under his protection."

³ Verses 24-28. Cf. xlix. 15, and 2 Kings ii. 3-11, the carrying away of the prophet Elijah, whom God *takes* to himself.

⁴ Heb. xi. 14-16.—The notion of a carrying away reappears in Paul's reference to a mysterious ascension of the Church, 1 Thess. iv. 17.

ing away (*enlèvement*) gives place to that of a raising again (*relèvement*) of the dead, or more exactly, from among the dead. The hope of a future life becomes, as it were, crystallized in this new conception :

The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces ;
 He swalloweth up death for ever. . . .
 Let thy dead live again,
 Let my dead bodies arise !
 Awake and sing
 Ye that dwell in the dust ! . . .
 Let the earth bring forth the shades !¹

We regret that we cannot appeal to the well-known passage in the book of Job which has so long been supposed to contain a promise of the resurrection. The meaning of that text is the subject of much dispute and uncertainty.²

Chapter xxxvii. of the book of Ezekiel compares the restoration of Israel to the resurrection of a multitude whose bones strewed the plain :

Divinely led, my spirit to the desert went :
 The ground was covered o'er with numberless dry bones ;
 I tremblingly approach, Jehovah cries to me :
 If to those bones I speak, will they return to life ?
 I said : O Lord, thou knowest. Then said he to me :
 Attend my words, retain them ; say to those dry bones :
 O ye dry bones, that now are naught but senseless dust,
 Arise ! receive again the spirit and the light,
 Assemble at my voice your members scattered wide,
 And be a second time with spirit animate ;
 Among your withered bones let muscles be restored,
 Your blood renew its round, your nerves resume their place ;

¹ Isa. xxv. 8 ; xxvi. 19.

² xix. 25-27. R.V. ;

But I know that my redeemer liveth,
 And that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth :
 And after my skin hath been thus destroyed,
 Yet from my flesh shall I see God :
 Whom I shall see for myself,
 And mine eyes shall behold, and not another.

—See Jean Bovet, *La Vie à venir d'après l'Ancien Testament*, Neuchâtel, 1889.

Arise and live again, and know me who I am !
 I listened to God's voice ; obediently I cried :
 O spirit, breathe upon these bones, from west, from east,
 Or breathe from north, O breathe ! . . . In haste new life to gain,
 These long unburied hosts, awakened by my voice,
 Their dry and withered bones full soon together shake,
 To clearest sunshine now their eyes reopen wide,
 Their bones have come together, clothed again with flesh !
 And on the field of death a multitude stands up,
 Becomes a mighty host, and knows Jehovah, Lord.¹

“ That the power of God *can*, against all human thought and hope, reanimate the dead, is the general idea of the passage ; from which, consequently, the hope of a literal resurrection of the dead may naturally be inferred.”²

In the midst of the sanguinary persecution to which they were exposed by Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria, and during the wars which they waged for their religion and their liberty, the Jews of Palestine, educated in the doctrine of Sheol, and convinced that the

¹ Lamartine, *La Poésie sacrée—Méditations poétiques*. The French lines are :

L'Eternel emporta mon esprit au désert :
 D'ossements desséchés le sol était couvert ;
 J'approche en frissonnant, mais Jéhova me cria :
 Si je parle à ces os, reprendront ils la vie ?
 —Eternel tu le sais—Eh bien ! dit le Seigneur,
 Ecoute mes accents ; retiens les, et dis-leur :
 Ossements desséchés, insensible poussière,
 Levez-vous ! recevez l'esprit et la lumière !
 Que vos membres épars s'assemblent à ma voix !
 Que l'esprit vous anime une seconde fois !
 Qu'entre vos os flétris vos muscles se replacent !
 Que votre sang circule et vos nerfs s'entrelacent !
 Levez-vous et vivez, et voyez qui je suis !
 J'écoutai le Seigneur, j'obéis et je dis :
 Esprit, soufflez sur eux, du couchant, de l'aurore,
 Soufflez de l'aquilon, soufflez ! . . . Pressés d'éclore,
 Ces restes du tombeau, réveillés par mes cris,
 Entre-choquent soudain leurs ossements flétris ;
 Aux clartés du soleil leur paupière se rouvre,
 Leurs os sont rassemblés et la chair les recouvre !
 Et ce champ de la mort tout entier se leva,
 Redevint un grand peuple, et connut Jéhova !

² Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament*, vol. ii., p. 395 ; Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1875.

souls of the righteous as well as those of the wicked descended to that underground abode, could not bring themselves to believe that God would allow so many noble martyrs who had died for his glory to remain there for ever in the company of renegades and pagans, and so they arrived at the idea of the resurrection of the body.¹

That which up to this time had been only a subject of speculation for doctors of the law sprang into new life, becoming a hope for the oppressed, and an encouragement for those who were fighting for the cause of God.²

To affirm the resurrection of the body was an ingenious method of solving the difficulty which for so long a time had troubled the consciences of Israelites, without denying any part of the ancient Mosaic faith. Moses had said in effect: "Man receives his reward upon earth." Every day this promise was being falsified by the facts. The just died without having received that which he had deserved. Israelitish warriors fell in crowds bearing arms for the sacred cause of Jehovah, one mother and her seven sons had perished martyrs for their faith, and for them would all be over? Nay, these heroes shall live again. Their existence has not come to an end: they will come forth living from their tombs when the Messiah shall appear; they shall be present on the day of his coming, and along with us who still live shall share in the coming glory.³

The full solution of the enigma can only be furnished by the participation of the righteous who have departed in faith, in the promises of God, the redemption of their nation, and the consummation of that kingdom of God for which they waited.⁴

The prophecy of Daniel satisfied these demands of heart and faith. In the twelfth chapter the resurrection of the righteous is announced very positively: "Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. . . . And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that have taught righteousness to the multitude as the stars for ever and ever." The book ends with the promise given to Daniel of his own resurrection: "Go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

¹ Bruston, *art. cit.*, p. 229.

² Nicolas, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

³ Ed. Stapfer, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

⁴ Oehler, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., pp. 392, 393.

IX.

Not having been able to find in the Old Testament a single direct proof of a native and compulsory immortality, the partizans of the traditional dogma have fallen back upon indirect proofs. Out of twenty-three thousand two hundred and five verses they quote four which, as they claim, "imply" an inalienable immortality. We shall shortly have to study these four implications; but at this point, seeing the general tenour of the Scriptures of the Old Covenant, we can already affirm that the doctrine of eternal torments has been foisted upon the Old Testament. Nowhere at all in these classic books of Israelitish literature do we find the interminable tortures of the Tartarus of pagan mythologies, of the Koran, or of ecclesiastical tradition. Brought to the touchstone of the moral consciousness, this unequalled collection of documents issues victoriously from its trial. Its eschatology, sober and majestic, contains not a notion degrading to the divinity, nothing to revolt the moral sense.

The anger of Jehovah is not eternal; his mercy endureth for ever. No other declaration occurs so often. And what a contrast there is between the lusts of the heroes of profane antiquity, such as Achilles and Ulysses, lions and foxes, who in Hades dream only of new combats, stratagems, massacres, and pillages, and the aspirations of men like Enoch, Moses, David, and Isaiah! The ideal of these Israelites is to unite themselves to the God who forgives, to the God who indited the Decalogue, and who gives liberally an eternal life to the faithful observers of his holy law. This ideal is like a golden thread binding together the writings of the canonical collection. Is not this phenomenon unique, and well worth the attention of the disciples of the moral consciousness?

X.

Dispersed abroad as a result of the wars waged for the possession of their country, the Israelites propagated their beliefs everywhere, and made numerous proselytes; but they could not entirely protect themselves from the operation of influences which in turn permeated and perverted their doc-

trines. The Jews in Egypt in particular became partizans of the immortality of the soul. As M. Nicolas has said: "There is no doubt as to the origin of their doctrine; it came directly from Plato, in whom alone it is found surrounded by the same accessories and expounded in the same terms as in Philo."¹

On the other hand, the materialism of Epicurus had also its representatives in the Israelitish community. The Sadducean party denied all future life. The prospect of nothingness beyond death was, however, not one likely to become popular among those whose children were called upon to die in the flower of their age for the defence of the country. Thus it was the contrary doctrine of the Pharisees that eventually prevailed. In the reaction against Sadduceeism, some Pharisees sought support in the doctrine of the Alexandrine Jews, and, like them, became Platonists, if we may believe Josephus, who was himself a Platonist, and has been reproached with clothing Jewish ideas in a Greek garb. Gradually, at least outside Palestine, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and that of the resurrection became united, producing a hybrid compound of contradictory opinions.

On all these questions a general lack of precision prevailed, which was afterwards inherited by Christianity. At the present time this vagueness still exists. Like the Essene, the Christian thinks that death is a deliverance, and that the immortal soul goes direct to heaven at death. To this faith in the immortality of the soul he adds faith in a resurrection to come. The soul will hereafter be invested with a glorified body. With the Pharisee he believes in the resurrection of the body, with the Essene in the liberation of the soul in death, and he finds it difficult to reconcile these two beliefs.²

XI.

By a truly extraordinary immunity the canonical books of the Old Testament show no undeniable traces of the influence of Platonic doctrines; this influence is, however, evident in many of the extra-canonical books.³ Nevertheless, we believe

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 320.—Born at Alexandria about 30 B.C., Philo endeavoured to reconcile the Platonic doctrines with the religion of the Israelites. He was called in the schools the Jewish Plato.

² Ed. Stapfer, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

³ M. Henri Bois, Lic. ès lettres and doctor in theology, has just published

that the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic books, both Jewish and Judeo-Christian, are yet to a large extent Conditionalist. Although they carry no authority in the Synagogue, we will quote a few extracts :

The Most High has made this world for many, but the world to come for few. . . . Like as the husbandman's seed perisheth, if it come not up and receive not thy rain in due season, or if there come too much rain and corrupt it : even so perisheth man also.¹

Evil shall be put out, and deceit shall be quenched . . . corruption shall be overcome.²

Sinners will remain in Sheol the prey of eternal death, and will have disappeared in the day when God shall have pity on the faithful.³

The wicked will be as they were before their creation.⁴

Some there be which have no memorial, who are perished as though they had never been.⁵

The righteous will continue to exist after the destruction of the wicked and of their evil works. Their life will be as long as that of the patriarchs, and the number of their children shall mount up to a thousand.⁶

The impious who deny immortality will be deprived of that which they deny ; their souls will perish. . . . The wicked is consumed in his wickedness.⁷

They shall end by extinction ; an eternal fire will consume them . . . for those who have slandered the only and eternal God could not continue for ever to exist.⁸

The author of the second book of Enoch is the first to teach a simultaneous resurrection of all men, believers and unbelievers, heathen and Israelite. The second book of Maccabees also teaches a resurrection of the wicked, but apparently limits it to the unfaithful Israelites :

a book which supports these conclusions ; it is entitled : *Essai sur les origines de la philosophie judéo-alexandrine*, Paris, Fischbacher, 1890. See in *Supplement* No. VII. some passages from this book on the apocryphal books of the Old Testament.

¹ 2 Esdras viii. 1, 43, 44.

² *Ibid.*, vi. 27, 28 ; viii. 53, *sq.* ; ix. and xiii., *passim*.

³ Psalms of Solomon xiv. 6 ; xiii. 10 ; iii. 14 ; ii. 35 ; ix. 9 ; xv. 13.

⁴ Assumption of Isaiah iv. 18, 38.

⁵ Eccles xliv. 9.

⁶ Enoch x. 17 ; xxv. 6 ; xii. 13 ; cviii. 3 ; iii. 13 ; xcix. 6.

⁷ Wisdom of Solomon i. 11-16 ; v. 13, *sq.* Cf. iii. 10 ; iv. 19, *sq.*

⁸ Clementines iii. 6.

As for thee, Antiochus, thou shalt have no resurrection to life. . . . Thou like a fury takest us out of this present life, but the king of the world shall raise us up who have died for his laws unto everlasting life.¹

XII.

Traditional orthodoxy has been accustomed to see in the Pharisees believers in the native and inalienable immortality of the human soul. This, however, is going rather too far. In fact, that doctrine never acquired full recognition at Jerusalem. The Pharisees were more nearly Pythagoreans; they believed in the reincorporation of souls.² Of Indian origin, adopted by the Magi of Chaldea, this opinion had been able to infiltrate itself among the Jewish people during their captivity in Babylon. Still, the heterodoxy of the Pharisees did not go so far as the Platonic heresy. They did not maintain the separate immortality of the soul, but, as the evangelist Luke tells us, the resurrection of the body.³

We shall presently see that the Talmud attests the accuracy of the sacred writer. It is here desirable to record the important testimony of the apostle Paul.⁴ A Pharisee, son of Pharisees, belonging to the strictest sect, Paul was the accomplished model of a party to which, notwithstanding certain reservations, he never ceased to belong. Before Claudius Lysias and the whole assembled Sanhedrin he declares: "I am a Pharisee."⁵ Still, far from admitting native immortality, Paul elsewhere declares that if Jesus has not been raised from the dead, those who have died in the Christian faith have "ceased to be."⁶ When the apostle wishes to cast an apple of

¹ 2 Macc. vii. 9, 14, 23, 36. Cf. xii. 43, 44, and Enoch xxii. 4.

² Indications of this tendency have been seen in John ix. 2: the man born blind suspected of having sinned before his birth; John i. 21, 25: "Art thou Elijah the prophet?" the question put to John the Baptist. Cf. Matt. xi. 14; xvi. 14; xvii. 10, *sq.*, etc.

³ Acts xxiii. 6-8. Cf. xxvi. 5-8.—See with reference to the Pharisees: Ed. Montet, *Essai sur les origines des partis saducéen et pharisien*, 1883.

⁴ Paul, "nourished in the harem, knows its every turn," as M. Michel Weill has expressed it.

⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 18. Cf. *Critique religieuse*, April, 1882, p. 7; and for the meaning of *apôlonto*, the *Phædo* of Plato. In the Greek language in ordinary use there did not exist a stronger term for expressing that which we are accustomed in conversation to call annihilation. "What," exclaimed Socrates, "a soul created with all these advantages would no sooner have

discord among his accusers, it is still of resurrection that he speaks, not of immortality. The animosity between Pharisees and Sadducees was so keen on this point that several scribes at once began to defend the apostle, and the quarrel became so violent that the Roman officer had to put an end to the scene. Towards the end of his career the apostle of the Gentiles opposed the nascent heresy of native immortality by the declaration that "God only hath immortality."¹

Certain statements of Josephus have been quoted against us; but in relation to theology that historian is not to be depended upon. This has been generally recognized: his veracity is suspected, his works betray his duplicity, his declarations have but little value in matters relating to dogma. He gives us notions that are quite erroneous about the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. The parallel that he draws between their doctrines and the Greek philosophies has no solid foundation.²

Decidedly, on the subject now before us, the authority of Josephus is too unsatisfactory. When a quarter only of the number of authors of repute who have doubted his testimony shall have spoken in his favour, it will be time to think of giving him our confidence. Meanwhile, let us pass to the Talmud.

XIII.

The Talmud consists of two collections, the Mishna and the Gemara. The Mishna, a collection of the "oral law," speaks neither of native immortality nor of eternal torments. The

quitted the body than it would be dissipated and *annihilated*, as most men believe!" *Diaphephusetai kai apolôlen hôs phasin hoi polloi anthrôpoi*, § 29. Cf. §§ 68, 129, 130, 143, 145.—See also Chapter XI. of this work.

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 16.—The word *athanasian* seems to have been chosen with a view to those who, even in our own day, argue that God only hath eternity (*aidiotes*) or incorruptibility (*aphtharsia*), but that he has shared his immortality with his creatures, angels or men.

² *Dictionnaire* of Bouillet; Jost, *Histoire du judaïsme*; Dr. Adler; Ed. Stapfer, *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*. Dr. Pocock, Archbishop Usher, Bishop Warburton, Mosheim, Bretschneider, Prof. Hamburger, Chief Rabbi Kaeuffer, Dr. Kitto, Boettcher, Hilgenfeld, Drs. Marks, Ewald, Traill, Farrar, Hermann Schultz, Schürer, Messrs. Aug. Bost, Aug. Sabatier, E. Montet, Philarette Chasles, are unanimous in their want of confidence in this historian.

chastisement of the wicked consists in their absolute extermination at the last judgement, in the "annihilation of the sinful soul."¹ The Gemara gives a commentary on the Mishna: "The true sinners in Israel and the true sinners of other nations go down to hell and are judged during twelve months. After these twelve months their body is destroyed, their soul is burnt, and a spirit disperses them under the feet of the judges, for it is said: 'And the essence of the wicked shall become dust under the soles of their feet.'"² Rabbi Simon ben Lakisch has said: "In the future there will be no Gehenna, for the wicked shall be as chaff, and the day that is coming will devour them."

According to the Talmud, the existence of the soul and the body is only a conditional loan to every human being. It is true that in his great work on "Judaism, its Dogmas and its Mission" (*Judaïsme, ses dogmes et sa mission*), the Chief Rabbi Weill mentions a Doctor who is said to have taught an absolute immortality, but he does not give his name; this solitary anonymous Doctor certainly would make a poor show as an opposing minority. One of the most celebrated Talmudists of our time, the late Emmanuel Deutsch,³ declared that according to the Talmud the chastisement of the greatest sinners is temporary. In this vast collection of twenty folio volumes one single passage would seem to be in favour of the doctrine of eternal torments; but it is of relatively recent date, and not at all decisive. This is it: "The impious will descend into Gehenna, and will there be judged from generation to generation." In this passage there is nothing that goes beyond the scope of certain texts of Scripture which relate evidently to temporal punishments, as, for example, the desolation of the land of Edom, which also is to endure "from generation to generation."⁴ The meaning would seem to be this: A sentence eternal in its effects will be pronounced upon the impious, who will be for ever destroyed.

¹ *Sanhed.* xi. 2, 3; *Rosch Hashahanah*, 17a. It is the punishment of *Kareth*, a cutting off.—Joseph Cohen, *Les Pharisiens*, vol. ii., p. 448.

² Alex. Weill, *Moïse et le Talmud*, p. 244, sq. *Abodah zarah*, iii. 2; iv. 1.

³ The *Revue théologique* in 1877 published an extract from his famous treatise on the Talmud. See particularly pp. 162 and 170.

⁴ Isa. xxxiv. 10.

“The Rabbis regarded the total annihilation of the soul as the supreme chastisement; that is a point upon which there can be no doubt.”¹

The Rev. A. Dewes, D.D. and Ph.D., has made a deep and detailed investigation of this precise point. He has compared the result of his own researches with the works of Lightfoot, Schoettgen, Buxtorf, Castell, Schindler, Glass, Bartolucci, Ugolino, Nork, Fritsch, and Eisenmenger. His conclusions agree with those of the learned Deutsch.²

In his *Talmudic Dictionary*, Dr. Hamburger thus expresses his view :

The Talmud adheres strictly to the biblical doctrine of immortality, rejecting categorically, on the one hand, the opinion that denies all immortality, and, on the other hand, that which makes immortality a consequence of the nature of the soul, as though that were of divine essence. The Doctors of the Talmud have declared formally against the eternity of torments.³

If the patience of our indulgent readers would permit, we could quote also the equally definite statements of Drs. Benisch and Phillipson, of the Rabbis Marks, Adler, Löwe, and Chief Rabbi Mossé, of Avignon; but we will content ourselves with the declaration of Chief Rabbi Michel Weill: “Nothing seems more incompatible with the true biblical tradition than an eternity of suffering and chastisement.”⁴

¹ *L'immortalité de l'âme chez les Juifs*, by Dr. G. Brecher, translated into French by Isidore Cahen, p. 99; Paris, 1857.

² See S. Cox, *Salvator Mundi*, London, 1877.—Dr. Farrar has examined the works of various other learned authors, and has arrived at the same result.

³ Articles *Hölle* and *Unsterblichkeit*.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 590.—In support of these affirmations we quote a few texts taken from what may be called the main current of talmudic and post-talmudic teaching :

“It is the possession of the holy spirit which leads to immortality.”—*Abodah zarah*, xx. 6.

“The resurrection from among the dead is the portion only of the righteous. How could the impious live again, since even in life they are dead?”—*Sanhedrin*, § 10.

“The day of resurrection is the portion of the righteous only.”—*Taanith*, 7a; *Bereschith rabbah*, 13.

The *Pirke Eliezer* admit (c. 34) a resurrection of the heathen, but say that the heathen who rise again do not remain in life; they sink back into death. Thus the resurrection of the dead, according to the Jewish theology,

Following the example of the mediæval ecclesiastical doctors and the later Rabbis of the Talmud, the Gaon Saadiah in the tenth century and Albo in the fifteenth taught eternal torments; but they limit the number of victims to an almost impalpable minimum of monstrous sinners. Yet Albo has a glimpse of a final amelioration of their lot, and Saadiah protests against the idea of native immortality.

It may, perhaps, be asserted that the Talmud is mainly Universalist. If that be so, it would have taken for granted an indefeasible immortality. Even that view cannot, however, be sustained. Dr. Farrar, himself an advocate of eternal hope, has admitted it. He devotes sixty pages to Jewish Eschatology, and this is his conclusion :

is the definitive appanage of those who are to have a part in the kingdom of God. As for those who fall into Gehenna, their lot is first suffering and finally complete annihilation, the second death from which there is no return.

"The enemies of Israel who will come under the leadership of Gog will be immediately consumed by the burning up of their souls. They will not get away from Gehinnom, but will there be destroyed."—*Targ. Jerem.* on Numb. xi. 26.

"The generation of the deluge will have no part in the future life, and will not even appear at the universal judgement, being already annihilated. The inhabitants of Sodom, on the contrary, will be present at the last judgement, for they are not yet destroyed."—*Sanhedrin*, x. 3.

"As the cattle slain by the butcher have no renewal of life, so the impious will be definitively destroyed."—*Kohel. rabbah*, 69b.

"The fire will destroy them little by little, beginning with the ears."—*Kethuboth*, 5b.—This strange detail has a symbolic meaning. Vinet, a deep thinker, spoke of souls rendered by sin *incapable of hearing*, and apparently lost to all sense of their own *identity*. See *ante*, p. 62, and *Supplement* No. III.

"The souls of the wicked will be ignominiously destroyed as well as their bodies; they will have neither immortality nor eternity."—*Summary of the Faith*, ch. 24.

"The bodies of the wicked will be destroyed a second time; it is the second death."—*Targum of Jonathan*, on Isa. lxxv. 5, and Jer. li. 39, 57.

"The wicked will live no more in the world to come; they will be consumed in the smoke of Gehenna."—*Targum of Jonathan*, Psa. xxxvii. 20.

"The chastisement will last twelve months, therefore did Noah remain one year in the ark."—*Abodah zarah*, i.; *Edaioth*, ii.

"Rabbi Acha asks whether there is any hope for those who have laid violent hands on the temple of the Lord. Answer: They will be neither damned nor saved; their sleep will be eternal, according to the word of the prophets."—*Targum of Jonathan*, on Jer. li. 57.

"After the last judgement Gehenna will exist no more."—*Asarah maamaroth*, 85; *Nedarim*, viii.; *Abodah zarah*, iii.; *Midrash rabbah*, i. 30, etc.

Generally, it may be stated with confidence that the Rabbinic opinion was that of Abarbanel, that the soul would only be punished in Gehenna for a time proportionate to the extent of its faults; and it is in accordance with this belief, and that in annihilation as being "the second death," that we must interpret the passages which are sometimes adduced from the Targums of Jonathan and Onkelos, and from various parts of the book of Enoch.¹

In short, according to the great majority of Rabbis, Gehenna designates generally a brief chastisement followed by pardon. For great sinners the chastisement will be prolonged; for the worst criminals the chastisement will finally be either commuted or followed by complete annihilation. The Rabbis who have spoken of endless torments are very few, and the scope of their declarations is frequently contestable.²

XIV.

Maimonides is a modern Rabbi who has formulated with unequalled authority the teaching of the Synagogue. The Jews have called him the eagle of the Rabbis and their second Moses. His confession of faith, in fact, occupies in the Synagogue a position similar to that of the Apostles' Creed in the Churches of Christendom, since every Jew is expected to repeat it daily. The Israelite who should call in question any one of the thirteen articles of this creed would be under the stroke of excommunication, and would lose all share in the age to come. Here is the declaration of Maimonides on the point in question:

The punishment that awaits the evil man is that he will have no part

¹ *Eternal Hope*, Excursus v. Cf. *Mercy and Judgement*, London, 1881. This last volume is a reply to Dr. Pusey.

² This seems to be the case with the single quotation by Dr. Ferd. Weber in support of this assertion in his book: "Neither are passages wanting which relate to eternal torments." The author quotes only *Pesachim*, 54a: "The fire of Gehenna never goes out." But we shall soon have occasion to see that even in the Bible "unquenchable fire" indicates a temporary fire, as, for example, the burning of Bozrah (Isa. xxxiv. 10, *sq.*). We note that Weber's paragraph as to the assertion of eternal torments contains only five lines, while whole pages are devoted to what might be called the Conditionalism of the ancient Synagogue.—F. Weber, *System der altsynagogalen palästinischen Theologie aus Targum, Midrasch und Talmud*, pp. xi., xxxiv., 76, 190, 215, 326, 374, *sq.*, 380, etc.

in eternal life. He will die, and will be completely destroyed. He will not live for ever, he will perish with his wickedness like the brute ; it is a death from which there is no return. The reward of the righteous will consist in this, that they will be joyful and will exist, while the retribution of the wicked will be to be deprived of the future life.¹

The doctrines of Maimonides are accepted by Simon ben Lakisch, Jehudah bar Elaï, Jarchi, David Kimchi, Manasseh ben Israel. In all Judaism there are no higher authorities.

Chief Rabbi Wertheimer has in a few words summed up the Jewish view in a lesson given in the University of Geneva. According to him, "the principle of the immortality of the human soul has been, is, and always will be, rejected by the Semites, because for them God is all."

We have consulted in vain Weber's work, those of Wünsche, Gfrörer, Gröbler, Hausrath, Schultz, Kleinert, Spiess, Wogue, Jost, Ewald, Weizel, Alger, Edersheim, etc. In none of these authors have we found anything to invalidate our view of the case. On the other hand, we have gathered quite a harvest of supplementary proofs.

It is with regret that we have to state that the truth on this point has been perceived by a sceptical scholar better than by many orthodox professors, who are still running in the Platonic ruts. M. Renan shall speak for himself:

When an Israelite, travelling through Egypt, visited the royal catacombs of Thebes, the Memnonia, the underground vaults of the Serapeum—those abodes of the dead so much superior to those of the living—the sentiment uppermost in his mind was the pity inspired by the view of the absurd. To him God would then appear great, unique, laughing at men and their follies. In his eyes, the chief of those follies was the pretension to immortality. "God alone endures," such has always been the fundamental basis of the semitic and monotheistic theology. Man is a transitory being, and the worst act of his pride would be to make himself equal to God by attributing to himself eternity. The Pharaoh who built pyramids for himself in prospect of an indefinite existence, far from being considered by the wise Israelite as a religious man, appeared to him to be impious. The belief in immortality seemed to him not merely not pious, but in opposition to God and to sound sense. The people believed in *rephaim*—ghosts ;

¹ *Of Repentance*, ch. viii. Edition of Dr. Clavering, Oxford, 1705.

there were sorcerers and sorceresses who pretended to invoke these shades and make them speak. If the wise men of Israel had allowed it, the people with their Sheol and their *rephaim* would have created a hell and a mythology like all the other peoples. But the wise men were strong enough to stifle these dreams at their birth. "In Sheol there is neither feeling, nor knowledge, nor vision, the *rephaim* are nothing."—One being alone exists eternally, that is, God. Man is a creature essentially mortal. . . . The idea of an infinite destiny for man never enters the Jewish mind. . . . The Christian hope is at first only a reign of a thousand years. . . . With Greek philosophy the dogma of the immortality of the soul was introduced into the Church, and was associated, not very happily, with that of the resurrection of the body. . . . It is to be observed that the first Christian teachers who tried to amalgamate Christianity with Greek philosophy—St. Justin and Tatian—have no belief in the eternity of the soul. For them the soul is essentially mortal. God makes it immortal as a favour, by a sort of miracle. It should be noted that Justin and Tatian were both Syrians.¹

On this question the erudite freethinker is in accord with the unflinching promoter of Plymouth Brethrenism. In his book entitled *Hopes of the Church*, Mr. J. N. Darby says:

I would express the conviction that the idea of the *immortality of the soul* . . . is not in general a gospel topic; that it comes, on the contrary, from the Platonists; and that it was just when the coming of Christ was denied in the Church, or at least began to be lost sight of, that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul came in to replace that of the resurrection. This was about the time of Origen.²

XV.

Some writers have erred through confounding the Talmud with the Kabbalah, as though these two records were but one, or as though they both were of equal value.³ This confusion

¹ *L'Ecclésiaste*, 29; Paris, 1882.

² *Works, Prophetic*, vol. i., p. 463. London: Geo. Morrish, 24, Warwick Lane, 1866. See also the letters of J. Salvador, published in *Le Temps* newspaper (*Union chrétienne*, June, 1882).

³ This word might be spelt Qabbalah, in accordance with the reasonable system of transcription adopted by Prof. Reuss; the original comes from the verb *qābal*, pihel *qibbel*, to receive by transmission, speaking of a doctrine. The Kabbalah was a traditional doctrine, which was received under the seal of secrecy. By enveloping themselves in mystery the

exists, for example, in the *Judaism Unveiled* of Eisenmenger,¹ and it reappears in an article by M. George Godet on *The Chastisement to Come*.²

Eisenmenger being an anti-Semite, all was fish that came to his net. He found in the Kabbalah arms wherewith to oppose Judaism, and did not care to enter into a distinction which would have weakened the force of his attacks. M. George Godet, being an anti-Conditionalist, and ascribing his own point of view to *the great majority of Rabbis*, has faithfully followed in the steps of his guide, without noticing that the majority of the quotations that he borrows from Eisenmenger have very little value. The Kabbalah, in fact, is not acknowledged as an authority in the Synagogue. As the learned Munk says:

The whole system could only arise under the influence of the Jewish schools of Alexandria, where the doctrine of Pythagoras and that of Plato were combined with oriental philosophical modes of reasoning. . . . The speculative Kabbalah presents to us a complete mythology . . . it departs altogether from the Mosaic doctrine and results in pantheism.³

So also M. Ad. Franck. He says:

Let us not be deceived; the Kabbalah is pantheistic. . . . It is not only by their psychology, but also by their whole system, that the authors of the *Zohar* often remind us of Plato's philosophy.⁴

M. Franck thinks that the materials of the Kabbalah were taken from the theology of the ancient Parsees; other

Kabbalist doctors attained a double object: they stimulated the curiosity of their scholars, and they protected themselves against the persecution which might have affected them even in the bosom of the Synagogue, their system being in its essence a pantheistic heresy and a true gnosticism.

M. Ad. Franck has devoted to this obscure subject a remarkable volume: *La Kabbale*, Paris, 1843. A second edition has just been issued.—See also: *Dissertation sur la Kabbale*, by A. F. Petavel, Neuchâtel, 1848. A page of this work is quoted in the *Supplément* No. VIII., under the title: *Pretensions of the Kabbalists*.

¹ *Entdecktes Judenthum*, Frankfort, 1700.

² *Chrétien évangélique*, 20 Dec., 1882.

³ *La Palestine*, p. 519, sq.; and *Dictionnaire de la conversation*, at the word *Cabale*.

⁴ *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, at the word *Kabbale*.

scholars believe that the system is of neo-Platonic origin; but all are agreed as to the pantheistic character of the Kabbalah.

It is not in the Talmud, but in the Kabbalistic writings, that are to be found the heterodox assertions concerning the human soul: that, being itself a part of the divinity, a divine substance or spark, it must for ever exist, etc.¹

From the standpoint of the Kabbalah, the soul is not a creation, but an emanation of the Divinity; therefore every human soul is both pre-existent and imperishable by nature. The doctrine of eternal torments flowed naturally from this *à priori*. The same principle might equally lead to the doctrine of universal salvation; that depends upon the disposition of the doctor, optimist or pessimist. Both these consequences have been maintained by Kabbalists. Thus the book of the *Zohar* develops the hypothesis of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, which are supposed eventually all to return into and form part of the universal soul.

Some celebrated rabbis have been reckoned among the Kabbalists. It is none the less true, however, that to confound and quote indiscriminately Talmud and Kabbalah is very much like reckoning the gnostics Marcion and Valentinian among the Fathers of the Church. It is like taking a parasitic plant for a branch of the vine of Israel. Every river has its back currents. Certain rabbis have Platonized; but if in the history of the Israelite theology the central current be carefully followed, it will be evident that on the point in question the official teaching has remained generally faithful to the true biblical tradition.²

XVI.

In any case, says M. Auguste Sabatier, the idea of the Catholic hell and eternal torments does not belong to Hebraism. As the Hebrews did not ascribe to the soul an essential indestructibility, but, on the contrary, regarded it as essentially mortal, there was in Hebraism no basis for the doctrine of an eternal hell, which from this point of view

¹ Hamburger, *Realencyklopädie für Bibel und Talmud*; Articles, *Unsterblichkeit der Seele, Hölle, Kabbalah*, *passim*.

² In the important work before quoted, on the *Theology of the Ancient Synagogues of Palestine*, Dr. Weber does not admit the Kabbalah nor the apocryphal books among his sources of information. See his *Introduction*.

would have no reason for existence. Jehovah restores life to the wicked in order that they may be judged and punished ; but when once the sentence is declared and the punishment endured the wicked disappear.

This appears in the peculiar doctrine of Rabbi Akibah. Was it not also the doctrine of St. Paul, who, while admitting a final judgement for all men,¹ goes on to describe the defeat and utter destruction of all the enemies of God, even to the death of death itself, and proclaims that in the end "God will be all, in all"²? Is it not also to the same order of ideas that belongs the notion so strange of the "second death," the supreme death, which often reappears in the Apocalypse of St. John? We can then affirm that the eschatological dualism of an eternal hell and an eternal paradise is entirely outside the lines of pure Hebraism. This final dualism supposes at the beginning a metaphysical dualism of two eternal and incompatible principles, which is also utterly foreign to the Hebrew intuition. A theology which derives everything from a single principle, from God alone, can only conceive of evil as an accident, and cannot possibly issue in an eternal dualism. There is a necessary correspondence between the principle of absolute creation and the complete restoration of all things. No longer, then, let Hebraism, nor even authentic Christianity, be accused of having invented an eternal hell and imposed upon the world that horrible nightmare. Hell is of Aryan origin, not Semitic ; it is a remnant of paganism, which the Church mistakenly adopted and has too long retained.

We have, then, reason for saying that, notwithstanding all infiltrations of Greek thought, Palestinian Judaism has maintained anthropological views radically different from Platonic anthropology, and has maintained them precisely in that doctrine of bodily resurrection which has been so awkwardly amalgamated by ecclesiastical theology with that of the immortality of the soul.³

¹ 2 Cor. v. 10.

² 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.

³ *Mémoire sur la notion hébraïque de l'esprit*, p. 29, sq. Paris, Fischbacher, 1879. This essay has a quasi-official value ; it forms part of a publication by the Faculty of Protestant theology of Paris, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the professorship of M. Reuss.—The *Journal de Genève*, of 10 Oct. in the same year, published a review of this *Mémoire*, which also contains an adhesion to some of our principles. It is from the pen of M. Lucien Gautier, professor of Hebrew in the theological Faculty of the Free Church in Lausanne. M. Gautier says :

"It remains for us to indicate the importance of this new theory in relation to various doctrines, that of inspiration for example, and in relation to the eschatological beliefs of the Christian Church. M. Sabatier, in fact, shows

Let us conclude. Taken as a whole, the Synagogue has remained faithful to the eschatology of the Old Testament. The Israelites are in principle Conditionalists. Their great mistake has been in refusing to recognize in Jesus the supreme *condition* and the mediator of life eternal. By his resurrection the Christ has illuminated the grave; the hope of the Israelites is but an uncertain glimmer. Many Christians salute with joy the advent of death; sometimes their countenance is radiant even after they have breathed their last sigh. But has a Jew ever been seen impatient to leave this world in order to enter into the divine abode? Not possessing the earnest of the celestial inheritance, the Jews seem not to reckon much upon paradise; hence naturally arises an exclusive attachment to the good things of this world. Judaism presents the melancholy spectacle of an unfinished temple; its ruined walls attest the fatal lack of a covering. We shall find in the Gospel the crowning of the edifice.

that in the formation of these beliefs there was a double current, a double series of factors, one coming from Greece and the pagan world, the other from biblical sources. It is to the Greek influence that is to be assigned, amongst others, the origin of hell, the place of eternal punishments. And, more important still, while Greek psychology admitted the immortality of individual souls as a guarantee of the future life, the Hebrew psychology finds that guarantee in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, made alive again by the gift of the divine Spirit. From the conjunction of these two incongruous conceptions has resulted a dualism, an internal contradiction, which exegesis and theological speculation ought to endeavour to replace by a simpler doctrine resting on better foundations."

CHAPTER IV.

IMMORTALITY ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- I. The immortalization of man by means of faith in Jesus Christ, the principal aim of the New Testament writings—II. With a scope beyond the horizon of the Old Testament, the question already raised comes up again : What do the biblical writers mean by the words *life* and *death*?—III. We maintain the literal and primarily ontological meaning of these terms—IV. Declarations of some of the most esteemed Commentators—V. Teaching of Jesus in relation to immortality—VI. Study of his favourite maxim—VII. Accordant teaching of the apostles—VIII. Preliminary reply to two categories of objections—IX. Profession of faith drawn from the whole body of biblical writings.

I.

IMMORTALITY, which in the Old Testament is conditional, is conditional also in the New. The Gospel adopts the teaching of Moses and the prophets, giving it precision and completion. In so doing it borrows the terms which are used in the Septuagint translation to represent the corresponding Hebrew words. The Alexandrine version thus forming the connection between the two Testaments, the biblical doctrine is, as it were, firmly clenched.

The New Testament has nothing to say about a native and inalienable immortality. This silence is not without meaning, for the Scripture takes care to teach the most elementary religious truths, proclaiming even those which might be taken for granted, as, for example, the eternity of God.¹ If Providence is not named, there is no lack of texts in favour of that doctrine; but as regards native immortality, neither the word nor the thing can be found.²

¹ Deut. xxxii. 40 ; Rom. xvi. 26.

² One of the latest champions of the traditional dogma in America explains this absence by saying that if there had been favourable texts the Conditionalists would have contested their genuineness. *Life and Death*

In both Testaments immortality appears as the result of a personal faith in the personal and living God: the redeemed righteous shall live; the obstinate sinners shall be for ever destroyed.¹ Still, the horizon becomes wider; the new Testament prolongs the lines; it clearly extends to the future life the temporal promises and threatenings of the Old Testament. The eternity of life and the eternity of non-existence, veiled under the Old Covenant, are revealed and made prominent in the New.

Jesus upholds the conditions of immortalization. To one who asks of him how to obtain eternal life, he answers, like Moses: "Do this, fulfil the law, and thou shalt live."² Man becomes immortal by righteousness; but (and this is a new fact) Jesus offers in his own person the only bridge whereby a man may attain to righteousness. His expiatory death gives us the assurance of divine pardon, and an imperishable life becomes the portion of everyone who unites himself to Jesus by faith. Such, as it seems to us, is the fundamental thought of the New Testament, the precise aim of the Gospel. "These things are written," we read in the Gospel of John, "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that believing ye may have life."³ In this passage the word *life* is used in its full force; it is *active existence*, normal, pure, happy, and also perpetual, because not poisoned by sin. That life alone is imperishable.

II.

Here again, as at the outset of our study of the Old Testament, traditional exegesis cries "Halt!" Put aside, it says, the rudimentary notions of existence and duration; the life promised in the New Testament bears a mystic meaning synonymous with eternal happiness and holiness. Deprived of this mystic life, the wicked may still exist, and even exist

Eternal, by S. Bartlett, p. 50.—In despair of his cause, this author seems to have acted upon the rule said to prevail among the lawyers at the Old Bailey: "If you have no good argument, abuse the opponent's attorney."

¹ 2 Thess. i. 9; cf. Ps. xcii. 9.

² Luke x. 28; Lev. xviii. 5.

³ John xx. 31.

for ever. Without having life eternal, they may yet possess an interminable life.

Truly, if the definition thus put forth in opposition to us were well founded, it would undermine the very basis of Conditionalism. But we are well prepared to meet the objection. We have to oppose it with that which in a deliberative assembly would be called a motion to order, an appeal to the rules. The principle which is held to govern all discussion among Protestants—we may say even among philologists—in the study of the texts is, as we have seen, the historico-grammatical interpretation. By virtue of this principle, the proper and usual meaning of words has the precedence of all other meanings. Unhappily, without being aware of it, Protestantism has been unfaithful to the principle upon which it is founded. In relation to these most important notions, *life* and *death*, it has followed in the wake of the Roman Church, which has distorted, falsified, and mutilated the teaching of the Scriptures. Brought to book, there is only one thing for Protestantism to do: to recognize its inconsistency, and so to re-establish the meaning of the terms in question, otherwise it will shamefully deny itself.

III.

Meanwhile we maintain that *life* in the New Testament signifies specifically not happiness, nor holiness, nor anything else, but simply *life*; that is to say, in relation to man, the existence of a conscient individual, capable both of thinking and acting. By *death* we understand the contrary of life: the deprivation of all sentiment, the end of all activity, the extinction of all individual faculties. Death without any restriction, expressed or understood, death absolute, sometimes called second death, will be the definitive and complete cessation of life as just described.

There are in Greek, as well as in French and English, plenty of words to express *happiness*. In French we have counted more than a dozen, and Greek is no less rich. There are even more words to express the notion of *misery*, to convey which the term *death* is supposed to be used. Human lan-

guages are only too fertile in vocables expressive of the idea of suffering. Death and life, on the contrary, are without synonyms; a further reason for leaving to these terms their proper meaning, which no other expression can convey without periphrase.

Strong in the principle which furnishes a basis for Protestantism and biblical philology, we take our stand upon the literal meaning as in a citadel. In order to drive us out of it, our opponents have but one way of access: to prove that the adoption of that meaning leads, in this connection, to absurd consequences. It is, of course, necessary to take in a figurative sense those expressions which it would be ridiculous or contradictory to interpret literally. In such cases a tropical sense may, nay must, be substituted for the literal. In the Gospels, for instance, there are some hyperboles. Jesus directs us to turn the left cheek to the person who should strike us on the right. That is the letter. To one who smites him on the face he says: "Why smitest thou me?" That supplies the interpretation according to the spirit. But to pretend that, in order to hold to the spirit, we must habitually take a meaning precisely opposed to the letter, is to "change darkness into light and light into darkness, to make bitter that which is sweet and sweet that which is bitter." This would be the death and burial of exegesis.

With regard to the particular point now in question, by the admission that the soul can perish the representatives of the traditional dogma have, so to speak, cut the ground from under their feet.¹ If the soul can perish, it is not by nature immortal. If it is not by nature immortal, there is nothing absurd in saying that Jesus confers upon the soul first of all an immortality properly so called. There is nothing absurd in the act of conferring imperishability. But if the literal meaning here has nothing absurd in it, there is no alternative; that meaning must prevail, otherwise we forsake Protestantism; and more than that, we forsake the universally-recognized domain of philology, for "there is only one philology."

¹ Chap. II., sect. vi.—So, too, in the *Chrétien évangélique* of 20 Jan., 1881, p. 20. M. Geo. Godet, while combatting Conditionalism, subscribes to the conclusions of Lotze as to the contingency of all creatures, including human souls.—See *ante*, pp. 54 *sq.*, 70, and p. 82, note.

We have, therefore, full right to claim as in favour of Conditional Immortality all the texts in the New Testament in which it is said either directly or indirectly that Jesus is our *life*. We will not reproduce them; that would be to quote nearly the whole volume. We will take as a single example that classic passage which the British and Foreign Bible Society has had printed in three hundred different languages: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." In accordance with the rule to which we have appealed, this signifies that the believer, escaping the final and total destruction that awaits the impenitent sinner, acquires an imperishable life. This life will doubtless be holy and happy, considering the character of the God who gives it. In the widest sense of the word, in its full and emphatic sense, this life will be, as we have already indicated, perpetual existence in the normal developement of all human faculties, physical, intellectual, and moral health; the harmonious unfolding of all those gifts of which the germs have been implanted within us by the divine bounty. By the goodness of the Creator, every life is generally joyous in the measure in which it is normal. Nevertheless, in all life the notion of existence remains primary. Holiness and happiness are qualifications of life; there may be life without them, but the converse is impossible; life is a canvas, which they ought to beautify. No doubt a burning candle is flame and light, but it is in the first place a combustible. Let us, then, be careful not to put the attribute in the place of the subject, and always, in accordance with the rules of logic, to leave in the foreground that which is made prominent by the sacred text.¹

¹ No one will contest the ontological meaning of the word *life* in this passage: "As the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself" (John v. 26). It is here evidently first of all *existence* that is spoken of. In verse 21 of the same chapter it is said that the Son *giveth life* to whom he will; therefore, judging by the context, it is *existence* that the Son gives to the believers. But it is asked how the Son could give existence to those who already have it. We reply, that to perpetuate a life ephemeral in its nature, to infuse a new life into a creature about to perish, to fill with oil a lamp that is going out, in short, to revive the dead, is indeed to *give life* in the ontological sense.

In the subsequent chapter Jesus identifies again, and even more evidently,

The traditional interpretation is, in short, a usurper. Like a parasitic plant, it infests the field of exegesis. Happily some excellent Commentators have contended against it, directly or indirectly. We will proceed to record some of their declarations.

IV.

§ 1. We will begin by quoting Hermann Olshausen, one of the most eminent of those who in our century have laid down the laws of biblical interpretation. He says :

Kuinoël deserves severe blame for the superficial manner in which he explains the word *life*. He comments with incredible negligence on the words, "this life is in his Son,"¹ as though the meaning were that "happiness is given by his Son." It is evident that this false interpretation tends to weaken, and even to suppress, the true meaning of our holy books. . . .

Schleusner asserts that the word *life* has nine different meanings, but he seems to ignore its only true meaning. Wahl and Bretschneider march in the footsteps of Schleusner, and have nothing better to say. Their interpretations do violence to the sacred writers, by attributing to them modern opinions. Lücke and Seyffarth have shown much more penetration. There is no doubt that the eternal life cannot be unhappy, but in the New Testament life never has the meaning of happiness. *Life is the normal union of the forces which maintain the existence of the*

the ontological life that he receives with that which he transmits : "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me shall live because of me" (John vi. 57). The *as* and *so* suffice to prove that it is not here a question of happiness and holiness, but, firstly and fundamentally, of *life*, in its proper meaning of existence.

The principle that we lay down is that this fundamental meaning is never absent from the term in question. If Jesus elsewhere says, "This is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3), that knowledge is called life only by metonymy, and as the means of attaining the end. So also in the Old Testament : "There is death in the pot" (2 Kings iv. 40) ; *death* is used by metonymy for a *deadly poison*, the effect for the cause.

The same remark applies to that other saying of Jesus in the same Gospel (John xii. 50) : "His commandment is life eternal." This is again a metonymy, the cause put for the effect. Without metonymy this declaration might be paraphrased by saying that obedience to the commandment of the Father is a source of immortality. The ontological meaning remains unimpaired.

¹ 1 John v. 11.

living being. Death is the abnormal dislocation of these same forces. Applied to human nature, this definition will suffice to give us the true meaning of the word *life* in all the passages of the New Testament in which it is found.¹

§ 2. Professor Reuss could hardly misunderstand the ontological meaning of the term referred to. He says :

Life eternal is nothing else than that which is more simply called *life*, the adjective merely expressing the *indefinite duration of an existence* assured to the individual. . . . For a man to eat the flesh of the Son . . . signifies to have life in himself, a life *henceforth permanent . . . imperishable*.²

Such being the privilege of believers exclusively, it necessarily results that the life of the wicked will be transitory, perishable. Professor Reuss himself draws this inference :

When Paul says : "In Christ shall all be made alive," he cannot have in view all human beings in general, for the simple reason that they are not all in Christ. He means to say : All those who are in Christ will have life just because they are in Christ, who is the author and cause of that life *henceforth indestructible*. . . . The others pass through temporal death into death eternal.³

Are not these words of Professor Reuss decisive : *life henceforth indestructible* ? For eternal torments an indestructible life would be absolutely necessary ; the wicked not having such a life, how could there be for them eternal torments ? Let us remember that no such expression is applied to them in the Bible. Professor Reuss made use of it in a work published long ago ; but if we desire to observe the progress of his thought, we must take note of the much more recent affirmations that have just been quoted.⁴ As long ago as 1852 he wrote :

The notion of the indestructibility of the soul, of a continuity of life

¹ *Opuscula theologica*, viii. *De notione vocis ZOE in libris N.T.*

² *La Bible. Théologie johannique*, pp. 148, 188, 192.—We give notice once for all that here and in the following quotations the italics are ours.

³ *La Bible. Épîtres pauliniennes*, vol. i., p. 260. *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, vol. ii., p. 234. 1852.

⁴ In his explanation of 2 Thess. i. 9, Professor Reuss speaks of an *eternal damnation*. We should have no difficulty in admitting that expression, for, deprivation of life being clearly a punishment, a condemnation which makes it perpetual becomes an eternal punishment or damnation.

essentially inherent in the soul, all that which in philosophy we call immortality, is outside the circle of ideas in which apostolic theology moves. Incorruptibility, the quality of exemption from all decline, from all chance of death, properly belongs to God alone. None, therefore, but Christ, the image of God, could communicate to the world such a boon.¹

§ 3. Professor Frederic Godet is in agreement with Professor Reuss on this point. The well-known Neuchâtel professor declares that :

The life that Jesus Christ communicates to believers is not of a purely moral nature ; it is his complete life, *corporal as well as spiritual*. . . . When Jesus says : "I am the resurrection and the life," it is impossible to separate the moral from the physical meaning. . . . *Life* designates existence in its perfect state of prosperity. . . . But for some beings this developement is limited to the physical life, for others it extends to the intellectual and moral life. . . . John means to say that in union with the creative Word there was life, full life, perfect developement of *existence for each being* according to its capacity.²

§ 4. A lay theologian had preceded Professor Godet in this line of thought. M. Frederic de Rougemont has written :

All life, *physical and spiritual*, flows from God through the Word. . . . The eternal Word of God is the life of all created things ; it is in him that they subsist *physically and morally*, and it is by him that they are reborn to life after sin has put them to death physically and morally.³

§ 5. Let us now weigh the testimony of the venerable pastor to whom we owe the *New Testament Explained*, one of the most useful works of our French evangelical literature. It is M. Louis Bonnet who writes :

Life ought to be understood in its *universal* sense. The Scripture has no knowledge of the sterile notion of an immortality of the soul independent of the resurrection, and more especially of the renewal of our whole being . . . of the pagan idea of an immortality outside of

¹ Rom. i. 23 ; 1 Tim. i. 17 ; 2 Tim. i. 10.—*Histoire de la théologie chrétienne*, etc., vol. ii., p. 237, sq. 1852.

² *Commentaire sur l'Evangile de Jean*, vol. ii., pp. 130, 134, 333 ; vol. i., p. 156. Paris, 1864, 1865.

³ Notes inserted in a French translation by Clément de Faye of Trench's *Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 110 ; and in Olshausen's *Biblical Commentary upon the History of the Lord's Passion*, p. 245. Neuchâtel, 1845.

the life in God, and of a state of pure spirit. . . . Never does the Scripture teach the doctrine of an abstract immortality. This false spiritualism is as contrary to true philosophy as it is to the Gospel.¹

The principle clearly laid down, as by a common accord, by Messrs. Frederic Godet, Frederic de Rougemont, and Louis Bonnet, is of the highest value, and it should be urged to its legitimate consequences. If Christ, the Word of God, is truly the source of *all life*, of every sort, even physical, it logically follows that the wicked becoming more and more strangers to the *life in Christ*, must eventually be deprived of *life of every kind, even physical*. The theologians just named would then be virtually Conditionalists.

As for Professor Reuss, he is perhaps expounding the view of the apostle Paul rather than his own. If he shared it, he, too, would be among the number of unconscious Conditionalists.

§ 6. Pastor Zietlow has expressed similar views :

To the man [Adam] in his fallen state the gift of eternal life would have been baneful, as involving the eternal continuance of that state, and the production of a race of beings in eternal revolt against God. Still, the tree of life is not suppressed, but access to it is no longer permitted. *Eternal life is essentially immortality, an indestructible life*,² a life which has eternity for its goal.³ It does not become the portion of the sinner, seeing that if it were to become his portion, he would be able to pose eternally as an enemy of God. . . . *Eternal life gives to the natural human organism a capacity for eternal existence*. It makes the man capable of *immortalization* in both the soul and the spiritual body. If deprived of this eternal life he becomes the prey of death, in conformity with the sentence pronounced in Gen. iii. 19 ; not as an extraordinary event, but as the natural and necessary consequence. Eternal life is a free gift of God, an additional grant, *donum superadditum*.⁴ It is not a constituent part of human nature, but may be grafted upon it, so to speak. Without this graft human nature is perishable.⁵

¹ *Le Nouveau Testament de Notre Seigneur Jesus Christ expliqué, au moyen d'introductions, d'analyses, et de notes exégétiques*, par L. Bonnet, docteur en théologie, pasteur à Francfort, four vols., large 8vo. Lausanne, G. Bridel and Co.—Notes on Matt. xxii. 32 ; John i. 4 ; Rom. viii. 11 ; 1 Cor. xv. 18, 53 ; 1 Tim. vi. 16, etc.

² Heb. vii. 16.

³ Gen. iii. 22.

⁴ Rom. vi. 23.

⁵ Extract from an article entitled *Der Baum des Lebens*, by G. Zietlow, pastor at Carnitz, Pomerania.—*Zeitschrift für kirchliche Wissenschaft*, of Chr. E. Luthardt, p. 21, sq. 1887.

§ 7. So also Dean Alford, one of the most esteemed English exegetical and critical writers. On the verse in the first Epistle of John (ii. 17), "And the world is passing away and the lust of it," he makes the following comments :

In the world the ungodly men who are, in all their desires and thoughts, of the world are included. They and their lusts belong to, are part of, depend on, a world which is passing away. On the other hand, *eternal fixity and duration belongs only to that order of things and to those men who are in entire accordance with the will of God.* And among these is he that doeth that will, which is the true proof and following out of love toward him. As God himself is eternal, so is all that is in communion with him, and this are they who believe in him and love him and do his will.¹

§ 8. Professor Hugues Oltramare, late dean of the national Faculty at Geneva, calls the incorruptibility of believers non-transitoriness;² this supposes that the wicked reaping corruption would be transitory. What will that be if not a transitory existence followed by non-existence?

§ 9. The evidence leads Professor Ménégoz to the same conclusions :

It is not only Paul's anthropology, but also the Pauline conception of redemption that is opposed to the understanding of *death* as anything else than the abolition of existence. . . . The chastisement of sin is the destruction of the life. In the day of the Lord the wicked will be exterminated. Their suffering ends in death, in the *complete annihilation of their being.* Apart from *life in Christ* and with Christ there is no *life.* The whole theological system of Paul falls to pieces if *death* be understood to mean anything else than the suppression of existence.³

§ 10. In a lucid statement already quoted, Professor Auguste Sabatier has brought out very clearly this biblical notion of an *eternal life*, which protects the *believer alone* from falling back into nothingness :

According to St. Paul, who is the most explicit of all the writers of the New Testament, and who herein keeps well within the lines of

¹ *The New Testament for English Readers, in loco.*

² *Commentaire sur l'Épître aux Romains*, vol. i., p. 197, edition of 1843.

³ *Le Péché et la rédemption d'après St. Paul*, pp. 78, 91, 83, *sq.* Paris, 1882.—M. Ménégoz has repudiated the name of Conditionalist ; but, in truth, the sentences quoted formulate our main thesis in a way that leaves nothing to be desired. He is apparently another unconscious Conditionalist.

Hebraism, man is not naturally immortal ; he can only become so by a new infusion of the divine Spirit ; he is not so by nature, he becomes so by faith. It is a grace.¹

These sufficiently numerous declarations are like so many piles driven through the somewhat marshy soil of traditional exegesis. The eschatology of the New Testament may rest securely upon this foundation.²

V.

Encouraged by so many adhesions, implicit or explicit, and determined to ascribe to the terms of the evangelical vocabulary their natural and legitimate meaning, let us now lend an ear to the words of Jesus.

"I am the bread of life,"³ said he. Bread is not a symbol of holiness, nor of happiness ; it is simply figurative of the maintenance of existence. "He that drinketh my blood hath eternal life,"⁴ said Jesus again. Neither does the blood symbolize happiness, nor holiness. The blood is the *life* according to Moses. But these emblems will be further considered in the special study of baptism and the Lord's supper in our sixth chapter.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life."⁵ The view of the brazen serpent did not directly produce either sanctity or joy ; it restored life by setting the organic functions again to work.

In his last discourse Jesus compares himself to the vine, the sap of which is for the branch that which the blood is for the

¹ *Mémoire sur la notion hébraïque de l'esprit*, p. 33.

² There are probably passages in the writings of the authors just quoted which might be opposed to us. It seems that here and there some of them have not always submitted to the historico-grammatical principle of interpretation. Their exegetic probity has valiantly struggled against ancient tradition, but they could hardly be expected expressly to disavow a metaphysical doctrine which they had sucked with their mother's milk. They leave to their successors the duty of openly repudiating it. Our predecessors are like Moses mounting the slopes of Nebo. Our quotations prove that they have had a glimpse of the promised land of an exegesis without philosophic *à priori*.

³ John vi. 48.

⁴ John vi. 54.

⁵ John iii. 14, 15.

animal. The branch separated from the stock is neither culpable nor sensitive of suffering; it symbolizes only the lack of an independent life. It is withered, that is the sinner's agony; it is burnt, that is his complete combustion.

This leads us to speak of the fate that Jesus assigns to the wicked. They have not in themselves a full and durable life.¹ A man may destroy himself.² Jesus compares the wicked to the bundles of tares cast into the fire, to a man crushed under a rock, to criminals who are executed. It is true that the wicked will rise again; they will have to appear at the last judgement, but if they are obstinate they will be finally destroyed, "both soul and body in Gehenna."³

VI.

Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?⁴

Such is the generally received translation of a saying which may be called the favourite maxim of Jesus. It would seem that no aphorism was more often on his lips. In forms more or less complete it is found as many as six times in the Gospels, and it occurs, as is not usual, in John as well as in the Synoptics.⁵ Professor F. Godet perceives in this saying "the foundation of the moral philosophy of Jesus Christ"; and M. Louis Bonnet speaks of its "supreme importance."

It is also very mysterious. It is an enigma, a paradox,⁶ like that which may be heard in familiar conversation in speaking of a game in which "the loser wins." One word in particular

¹ John vi. 53. The "life indeed" which endures (*tês ontôs zoês*),
¹ Tim. vi. 19. In the sight of God and in reality the sinner's life is a dying life.

² Luke ix. 25. *Heauton de apolesas*, the man who loses or forfeits "his own self."—R.V.

³ John v. 25-29; Matt. x. 28.

⁴ Matt. xvi. 25, 26, A.V.

⁵ Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25, 26; Mark viii. 35-37; Luke ix. 24, 25; xvii. 33; John xii. 25.

⁶ In Hebrew *mashal*. Orientals generally, and the Jews in particular, delighted to put their maxims into enigmatic form. The book of Proverbs offers numerous examples of this.

has been the despair of translators. They have all been foiled by the Greek term *psuchê*, which they have sometimes rendered *life* and sometimes *soul*, while neither of these expressions is satisfactory. In order to indicate clearly the point of the difficulty, let us try the passage using the word *soul*: "Whosoever will save his soul shall lose it"; that is an idea that revolts the thought, Jesus would thus be condemning as sterile and mischievous a pious and laudable endeavour. Such a translation would evidently be a contradiction. Let us now try the word *life*; this term would introduce a contradiction equally grave in the last clause of the passage. Jesus would be asking what would be a compensation for the loss of life, or, in other terms, what is more precious than life, and by life would be understood generally and primarily the present life. This, therefore, would be likely to lead on a wrong track. Jesus would seem to teach that existence here below is the chief good; yet the Christian and even the simple patriot know more precious treasures, and Jesus himself has only just announced that it is sometimes wise to sacrifice the life. Professor Reuss, who (like the English revisers) maintains in his translation the word *life* all through, acknowledges that this term "does not very clearly convey the meaning of the original." In fact, it is equivocal. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that many translators should have preferred to introduce in this place the word *soul* instead of *life*, as adopted by them in the preceding verse. But to employ in the same argument in two consecutive verses two different words to render one and the same term in the original is to violate an established rule of translation.¹

What, then, is to be done? We see only two alternatives: either to maintain the word *life* throughout the passage, adding in a note the indispensable explanation that the word used in the original sometimes designates that which is called specifically the human soul with the prospect of a future existence; or else to have recourse to a paraphrase.

If a paraphrase be preferred, we will try the reflective pronoun *himself* as a rendering of the debateable term which

¹ The latest edition of the Lausanne version, usually so strictly literal, here with a certain timidity departs from its fundamental rule.

appears four times in the two verses under review. We will put it thus: Whosoever will save *himself* in contempt of the divine appeal, preserving at all costs his present life, shall lose *himself*; but whosoever will for my sake make the momentary sacrifice of *himself*, shall find *himself* again. Wise and praiseworthy calculation! For what shall it profit a man to prolong for a short time his earthly existence and to gain even the whole world, if he should lose *himself*? Wherewith could he redeem *himself*? This paraphrase is founded upon the example given by the evangelist Luke in one of the passages referred to.¹ We can also appeal to the usage of the Aramaic Greek of the Gospels, the roots of which reach down to the Hebrew of the Old Testament. In Hebrew the *soul* (*nephesh*) is often used to designate the person: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself" (Jer. li. 14); literally, "by his soul."² From the biblical point of view the individuality is in the *nephesh*, or *psuchê*, the soul or life of man, and God himself is represented as having, or, more precisely, as being, a soul.³

We now hold the key of the enigma. Like the noun in the original, our personal pronoun *himself* bears a double meaning; it will designate sometimes the present life of the individual, and sometimes his future existence, according to the sequence of the thought. For everyone there is an earthly life, with the possibility of a life immortal. The *self* is, as it were, separable into an inferior and a superior *self*.⁴ The inferior must be subordinated, and often even sacrificed, to the superior. The

¹ Luke ix. 25.

² In his pamphlet entitled *Notre Durée*, M. Byse quotes seventeen instances of this use of the word *soul* to designate God as a person. These should not be confounded with those passages in which the Lord swears *by his life*. Ezek. xx. 31, etc.

³ In Hebrew, and generally in the Semitic languages, this word *soul* with the personal suffix is very frequently used to express the idea embodied in our reflective pronoun. All the translators of the New Testament into Hebrew—Reichardt, Delitzsch, and Salkinson—are agreed in rendering *heauton* (himself) in Luke ix. 25 by *naphsho*. So it is in the ancient Syriac version. The Greek of Luke is richer and more precise; it here unites in a single word the body and the soul, which Matthew in a similar context mentions separately: "to destroy both soul and body" (x. 28).

⁴ Thus it may be said of the same individual at the same time: "He is no more; he is dead"; and, "He is in heaven; he lives with God." This indicates the double meaning of the pronoun, as in our paraphrase. In the same way the nouns *existence* and *person* sometimes contain a double meaning.

man who, at all cost, is determined to save his earthly life, will lose the possibility of attaining an immortal life ; but he who, on the contrary, will sacrifice his earthly life in the service of Jesus Christ, will receive a life imperishable.

What is it to sacrifice the earthly life ? In the first place it is, in various passages relating to persecution, to accept a violent death rather than deny Jesus Christ. In the second place it is to renounce, in order to serve Jesus Christ, not merely sinful inclinations, which needs no saying, but even the satisfaction of some innocent tastes and natural preferences. It may, perhaps, involve the renunciation of a brilliant or lucrative career, of the public favour, of an attractive marriage with an unconverted person, or, again, of the display of some special talent. In short, it will be to repress, if need be, a certain expansion of the personality. A pastor, for example, may have a taste for painting ; he will, perhaps, renounce its gratification, lest he should devote to it the time and energy which he owes to his ministry. This second sense, like the first, is in perfect conformity with the genius of the biblical languages, the soul in Scripture frequently designating the sum of human aspirations, and occasionally a dominant passion.

In the Gospel of John we see that Jesus applied to himself the maxim which he seems to have adopted as his motto.¹ He renounced the legitimate joys of the family and all temporal ambition. He sacrificed his person and his life ; but the loss was compensated by a speedy and glorious resurrection. Precept and example were in him admirably united. He sacrificed much ; he recovered as much, and more. So also did his disciples. He who dies a martyr sacrifices an ephemeral existence ; in exchange he obtains immortality. Every faithful Christian will mortify worldly desires and tastes ; in return he will enjoy, not only beyond the tomb, but even here below, pleasures more noble and not less intense. More than that, like the martyr, he will secure his personal immortality, he will "lay hold on eternal life."

By following the method indicated by Professor Drummond in his captivating studies on *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*,² there may be seen anticipated in this favourite maxim

¹ John xii. 23-27.

² See *ante*, pp. 21, 31.

of Jesus Christ the formulation of one of Nature's greatest laws. Among individuals, as among species, only those organisms survive which, accommodating themselves to the changes in their environment, *renounce* certain habits to adopt a new mode of life. The famous law of "the survival of the fittest" rests in great measure upon these renunciations and this flexibility of certain types. On the other hand, the types which do not lend themselves to the indispensable transformations break down, and are only to be found by the archæologist in a fossil state.¹

Let us note in passing the variety in the expressions relative to the manner in which immortality is to be obtained. According to Matthew, the believer will *find* (*heurêsei*), will discover as by a miracle that which he had lost. This evangelist has in view the essentially Jewish hope of the resurrection of the body. The divine omnipotence will supernaturally intervene in order to restore life to the dead body lying in the tomb. Luke, on the other hand, often aims at expressing the subtler shades of Greek thought. According to him, the believer will *reproduce* (*zôgonêsei*) his life.² It is the notion of the grain of corn in the Eleusinian mysteries; by a sort of co-operation of forces the grain lives again in the ear, which it engenders or brings forth. It is the philosophical idea of palingenesis. Mark seems to represent the Roman faith, the faith of the soldier who hardly reasons at all. Without inquiring how, he knows that the struggling believer will in the end come forth safe and sound from the conflict with death; he will wrest his life from the enemy who threatens it: he will *save* it (*sôsei*).

¹ In America at the present time the race of the Red Skins is dying out before advancing civilization. Hope is, however, entertained of saving some tribes which have accepted the new life of the Gospel and have renounced the attractions of savage life. In the South Seas Christianity has saved whole peoples from the abyss. In South Africa the French Protestant Mission has preserved the existence of the Basutos, maintaining their vital force through the transformation of their national manners under the influence of a regenerative doctrine.

² Luke, the companion of Paul, thus recalls the image employed by the apostle in one of his letters to the converted Greeks at Corinth (1 Cor. xv. 37). Jesus makes use of the same emblem at the time when certain Greeks ask to see him (John xii. 20-24); but he has in view the origin of his Church rather than his own personal resurrection, the production of the ear rather than the mere reproduction of the seed deposited in the earth.

Then, lastly, as represented in the Gospel of John, the believer cannot die. He will neither recover his life, nor reproduce it, nor deliver it from death in an agonizing encounter; calm and tranquil, though at the same time vigilant, he will *keep* (*phulaxeî*)¹ his life. This expression is in conformity with the most intimate thought of the Master, who said: "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die."² Begun here below, the communion of the believer with his Saviour is never interrupted; it survives physical death, which is thus only an apparent death.

Let us now see what is to be the fate of the man who, through cowardice or egoism,³ refuses the required sacrifice. "He will lose himself." And what is it to lose himself? We need not go far to ascertain the exact meaning of the word *lose*. We need not, indeed, go beyond the context. As we have just seen, in order to be saved, to obtain eternal salvation, it is necessary to lose something; this something that is lost is absolutely suppressed, destroyed, annihilated. For the martyr there is total suppression of the earthly life, annihilation of present existence. For every Christian there is the voluntary suppression of certain enjoyments; and here, again, suppression is synonymous with annihilation. Seeing, then, the parallelism of the terms, it follows incontestably that to lose himself when immortality is in question must be to destroy, to suppress, that prospect and to annihilate himself. The lexicological correlation makes it clear that it is the loss of that which is called in philosophy the *ego*, the individual personality, that is in question. The destruction may be progressive, but at last nothing will remain to him, nor of

¹ The profound genius of John makes eternity begin here below, for the worldly man as well as for the believer. He who prefers the world to Jesus Christ has already begun to lose his being; *apollueî* in the revised text, instead of the future of the Synoptists. "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life" already (John xii. 25; iii. 36; v. 24; vi. 47, 54; I John v. 11-13). He takes possession of himself (Heb. x. 34, revised Greek text); cf. ver. 39: those who save their soul, or take possession of it, *peripoîēsîn*.

² John xi. 25, *sq.*; v. 24; vi. 50; viii. 51.

³ Luke (xvii. 33) accentuates the notion of a culpable egoism, carnal and fundamentally sacrilegious; *peripoîēsasthai* in the revised text, a word which sometimes bears the bad sense of *monopolize* or *appropriate personally*. Man does not belong to himself; he has not the right to refuse to respond to the call of God.

him, who loses his true self. The loss of the Christian is real, but comparatively light, and in some measure provisional ; that of the worldling is the supreme loss, the irreparable loss of existence. Supposing that at the last moment the worldling should wish to pay a ransom and recover possession of his being that is about to be engulfed in the abyss of nothingness, what would all his acquired possessions avail him? These could not restore his life, and, besides, he is about to lose them by speedily ceasing to exist.¹

The worldling grasping at earthly possessions has been compared to a man who should purchase a gallery of pictures and become almost immediately blind. This vivid comparison is a thousand times too weak. The heir of a magnificent empire dying on the very day of his coronation affords an image which is still very inadequate, since, according to the formal teaching of Jesus Christ, to be lost is to be destroyed "soul and body," deprived of all the faculties of the being, to enter at last into the horror of eternal nothingness.² There is in this prospect enough to inspire salutary terror. Jesus leaves no hope of imperishable life to the man who despises his invitation. Every man must give himself to Jesus or perish, and must at once begin this surrender, or at once the process begins which will end in destruction. He who persists in rejecting the Saviour will at last perish utterly and for ever ; by a slow and painful death-process beyond the tomb the effacement and complete suppression of his individuality will be accomplished.

¹ Cf. *Psa.* xlix. 6-9, to which Jesus seems to allude.

² Cf. *Matt.* x. 28 and the valuable work of M. D. H. Meyer, *Le Christianisme du Christ*, p. 307, *sq.* The proper and normal meaning of the Greek verb *apollumi* is, moreover, clearly indicated in another passage of Matthew (v. 29, 30), relating to the amputated member which rots and perishes. Cf. *Mark* xiv. 4 ; *Luke* xxi. 18 ; *John* vi. 12, 27 ; *Acts* xxvii. 34 ; *James* i. 11 ; *Rev.* xviii. 14. The meaning is evidently to *cease to exist*. So it is, too, with another verb used in *Matt.* xvi. 26, *zêmioô* in the passive voice, which does not mean to endure pain, any more than *apollumi*. It means *to be damaged*, to *pay a fine* ; and in this case to pay at the cost of existence or of damage to the being. When, in respect of the soul, a meaning is attributed to *apollumi*, which it never bore in Greek antiquity, a law of exception is made and exactitude is sacrificed for the sake of a philosophical hypothesis. Lexicology protests against such violence done to the sacred writers.

To sum up as concisely as possible the Master's thought : Our text speaks of two kinds of existence, one earthly and ephemeral, needing the other, which is heavenly and eternal, to be grafted upon it. Jesus exhorts man, if occasion should demand it, to sacrifice the earthly to the heavenly life. The sacrifice required involves, in the case of martyrdom, the total suppression of the earthly existence ; in any case, the deprivation of many temporal advantages. To lose is, then, to suffer a deprivation when it relates to the present life. When it relates to the future existence, there is nothing to prevent, rather everything to compel us to allow the same word to bear the same meaning in the second member of the same phrase. It follows that worldlings who refuse the required sacrifice find themselves threatened with the deprivation of their existence.

Unhappily, Platonic ideas percolating into the Church have falsified the meaning of the most important terms of this important declaration. To the human soul has been gratuitously attributed absolute immortality, without reserve or condition. The result has been that the word translated *to lose* has been defrauded of its natural and legitimate sense. Its meaning was *to suppress* ; it has been made synonymous with *render eternally miserable*. But by a distortion of the meaning of the words, the balanced adjustment of the reasoning of the two verses before us has been upset, the point of the divine paradox has been broken, the two-edged sword has been blunted, the key of the enigma has been twisted out of shape ; this saying of Jesus has become untranslatable.

VII.

The Epistles furnish a commentary upon the teaching of the Gospels. The apostle Paul says : " God only hath immortality . . . He will give eternal life to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption . . . He that soweth to his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption . . . The disobedient shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction."¹ Christ is the life of the apostle, the head indis-

¹ *Olethros aiônios*, 2 Thess. i. 9 ; the death without limitation of Rom vi. 23, viii. 13 ; the end, Philip. iii. 19. " The punishment of sin is the destruction of the life," Ménégos, *Le Péché et la rédemption d'après saint*

pensible to the existence of the body of the Church and of every believer ; he is the second Adam, the federal chief of all those who will share in the endless life. Paul speaks once of the resurrection of the wicked,¹ but their survival will be for so short a time that he usually passes it over in silence. There is no absolute immortality outside of, or apart from, Jesus Christ.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says : “ We are not of them that shrink back unto perdition, but of them that have faith to the saving of the soul . . . for our God is a consuming fire . . . a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries.”² That which God consumes he does not allow still to exist ; the burning bush in Exodus was a miracle just because, although on fire, it was not consumed. After the last judgement death will make no more victims, it will itself be abolished, and God will be “ all, in all ” the survivors.

The apostle John is still more precise ; he says : “ He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” ;³ the notion of a privilege consisting in a perpetual existence making a man eternal, being thus clearly and distinctly brought out. In the light of this saying should be read this other passage of the same epistle : “ Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him.”⁴

In the Apocalypse the righteous only have access to “ the tree of life,” which is by no means a symbol of enjoyment. Nothing is said about the beauty or attractiveness of the fruit of this tree. It was the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil which was pleasant to the eyes and the taste. And so in order to attain holiness, Adam needed only to resist the temptation to eat the forbidden fruit. The only purpose of the

Paul, p. 78 ; Paris, 1882. This book has brought the question one step nearer solution. It brings out Conditional Immortality very clearly in Paul's writings ; but it makes the mistake of setting the teaching of the great apostle in opposition to that of Jesus Christ, some of whose words are summarily quoted, though in reality they have but little evidential force. We shall have an opportunity of analyzing each of the passages brought forward by M. Ménégos.

¹ Acts xxiv. 15. We shall come again upon this question of the resurrection of the wicked and its purpose. See in particular Chap. XI., sect. vii.

² Heb. x. 39 ; xii. 29 ; x. 27.

³ 1 John ii. 17.

⁴ *Di'autou*, 1 John iv. 9.

tree of life was to perpetuate existence ; so distinctly is this the case that it is spoken of as having power to immortalize even impenitent sinners.¹

The "book of life" is the register of the living who will survive. It is a figure of the divine decrees. The lake of fire symbolizes the final destruction of those whose names have been blotted out of the catalogue.²

The "water of life" mentioned in the last chapter of the Apocalypse has the brightness and purity of crystal, yet it is first of all an emblem of perpetual life. "He that will, let him take of it;" such is the message, in which is clearly formulated an attainable immortality. A life indefinitely prolonged is the gift offered to everyone who desires it and consents to take possession of it: whosoever refuses to drink of that water can but die of thirst. It is put in three words: *Ho thelôn labeto*, on the last page of the Bible, as though a summary of the whole.

VIII.

At the outset we established the right and the duty of holding to the grammatical meaning wherever possible. Interpreted upon this principle, the whole New Testament teaches that Jesus is the only source of immortality. On the other hand, it attests that death is in operation in every one of us. The body is first to succumb, something surviving; but this something being deeply tainted, sick unto death, will not survive indefinitely. Left to itself, this vital force advances by a slow and painful process towards final destruction, which will be the second death, complete and absolute death, the end of the individual.

We can now affirm, having put it to the test, that the historico-grammatical meaning is not merely warranted, but required, in every one of the passages of Scripture in which are found the terms that have just been the subject of our study. It is a skein which can be easily unwound by anyone who begins at the right end. Our readers can convince themselves of it by the use of a concordance.

¹ Gen. iii. 22 ; Rev. ii. 7 ; xxii. 2, 14.

² Rev. iii. 5 ; xiii. 8 ; xvii. 8 ; xx. 12, 15 ; xxi. 27 ; xxii. 19.

To the passages relating to life and death should be added a large number of others which speak of salvation and perdition. To save a living being is to snatch him away from a mortal danger; to save an inanimate being is to preserve it from imminent destruction.¹ We have determined the meaning of the terms *death* and *destruction*.

But the traditional exegesis has turned death into a species of life, yet "a different mode of life." In order to sustain this paradox certain passages of the New Testament are brought forward, in which death seems not to designate the end of the individual, since he who is called dead still exists, perceives, and acts. This state is called *spiritual death*; it is the condition of impenitent sinners, and may, it is said, be prolonged indefinitely, a deathless death: there would therefore be room for endless sufferings. In our seventh chapter we shall reply to this objection, showing that *spiritual death* cannot immortalize, that it has no power to prevent either physical or metaphysical death, and that, on the contrary, it is only the precursor, the antecedent symptom of a complete and definitive death of the whole individual.

Another objection is urged which would be of graver import. Just as in the case of the Old Testament, to our army of witnesses are opposed a rear-guard of four or five verses, which are held to possess extraordinary properties. To begin with, if they had the meaning assigned to them, like veritable erratic blocks, they would be foreign to the general tenour of the books from which they are quoted. Then, by a special privilege, they would be able to balance, and even outweigh, a thousand other texts; five ounces in one scale would weigh as much as five hundredweights in the other. The absurdity of such a claim is evident. But besides that, without even leaving the royal road of exegesis, we can perceive that these four or five verses are not erratic blocks, that they do not contradict all the rest, that they have not the meaning ascribed to them, and that by the attempt to interpret them otherwise than in

¹ *Sôzô*, root *soos* or *sôs*, whole, subsisting, surviving (Alexandre, Schleusner, Wahl, Grimm, Cremer). The meaning to make healthy is only secondary. *Save* is opposed to *destroy*: James iv. 12; Heb. v. 7. Matt. xvi. 25: "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it." Make his life healthy would here be a contradiction.

accordance with established rules the interpreter becomes the sport of an optical illusion.¹

We shall make a special study of these exceptional passages.² We are, however, already acquainted with the general tenour of biblical teaching concerning the future life. The moment has arrived in which to summarize it. So far as we are personally concerned, the following exposition will be at the same time our profession of faith.

IX.

The Scripture, a heavenly messenger, soaring above materialism and the old spiritualism, above science and tradition, brings to us glad tidings. At the voice of this celestial emissary we escape from the darkness of our ignorance, and from the nightmare of our superstitions. The teaching thus brought to us bears the impress of truth, which prompts and warrants our faith; it appeals to the witness of the Holy Spirit in our consciences.

From the first to the last of its pages, the Bible sets clearly before our eyes life and immortality, but it is never the unconditional and impious immortality of the pantheistic religions. This religious encyclopædia, the work of fifteen centuries and a hundred different writers, teaches us the most evident truths of so-called natural religion: the existence of one only God, his eternity, the distinction between good and evil; but in vain will it be searched for a word which affirms or implies the imperishability of the human soul; it contains no more reference to such a thing than does the Pentateuch to a priesthood in the tribe of Judah, concerning which "Moses spake nothing."

¹ As an illustration we will mention Matt. xviii. 34: "He delivered him up . . . till he should pay all that was due," in connection with the words of v. 26: "Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the last farthing." Here some have seen eternal torments; but why not rather the death of the insolvent debtor in the prison? Usually a prisoner dies in the prison if he is never allowed to go out. Should the one of whom Jesus speaks be an exception? To suppose so would be to beg the question, supposing the inalienable immortality which is in dispute. The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke xvi. 23) says not a word as to the duration of the Hades in which the scene is placed. Hades is not eternal; according to the Apocalypse, it is to be at last destroyed: Rev. xx. 14.

² See Chap. XI., and in the *Supplement* the *Table of Objects*.

The soul is indeed spoken of as many as sixteen hundred times; but in the whole range of Scripture there is not to be found the expression “immortal soul,” that favourite term of ecclesiastical phraseology.

God alone, we read, hath immortality. No doubt there will be a survival for every man, but a “second death,” a final death, will be the portion of the incorrigible sinner. Only “he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever,” says the apostle John.

The Bible does not flatter us, does not exaggerate our value. In full accord with science, it teaches that, like man, every animal has a soul, and that the soul of the flesh is in the blood. There is an immortality, but it is the privilege of the righteous; the man who has not wisdom is likened to the beasts that perish. The future has no promise for the evildoer; the lamp of the wicked is to be put out. Victim of moral suicide, the obstinate sinner will sooner or later succumb. Undoubtedly man bore a divine image; he was created in view of immortality, but under express conditions and reservations. He has infringed those conditions; he has given way to his lower appetites; he has chosen death, and become subject to it.

Twenty times the apostle Paul repeats that the wages of sin is death, death absolute, in the sense which the word bears in its composite *deathlessness*, the cessation of all life, death with the meaning which is unavoidable in so many passages where the apostle exhorts us to cause sin to be mortified or put to death. The Bible speaks of souls that die: the soul that sinneth it shall die; he that shall turn a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death. Sin is not itself the final death, but it leads to it. Death is the fruit of sin, the wages of the senseless war against God. If we give way to the flesh we shall speedily die; lust engenders sin, sin when finished engenders death. Fallen man has been mercifully banished from the tree of life, which might have given him a baneful immortality; he will therefore not live on in ceaseless torments. If he does not repent, he will return by a slow but sure process to the nothingness from which he has been called forth by divine goodness. He carried in himself a fragile mirror of the divinity; the mirror is broken, and the man is

now only a child of the dust. Taken from the earth, the first man was but dust, as the apostle tells us.

Sin has taken possession of human nature. It sticks to us like the shirt of Nessus. This inveterate evil is transmitted with the blood; it empoisons the good gift of existence; it undermines, ruins, and kills us. Left to our own unaided powers, we shall never regain innocence, we shall exhaust ourselves in the struggle against the torrent which is carrying us away. The most we can do is to retard the development of the fatal germ that threatens to destroy us body and soul, according to the expression of Jesus Christ. The axe is already laid at the root of the barren tree; the pruning-knife menaces the unproductive vine branch,

Which, severed from the stock, must wither and decay.¹

The verdict of Scripture respecting man left to himself is also the verdict of science; we are without hope in the world, beings truly lost. "A single word sums up the situation: it is awful."²

But what a light shines suddenly in the night of the tomb just ready to close upon us! It is Jesus Christ, our light and our life. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. The incarnation of the Word unites a divine essence with our perishable nature. Along with our flesh, the Son of God adopts our interests and responsibilities. Representative of penitent humanity, priest and victim, Jesus offers with his blood the painful pledge of our repentance, and the requisite propitiation for the sins of the world. His death is a sanction of the moral law; it proclaims and expiates our guilt. God in Christ reconciles the world to himself. He suffers for and with his guilty creatures. The cross becomes the instrument of the reconciliation.

By repentance, love and faith we become united to the Saviour; we follow him to Calvary. Joined to him by all the powers of our soul, we are morally crucified with him, baptized with his baptism. Grafted into him, we become one plant with

¹ Qui, séparé du tronc, doit périr desséché.

² Louis Ruchet, *La Science et le christianisme*, p. 218; Paris, 1872.

him, the members of a body of which he is the head. We die and we rise again spiritually with Jesus, and his immortal life becomes our own. He that believeth on the Son receives the principle of a new life; he has passed from the beginning of death to a beginning of that new life. The apostle John tells us fifty times over that Jesus is the only source of imperishable life, that the transmission of this life is the very object of the incarnation. Twice the evangelist declares that this glorious and necessary teaching is the purpose of his book. That life is holy, happy, full, glorious; but first and foremost it is specifically life, in the proper and radical meaning of the word; it is "the state of animated beings, so long as they have in them the principle of sensation and movement," and in speaking of man, his existence with the display of his various faculties. Jesus calls himself the bread of life; we need to drink his blood. He is the vine-stock of which we are the branches. These images clearly signify that the spirit of Jesus penetrating our spirit communicates to it an element of immortality.

It was the Serpent who said: "Ye shall not surely die." Jesus, on the contrary, exclaims with a sigh: "How narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it!" but "broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction, and many be they that enter in thereby." Life eternal is a promise, a favour, a prize offered to the believer who will lay hold of it, and who, by patience in well-doing, seeks for glory, honour, and incorruption.

The resurrection of Jesus is the guarantee of this promise. If Jesus had not risen again, a rough common-sense might say with the materialists: "After death all is dead; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die!" But because Jesus lives we also shall live. The body dies: that is our share of expiation; the spirit still lives, and the body will be born anew and transfigured. We shall not suffer the second death; our names inscribed in the register of the celestial city will never be blotted out.

God, with whom there is no respect of persons, will have pity upon the heathen and the ignorant, as he has had pity upon us. Believers are a chosen band, not a caste. The God of Jews and non-Jews is also the God of the baptized and the

non-baptized, of the initiated and the non-initiated. The supreme judge will show himself just ; he will ask little of those who have received little. Those for whom it would have been better never to have been born will be the exceptions. They must have blasphemed against the Holy Spirit of God to lose all chance of salvation ; that is the only unpardonable sin. The chastisements will be in exact proportion to the gravity of the offences ; and the gravity of the offences is in proportion to the gifts entrusted to each person. For those who have not been able to hear or to understand the divine message, a further announcement is in reserve. The first-fruits, of which we form part, will be followed by an abundant harvest. It is written that in the future paradise there will be a tree of which the leaves will be for the healing of the nations. The nations are all those of human race to whom God has not yet been made known.

The Scripture, moreover, reveals to us a God who is good even to the wicked and the ungrateful, a God whose tender mercies are over all his works. David's heart was as the heart of God ; on the death of his rebellious son the royal prophet was heard to exclaim : " O Absalom, my son, my son ! " This voice was an echo of the fatherly compassion of the Creator even for the wicked. God entreats the sinner to come back to him, he announces his goodwill, he will exhaust the means of reconciliation ; but he will never make man into an automaton by destroying his freedom. The rebel, summoned to lay down his arms, must surrender or perish. He is in a burning edifice ; if he delays he will escape only with wounds ; if he obstinately remains he will be consumed.

If we sin willingly and deliberately after having come to the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for the expiation of our sins ; we have only to await a terrible judgement and the fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries. The New Testament predicts a total extinction of the irreconcilable wicked ; to signify this it employs the same terms that Plato uses in the *Phædo* to indicate annihilation. There are no stronger terms. The obstinate sinner will be as the rivers separated from their sources, as the trees with neither roots nor branches, as the dry bundles of tares, as the

corpses eaten by worms ; he will go to destruction, to Gehenna, the refuse-heap of souls. A fire more terrible than that of Sodom and Gomorrah will consume beings that are already in course of moral decomposition ; it will purify the atmosphere by putting an end to the last vestiges of their transitory existence. The remembrance of this ruin will last through the ages. Isaiah and after him the apostle John compare it to the columns of smoke which, from the heights of Mamre, Abraham saw rising above the Dead Sea after the burning and disappearance of the cities of the plain.

The rebels no longer existing, the revolt being suppressed, the devil trodden under foot and destroyed, there will be no more curse ; death will no longer reign, it will rejoin Satan in the abyss of annihilation, called in the Apocalypse the lake of fire and brimstone.¹ God will be all in all. The redeemed will survive for ever ; a new earth and new heavens will be their portion. Sin had for a moment abounded ; grace will superabound world without end.²

In this teaching is there anything to wound the religious conscience ? If so, let it be shown. We perceive in it rather the synthetic, moral, reasonable, and sublime character which is the inimitable sign of a revelation. While searching for immortality in science alone, we were groping along a dark tunnel ; on opening the Gospel, we have at once seen resplendent before us the radiant landscapes of the sunny lands beyond the Alpine chain. This pure and soft light appears to us to be that of truth itself.

We have now to consider in what way man can unite himself with Jesus Christ, and how this union can make us immortal.

¹ Probably in allusion to the history of the Dead Sea. In the time of Abraham, the region now covered by the waters became the scene of a vast conflagration. The earth, impregnated with bitumen and naphtha, took fire ; it was then a veritable "sea of fire and brimstone." After the conflagration was extinguished the smoke continued to rise during years and ages (Wisdom of Solomon, x. 7). A sinking of the soil having taken place, the waters of the Jordan filled the great basin ; but "fish cannot live there, nor are any aquatic plants to be found there" (Stapfer, *La Palestine*, p. 71). A striking symbol of the eternal death that threatens hardened sinners.

² See in *Supplement* No. IX. a doctrinal summary formed exclusively of quotations taken from the Old and New Testaments ; and the epitome by Rev. Ch. H. Oliphant, *Supplement* No. X.

CHAPTER V.

JESUS CHRIST THE ONLY SOURCE OF IMMORTALITY.

- I. Biblical psychology—II. Interior anarchy ; subserviency of the superior principle in human nature—III. The awakened conscience institutes expiatory sacrifices—IV. Definition of expiation—V. The Levitical sacrifices—VI. Jesus Christ the supreme victim—VII. Regenerative effects of communion in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. By the restoration of the interior hierarchy, man again becomes capable of immortalization—VIII. Justification and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, uniting us to the Christ—IX. Divine pardon is never impunity—X. Chastisements inflicted upon the offender, even though penitent—XI. The promised resurrection—XII. Its relation to palingenesis.

I.

As we have seen in our second chapter, the traditional belief which denied soul to the animals cannot be sustained ; it is contradicted by biology, as well as by Scripture. Animals have souls. It has been stated by a great naturalist, who is not a Darwinist, M. de Quatrefages, that the moral and religious sense is the only generic difference that distinguishes us from the animals. The New Testament, which has thus anticipated modern psychology, has a word to designate this distinctive trait of human nature ; it calls it the *pneuma*, the *spirit* in the special sense of that word.

“ The God of peace sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame,” writes the apostle Paul.¹ This passage is fundamental ; it establishes a *tripartite* division of human nature, which has been called the *trichotomy*. By *soul* must be understood the physical sensibility, the natural instincts, with the mental faculties. The *spirit* alone is the organ which can lay hold on the divine ; it is the

¹ 1 Thess. v. 23.

moral and religious sense, which may be called in a single word *spirituality*. The apostle mentions it first because it is the highest prerogative of man, and because it is intended to rule over the body and the soul. In the divine plan, man's spirit in living communion with the Spirit of God should penetrate the soul, and by it reign over the body and all its organs.

II.

As we have also before said, the question whether the story in Genesis of the fall of man in the garden of Eden be historic or symbolic is of secondary importance; that which is important is the actual, evident, incontestable, universal fact of sin pervading humanity. In every man there is a very strong tendency to subordinate morality and religion to the sensual appetites, or else to the satisfaction of pride and vanity. God, to whom all is due, so far from occupying the first place in the heart of the natural man, the place to which he has a right, is the object of an indifference which often becomes enmity, and which in any case deserves to be condemned as ingratitude.

The natural man is a kingdom in a state of anarchy; the body and the soul are in revolt against the spirit; the *pneuma* is in bondage. Above the divine commandment we have all at some time or other preferred the forbidden fruit, which was "a delight to the eyes" and "good for food," and seemed to us "to be desired to make one wise." As the apostle puts it: "we all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind."¹ The religious sentiment itself had gone astray; it had lost itself in superstition and fanaticism. A writer who was well acquainted with men has very clearly described the moral disorder of humanity: "Men," said M. Thiers, "are naturally cowards, liars and sluggards."²

As a faithful disciple of Kant, who tells us of radical evil, M. Renouvier insists upon the importance of the problem of sin. He says:

A superficial civilization which is pleased to turn away from the problem of evil, or to be satisfied with insufficient solutions, is liable in the course of ages to perish like those of antiquity, to be absorbed by

¹ Ephes. ii. 3.

² *Fortnightly Review*, Nov., 1877, p. 650.

the fermentation of the multitudes from whom it separates itself more and more. . . . In my opinion, no religion is worth the name unless it is a recognition of sin, in the general and in the particular, and the redemption of the sinner. . . . Indifference cannot keep the question in the background, the hope of progress cannot put it aside; it forces itself upon us; it has never allowed itself to be relegated to future ages, nor to be classed, without more ado, among the desiderata of science.

My starting-point is the man who is truly man, that is to say, who has attained to the moral consciousness, and I do not need to know how he has been made thus, or has become thus. I lead him, as may be done in a day or even an hour, to the point that we all know (happy he who knows it only imperfectly by the witness of his own heart), to the point at which, knowing that he has done that which he ought not to have done, that he has broken the law, he finds himself in the critical position of feeling himself degraded, of having lost his self-esteem, and of seeking for bad reasons to prove to himself that in doing ill he has done well, and of justifying himself in his own eyes in spite of his conscience. In this, I believe, we see a fact, a real phenomenon, if ever there was one.¹

Nevertheless, a large number of men seem not to trouble themselves about this disorder which is threatening their very existence. They appear to have no idea that, in accordance with a universal analogy, the perturbation of the functions of the personality must logically end in the final cessation of those functions, and consequently in the suppression of the person. The majority of our fellow-men are, as it were, asleep on the brink of a precipice. They are so thoroughly asleep, so completely strangers to the divine life, that the Holy Scripture in certain passages seems to deny that they have the sense of the divine. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," said Jesus Christ; according to this declaration all the unregenerate are mere *psychical* beings.² So, too, the Epistle of Jude speaks of men who are *psychical*, not having the *spirit*, the *pneuma*, thus designating sensual men who are on the way to perdition.

¹ Quoted by M. Astié. *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, article *Péché (Sin)*, vol. x., p. 371.

² John iii. 6.—Those who are *psychical*, having no higher life principle than the *psuchê* (the soul), are placed on a level with sensual and carnal men; the *psychical* wisdom is a carnal wisdom. 1 Cor. ii. 14; James iii. 15; Jude 19. Cf. Rom. vii. 14; Col. ii. 18.—See Ch. Byse, *Notre durée*, and the remarkable thesis of M. Alex. Westphal, *Chair et Esprit*, *op. cit.*

These passages have a hyperbolic character; in order thoroughly to understand them we must take account of the usages of language. A quality is often spoken of as absent when it exists only in a very feeble degree. A person may be said to be "without heart" or to have "no memory," "no head," etc.; these expressions, which, taken literally, would be exaggerated, are readily understood in their limited and comparative sense. On the other hand, the predominating element in a personality may serve to characterize it. Thus an individual may be spoken of as "all heart," "all enthusiasm;" a preponderating element in his nature is considered, by hyperbole, as excluding other elements, although present. He in whom the *animal* soul, or *psuchê*, predominates, is *psychical*, a stranger to the spiritual life; he who submits himself to the *pneuma* is *pneumatical*, or spiritual. The work of the Holy Spirit consists in the awakening and developement of this spirituality, giving it the preponderance over the other faculties. But, whatever may be the disorder of the human faculties, the conscience still distinguishes the man from the animal. Jesus Christ calls the conscience the light of man.¹ All Paul's preaching to the heathen implies the persistence in them of this element.

Asleep and paralyzed, the conscience may yet awake, break its bonds, and with the aid of God's Spirit resume the direction of our life.

Spirituality in man may be compared to a spark smouldering among the ashes, which may be revived by a heavenly breath, but which also may be extinguished. It may again be compared to a germ, in which there is a latent life. The unregenerate man is sometimes moved by the power of religious emotions; but under pain of death this spiritual germ needs to be fecundated.² As we shall see presently, the fecundation of the human *pneuma* is the work of the Holy Spirit.

To awaken sleeping consciences, to set before them the torch of revealed truth, to put them into communication with the

¹ Luke xi. 34; Matt. vi. 22.

² See in *Supplement* No. XI. some thoughts of M. César Malan on *Spiritual generation*. See also *The Fate of the Dead*, by Th. Clarke, M.D., p. 36, sq., *op. cit.*

Spirit of God, this will be the preliminary operation, indispensable if they are to be immortalized.

Men are diseased, mortally diseased; the Gospel brings a promise of healing, but it requires docile patients. This fact divides humanity into two categories: on one hand the sick who do not believe themselves sick, and who therefore reject the offered remedy; and on the other hand the sick who seek a physician. In other terms, there are men who, seeing the moral evil within themselves, mourn, strive and pray, and there are other men who, satisfied with their spiritual state, neither strive nor pray.

III.

The sinner who strives, who prays, or who at least mourns over his faults, is deeply sensible of the need of reparation. He often perceives that reparation is beyond his power, when it relates to his fellow-men; but his anguish is more poignant when he feels himself in the presence of an offended God. He then endeavours to abate the anger which his troubled spirit attributes to the sovereign lawgiver. Perhaps he has heard of divine grace. However that may be, he wishes to attest the reality of his repentance, and with that aim he will sometimes sacrifice that which he holds most dear. In order to satisfy this imperious need for reparation, he will even go so far as to shed blood: his own or that of a victim which he will pray God to accept in his stead. Such is the origin of the expiatory sacrifices which are found at the starting-point of all religions; such, too, is the motive of many a suicide.

Even when not going so far as suicide, the penitent sinner would strike his breast as though to simulate a voluntary death; he would cover himself with ashes as though to place himself by anticipation among the dead. In our own days the haircloth worn by the Israelite on the great day of Atonement is the shroud destined for his burial. The rigid fasts of the Jews and Mahometans testify to a similar sentiment; they symbolize a voluntary death. As we shall soon see, the baptism by immersion administered by John the Baptist presents more than one symbol of penitence, it indicates the instrument of death and the tomb of the offender.

History is full of the terrible abuses of this need for expiation. Many contemporary thinkers, by a kind of reaction, struggle against the instinct of which such abuses are the excessive manifestations; but it is in vain that they strive to suppress it. This it is which, ever alive, even though dormant, sometimes awakes and brings the murderer back from the ends of the earth, without the intervention of any officer, to appear as a prisoner at the bar of a court of justice, and even on the scaffold, erected, as it were, at his own demand.

In common life it frequently occurs that a man annoyed at himself or by someone else gives vent to his ill-temper by breaking with feverish hand some precious object. This object is his own property, or if otherwise he is prepared to restore its value. Why should he have broken it? Behind the act, apparently senseless, there is this sense of the need for expiation; he has satisfied it at the cost of an object which itself was in no way to blame. In default of the one really culpable, perhaps unknown or out of reach, an imperious instinct demands a victim of some kind. A *scapegoat* is one upon whom is laid the burden of others' faults; this proverbial expression is likewise the indication of an irresistible tendency of the human spirit, to which a substitution, voluntary or forced, seems natural. Often astray, often ferocious in its exasperation, this instinct is in itself quite legitimate, normal, logical, supremely honourable. It is imposed by the sentiment of justice in our relation towards the Governor of the world, and from this point of view is of the highest importance.

It is logical, for it represents in morals the universal principle of continuity, which allows no cause to remain without effect. Sin once committed must have its deleterious effect; it must lead to death. In principle the culpable being has lost the reason of his being. The sinner has some sense of this, but, wishing to save his life, he anxiously seeks the conductor that can ward off the lightning-stroke about to fall upon his head.

Especially is this sense of the need for expiation honourable. He who, having done evil, does not endeavour to repair the wrong is either careless or else a man of bad faith, deserving contempt from others as well as from himself. It is, therefore, worth our while to study more closely the notion of expiation.

IV.

What is the precise meaning of the word *expiate*? According to the dictionary of the Academy, it is "to make reparation for a fault"; Littré adds, "by punishment endured or inflicted." But this definition needs to be defined. At first sight it would seem that the reparation here spoken of is only a rhetorical figure. The murderer whose life is taken on the scaffold expiates his crime, but in dying he does not restore life to his victim: where, then, is the reparation? As M. de Pressensé has said: "In itself and alone, suffering does not make any reparation." By consulting the usage of language we should rather arrive at this definition: Expiate is to suffer or cause to be suffered the effects of a penal law; it is sometimes to suffer the penal consequences of a fault committed by the sufferer; it is also to suffer for a fault committed by another, the responsibility of which is assumed by the sufferer; it has, too, this other sense: to cause a third party to suffer the punishment for any fault.

The object or aim of expiation, whether forced or voluntary, is always the *sanction* of a violated law. The reparation is not that of the deleterious effects of the fault, but in a notable measure that of the outrage done to the law, and indirectly to the lawgiver. In fact, to display clearly the evil effects of the violation of a law is indirectly to prove the excellence or the advantages of that law, and to confirm its authority, which the transgression has more or less shaken.

V.

Among the majority of nations, in the earliest times expiation was made by the offering of human victims. In Palestine, for example, from the time of Abraham until the Babylonian captivity, it was a custom of the non-Israelite peoples to offer the first-born sons in sacrifice to the local divinities. The Israelites often followed their example.¹

Jehovah, the God of Israel, is distinguished from other gods

¹ Such was more or less the universal custom. Among the Greeks Agamemnon offers Iphigenia; Erechtheus immolates Chthonia; Idomeneus, a Greek Jephthah, sacrifices his son. The Druids in times of great calamity used to slay human victims.

by the fact that he rejects with horror these human sacrifices : but in the sentiment by which they are dictated there is an element which he approves and even demands.¹ Moses, in the name of the Lord, institutes the Levitical rites which require the immolation of animals, of which, moreover, many serve for the nourishment of man.

The Israelite will make the sacrifice of that which is most precious to him, his family excepted. If he is rich, he will bring his most immaculate bull ; if poor, his single sheep. He will put his hands thereupon, confessing his faults, and then he will himself slay the victim. In this onerous sacrifice, ratified as it was by a divine sanction, the Israelite's conscience obtained some relief. But the Levitical rites were yet only symbols, of which the whole value depended upon the sole effectual sacrifice which they prefigured. In other words, for the Christian they appear as the shadow projected beforehand by the unique sacrifice which was to stand in the place of all others.

VI.

This brings us to the expiation accomplished by Jesus Christ.

The way of immortality traverses Gethsemane and Golgotha.

¹ Abraham, the father of the faithful, set the seal to his calling by his obedience to the voice that demanded the sacrifice of Isaac. Cf. Gen. xxii. 1, 11, 16 : *Haelohim*, God as he has made himself known in nature and in the traditional conscience, ordering the sacrifice ; and *Jehovah*, the God of revelation, forbidding it. The story helps to reconcile, not two Gods, but two apparently opposite attributes of one only God. It is noticeable that the word *conscience* is not found in the vocabulary of the Pentateuch. "In harmony with Hengstenberg and Bertheau, we consider that Abraham imperfectly understood the divine command, under the influence of the contemporary Asiatic superstitions concerning human sacrifices ; but the patriarch's mistake was made to serve in promoting his religious education." Lange's *Commentary*. — The true God demanded an entire abnegation, the spiritual sacrifice of the first-born ; he did not desire the slaughter claimed on behalf of the Syrian or Canaanitish gods : Baal, Moloch, Astarte, Kemosh, Milcom, Remphan. Yet, in spite of the teaching supplied by this story of the sacrifice of Isaac, and in the face of all the Mosaic legislation, the infamous custom of immolating the first-born was perpetuated among the Israelites on their exodus from Egypt, in the wilderness, under the Judges, under the kings of Judah, and until the captivity : Lev. xx. 1-5 ; 1 Kings xi. 7 ; 2 Kings xxiii. 10, 13, 32 ; Psa. cvi. 37, 38 ; Jer. vii. 31 ; Ezek. xvi. 20 ; xx. 26 ; xxiii. 39. Some of these passages intimate that the Hebrews associated these abominable rites even with the worship of the Lord.

In vain will any other route be sought. We will descend into the dark valley and mount the fatal hill.

Like Socrates at Athens, Jesus died a victim of unjust hatred. This is very generally admitted. But Jesus assigns to his death a propitiatory value. Socrates, although himself also a victim of human malice, had no idea of making an expiation for the sins of his people, while, as Napoleon I. said, Jesus expects everything from his death.¹

Having "power to lay down his life, and power to take it again," Jesus lays it down, specifying the precise purpose of his sacrifice. The payment of a ransom, that is the purpose, the supreme object of the mission of the Christ: "The Son of man came . . . to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."² The visible expression of this sacrifice is the *blood*, which is shed with a view to the remission of sins and for the benefit of a multitude of sinners. The shed blood of a voluntary victim becomes the emblem of our redemption. Being at the same time priest and victim, representing the multitude of offenders, Jesus in their name offered, in the oblation of his blood, *the symbol and the*

¹ "The Christ expects everything from his death, is that the invention of a man? No; on the contrary, it is a strange proceeding, a superhuman confidence, an inexplicable reality! Having as yet only a few dull, uneducated disciples, Christ is condemned to death; he dies a victim of the anger of the Jewish priests, an object of the nation's contempt, abandoned and contradicted by his own people. And how could it have been otherwise with him who had announced beforehand that which was about to take place? He had said:

"I am about to be seized and crucified, I shall be abandoned by all, my first disciple will deny me at the beginning of my sufferings. I shall allow the wicked to have their way; but as a result, the divine justice being satisfied, the original sin being expiated by my death, the bond uniting man to God will be renewed, and my death will be the life of my disciples: they will then be stronger without me than with me, for they will see me risen again. I shall ascend to heaven, and I will send to them from heaven a spirit to instruct them. The spirit of the cross will enable them to receive my Gospel. In the end they will believe it, they will proclaim it, they will persuade the whole world to accept it."

"And this foolish promise, so appropriately designated by saint Paul *the folly of the cross*, this prediction of a crucified victim has been literally fulfilled. . . . And the mode of its accomplishment is perhaps more extraordinary than the promise itself."—*Sentiment de Napoléon sur le christianisme. Conversations religieuses recueillies à Sainte Hélène*, by the Chevalier de Beauterne, p. 95, sq., 6th edition; Poissy, 1845.

² Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45.

pledge of their repentance, which is the necessary condition of their salvation.¹

Three principal considerations seem to have inspired the expiatory work undertaken by Jesus Christ : first, a clear view of human sin, and of its consequences tending to the ultimate destruction of the entire race ; second, the brotherly love which prompted the Saviour to assume the responsibility of our faults ; third, the filial love which unites him to God as his brotherly love unites him to man. Moved thereto at the same time by filial and fraternal love, in his voluntary death, Jesus renders a loyal homage to the justice of the laws appointed by the heavenly Father and violated by us ; he has offered himself as our sponsor.

The heavenly Father has accepted the pledge offered by his first-born Son. In consideration of that pledge he has granted conditional pardon to penitent offenders. By raising again his Son who had been put to death, he has signed and sealed the contract by which we are saved. The apostles proclaimed with joy the glad tidings of grace offered to all. As the apostle Paul put it : “ Jesus . . . was delivered up on account of our trespasses, and was raised on account of our justification.”²

It is for each one of us, as regards himself personally, to accept or to disavow the mutual contract which the Gospel sets before us for ratification, and so to justify or nullify the sponsorship of Christ.³

¹ See in *Supplement* No. XII. our study, entitled *Salvation by the Blood of Expiation* (*Le Salut par le sang de l'expiation*). As we shall have occasion to note in our next chapter, at the very outset of his ministry Jesus in his baptism prefigured his expiatory death. An antitype of the deluge, baptism was the emblem of an execution deserved by all sinners. John the Baptist declines to administer it to Jesus, who has no fault to confess ; but Jesus claims baptism. Associating himself in sympathy with the sufferings of sinners, he asks to be allowed to suffer with them the just sentence of which the immersion was a figure. Matt. iii. 15.

² Rom. iv. 25. *Dia* with an accusative signifies *on account of*.

³ During many years it seemed to us a duty to repudiate the idea of a vicarious satisfaction as forming part of the work of redemption, it appeared to us to be immoral ; but now, on the contrary, as the result of a more profound examination, we perceive that a pardon without previous satisfaction would really be the scandal. An arbitrary and unconditional pardon would, so to speak, juggle away the necessary effects of the fault ; it would thus interfere with the principle of *continuity*, which forms part of the laws of our spirit, as God has constituted it. It ignores, or desires to ignore, one portion

VII.

To understand Christ's design, to associate ourselves therewith by an act of faith and with the whole heart, therein is salvation. To put aside that design, to turn away the eyes from his cross, is folly or disloyalty.¹ In this world or in the other, sooner or later, every sensitive conscience will render homage to the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It is written that the redeemed will for ever sing the praises of the Lamb of God, slain for the sin of the world.

The sunbeam, decomposed by the prism, produces all the colours of the rainbow; and in the same way a sincere faith in the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ will be in practical life the constant source of all Christian virtues: resignation, thankfulness towards God, humility, separation from the world, temperance, piety, self-devotion. These dispositions of the regenerate man cannot but exist in the heart united by a *sincere faith* with the Man of sorrows.

It was sin that necessitated the cruel death of our best Friend: how can we do otherwise than hate sin? It was expressly with a view to draw us away from sin that he suffered so much: how can we consent to remain in that pestilential atmosphere? Although our love for our Friend who was crucified for us be but weak, how can we delight in that which would make him sad, in acts which to his bleeding heart would be so many fresh wounds?

Adhesion to the entirely moral work of reconciliation accomplished by Jesus Christ will necessarily emanate from the moral sense, and like that work itself, that masterpiece of the human conscience, will assume the character of an act of conscience.

Is it possible to acquiesce in the holy life of Jesus Christ, in his incessant mastery over the most legitimate natural instincts, in his perfect consecration to the will of the Father, in his uninterrupted communion

of the texts and one side of the question. It is, however, true that traditional orthodoxy, under colour of exalting the work of the Saviour, has failed to recognize the part of *expiation* (we do not say of *propitiation*) which remains to both believers and the impenitent themselves.—See, too, with reference to propitiation: A. Gretillat, *Exposé de théologie systématique*, vol. iv., pp. 278-368.

¹ In the New Testament the faithful (*pistoi*) are *loyal*, of *good faith*, at the same time as *believers*. Cf. John xx. 27.

with him, as in the normal life of humanity, which ought to have been that of us all, without *ipso facto* appropriating to ourselves the moral principle of that life, and without making it thenceforth the very soul of our own? Adhesion to such a consecration is surely self-consecration.

Would it be possible to accept the moral reparation offered by him as an act which ought properly to have been our own, to ratify in our conscience the sentence pronounced upon the sin of the world by the normal conscience of him who has made the reparation by suffering the punishment, without that sentence becoming *ipso facto* in our own heart and will the doom of death to our own sin? It is this assimilation of the conscience of Christ crucified, contained in the act of faith, that St. Paul in his energetic language, at the same time literal and figurative, characterizes by these expressions: being "crucified with Christ"; being "baptized (plunged) into the death of Christ."¹ To adhere to the death of Christ for sin is to die to sin, that is to say, to break away radically from it. It was this reflex action of the object of faith in the believer himself which was so deeply felt by that Bechuana convert who exclaimed: "The cross of Christ condemns me to be holy." This word *condemns* expresses very naturally the effect which is produced at first by the view of the cross in the old human nature when it feels itself drawn by faith in front of that instrument of death, whereon the sin of humanity has been judged once for all in the person of the Son of God.

It is then of the essence of a justifying faith, by the very virtue of its object, to create in the soul of the believer an insurmountable hatred of the sin so painfully expiated by Christ, and an inexhaustible sympathy for the excellence so admirably realized in his person.²

A vital communion in the propitiatory work of Christ is at the very centre of the Christian life. Eternal salvation is in that communion; by restoring the hierarchy of our faculties, it renders us capable of immortalization. Order takes the place of moral anarchy; it is the restoration of the interior hierarchy. Henceforth the *body* obeys the *soul*, the *soul* obeys the *spirit*, and the *spirit* submits itself to the *divine will*. Re-established on the primitive plan, man has entered upon the way of life eternal. Already, indeed, he possesses it in its principle.

¹ Gal. ii. 20; Rom. vi. 3.

² F. Godet, *Etudes bibliques*, 2nd series, New Testament, p. 200, *sq.*

VIII.

This inward renovation is the work of the Holy Spirit, who thus prepares the immortalization of our nature. In accordance with a Gospel saying, the Holy Spirit takes of that which is Christ's and communicates it to us.¹

There are two phases of this preparatory work : justification and sanctification.

In justification it is not faith, but the grace of God that takes the initiative, presenting to the sinner the propitiating blood of Christ as the *pledge of pardon*. In the moment when faith takes hold of this pledge, justification takes place and unites these two factors, grace and faith, in an indissoluble whole. God then declares just the soul which is really and fundamentally just, inasmuch as by faith it henceforth submits its own will to the divine will.²

The new man is at first like a child just born. Sanctification is the growth of this new-born child. In every-day life and conduct the ideal dimly perceived in the hour of conversion is pursued. The Holy Spirit will complete the work of immortalization in the day of resurrection, when he will endow the faithful soul with a glorified body.

The fruit of faith is a new birth. The new man is born capable of continued life, but this new birth needs to be followed by all the care requisite for the maintenance of a life still feeble, although heavenly. For lack of watchfulness this flame may be extinguished ; it is with spiritual as with physical life : God takes it away from the man who is not careful to maintain it. It is a gift for him who will make good use of it ; it is also a loan which God will take back from him who abuses it. Conditional in its principle, immortality remains conditional, even to our last breath. We need to strive without ceasing, first to lay hold and then to keep hold on eternal life. Thus in the Gospel we find again the great law of the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest, which, as we have seen, shows itself in geology, in natural history, in ethnology, and in history properly so called : " So run," says the apostle, " that

¹ Literally, *will announce*, or *will reveal* it. John xvi. 13-15.

² See César Malan, *La Conscience morale*, Geneva, 1886 ; and G. Fulliquet, docteur ès sciences, *La Justification par la foi*, thèse, Geneva, 1889.

ye may obtain the prize. And every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible."¹ And immortality is just this incorruptible crown, the crown of lasting life spoken of by the apostle James.²

IX.

Everything is liable to be abused. The apostle Paul had, even in his day, to complain of those who discredited the Gospel by saying: "Let us continue in sin that grace may abound." In our days the doctrine of salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ has been grossly abused, and the abuse has caused the condemnation of the doctrine. Escaping Scylla only to fall into Charybdis, men have replaced it by a doctrine of arbitrary and unconditional pardon, which would be complete impunity.³

Both conscience and logic protest against a false doctrine of the pardon of sin,⁴ but the true biblical doctrine remains untouched by these attacks, as we will endeavour to prove.

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 24, *sq.*

² i. 12. Cf. Rev. ii. 10.

³ Lately a professor of dogmatics expressed himself thus: "The humble and sincere acknowledgement of the fault is the only reparation required by the living and true God. Repentance, then, is the only expiation worthy of the name." He also denounced the monstrous character of a theory which would make of God a judge thirsting for vengeance.

⁴ See among others the works entitled: *La Justice de Dieu*, by Hippolyte Rodrigues; *Examen critique de la religion chrétienne*, by Patrice Larroque; and *Moïse et le Talmud*, by Alex. Weill.—M. Larroque writes thus: "From the true notion of supreme justice this consequence follows, that every fault must be expiated, here or elsewhere, by the punishment or the suffering of him who has freely committed it. I do not fear to add that if, by an impossibility, we were offered the remission of the punishment incurred by our evil actions, the weight upon the soul left by the consciousness of faults not expiated would be so great and painful that it would lead in the end to a demand on the sinner's part, as for a boon, that he might make a temporary expiation which would re-establish the order of unchangeable justice. From this it follows that every other external fact, every institution, every rite is radically powerless to replace personal expiation. The dogma of the remission of sins by the application of the merits of Christ, by virtue of a sacrament, by an absolution pronounced by a priest, is therefore contrary to the true notion of divine justice. But I go farther. I say that this dogma is immoral. It is a stimulus to evil, inasmuch as it inspires a false security in the sinner, excuses him from true amendment, and offers itself as always within his reach as an easy means of getting rid of his faults. . . . The dogma

According to the opinion too generally admitted, the pardon of sins would be an act whereby God, in consideration of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, would treat the culprit as innocent. Such a pardon would be impunity; but the Scripture is formally opposed to that definition. Five times over the Bible declares that God will not hold the guilty for innocent; or, to translate with more verbal exactness: "Leave unpunished! he leaves not unpunished."¹

God's pardon, according to the Scripture, would rather be the assurance given to the penitent sinner that, in spite of his faults, God loves him still, and that the deleterious consequences of his fault shall not go so far as the entire destruction of his being.² In other terms, the repentant sinner is restored to favour, justified, sanctified, but he is, nevertheless, not treated as innocent.

"The wages of sin is death."³ But death is the cessation of life, and in an absolute sense the cessation of all activity and all sensation. In pardoning the sinner God declares him protected against this supreme chastisement of sin, but under a triple reserve:

1st. The pardon supposes the repentance of the sinner, and presupposes his regeneration. It even consists mainly in a respite granted in view of the moral renovation. It is a conditional postponement, which may be only temporary; it is provisional, and the supreme chastisement remains in suspense.⁴ The postponement becomes definitive, and peace takes the place of the armistice, when the sinner's amendment is confirmed.

of the remission of sins is opposed to the true principle of sound morals." According to the same author, "a true and solid repentance, and not that which is so conveniently practised by Christians, is certainly an expiatory suffering."—We believe the teaching of the Scripture to be yet more radical and more moral. There is no expiation but by way of destruction, total or partial. Anticipated or suffered, expiation can produce repentance; it consists always in a loss. But repentance, by preventing relapses, limits the deleterious effects of a previously committed fault.

¹ *Nakke lo jenakke*. Exod. xxxiv. 7; Numb. xiv. 18; Jer. xxx. 11; xlv. 28; Nahum i. 3. Cf. Exod. xxiii. 7; Prov. xi. 21.

² Ezra ix. 13-15; Psal. lxxviii. 38, 39; xcix. 8.

³ Rom. vi. 23.

⁴ See Exod. xxxii. 32-34; and the parable of the barren fig-tree, Luke xiii. 6, sq. See also Psal. cxxx. 4; Acts xvii. 30; Rom. viii. 13; Heb. x. 26, 27.

2nd. Far from being impunity, the divine pardon is accompanied by all due chastisements, except the total destruction of the sinner. The Lord pardons the rebellious people, which will therefore not be exterminated; but the fathers will die in the wilderness, the children only will enter the promised land.¹ Moses and Aaron themselves, guilty of impatience, will not enter therein. Isaac renews the blessing of Jacob when aware of his falsehood, but Jacob's life thenceforth will be only a long expiation. David, guilty of adultery and murder, obtains his pardon, but the child of his crime perishes; and soon the revolt and death of the incestuous Absalom pierce the heart of his unhappy father. Paul, when converted, has still his thorn in the flesh. A faithless wife, delivered by Jesus from the vindictiveness of the Pharisees, will have to meet the anger of her husband. The prodigal son himself, not to speak of the sufferings of his exile, will retain in his body and his soul the marks of his sin, and his father does not say to him, as to the elder son, "All that I have is thine." The robber on the cross, though pardoned, has still to expiate his crimes, as he says: "and we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds." The Bible fails to supply an example of pardon that is impunity. In practice the divine pardon is always accompanied by partial chastisements.²

3rd. If the condition of the pardon is not observed by the offender, the final chastisement will be all the more severe and irremediable.³ If the divine pardon were always absolute, definitive, and without condition, the sentence finally pronounced against the pitiless debtor in the parable would be illegal.

Misrepresenting the principle of Paul and Luther, it has been said by some: "Let us sin, that grace may abound; let us sin, it will cost no more; let us enjoy the delightful taste of the forbidden fruit, we will repent to-morrow; let us taste

¹ Numb. xiv. Here is the commentary of Messrs. Keil and Delitzsch on verse 20: "In answer to the earnest prayer of Moses, the Lord grants forgiveness, that is to say, the *maintenance of the existence* of the nation, but not exemption from the well-deserved chastisement."

² John xv. 2; Rom. viii. 10; Heb. xii. 5-11; 1 Cor. xi. 32.

³ Psal. xcix. 8; Matt. xviii. 32, 34; Rom. xi. 22; Heb. x. 26, *sq.*; 2 Pet. ii. 20.

the intoxication of pleasure, when we grow old we will repent." The principle of the condition of existence cuts short all these perfidious reasonings. According to this principle, sin is a gangrene; he who sins introduces or extends this gangrene. Sin having been committed, grace can no doubt save that which has not yet been tainted with the disease; but it will not be without a painful amputation, mutilating more or less the individual who has to undergo it. It is in this sense that the Scripture compares the man saved by grace to a brand plucked from the fire, more or less blackened, more or less consumed.¹

The true notion of divine pardon is of the highest importance; it is fruitful of practical consequences. We will mention a few. Every sin committed has irreparable effects; sooner or later it always brings after it a chastisement proportioned to its gravity. One of the chief advantages of the divine pardon is that it requires and produces the amendment of the sinner. From sin to sin, and from chastisement to chastisement, we were hastening towards nonentity; the arm of Jesus makes us halt and turn back. The sinner continues to suffer for his faults, but the individual is saved because he has quitted the way of perdition. Drawing his strength from the reopened springs of grace, he remounts the fatal slope that he had begun to descend. He suffers, and his body perishes, but his spirit, united to God by Jesus Christ, lives for ever. All believing individuals will enjoy eternal life, but in the common abode of happiness there will be degrees of fortune and of spiritual privilege, varying according to the degree in which here below the tendency to sin shall have been repressed. The punishments and rewards of the future life will eventually be in exact proportion with our conduct, good or bad.² In case of a fire, the essential thing, doubtless, is to escape without loss of life; nevertheless, the differences among the survivors may be great,

¹ Amos iv. 11.

² Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6; 1 Cor. xv. 40-42; 2 Cor. v. 10; Col. iii. 25; Rev. xx. 12, 13; xxii. 12. The parable of the penny and that of the talents complete each other. In one, each worker receives the same sum; that is the eternal life promised to all. In the other, the servants receive more or less reward, each one according to his desert. Cf. Matt. xx. 1-16, and xxv. 14-30.

some being mutilated for the rest of their days, and others without a wound. Antinomianism is the secret but profound sore of Protestantism. "He who counts upon the remission of sins will not be careful to avoid committing them," are the words of a thoughtful man. Thankfulness, which has been made the sole motive force of the Christian life, is too quickly cooled. The logical notion of pardon presented by the Scripture becomes a powerful curb upon the evil passions in the human heart. But no doctrine is sufficient of itself. In order to be delivered, the sinner must open all the avenues of his soul to the renovating breath of the Holy Spirit.

X.

As our Forerunner, Jesus has opened up a new way of access to God. It is ours to follow the Captain of our salvation into the deadly breach whither he has entered before us.¹ If the sight of his sufferings produces in us a true repentance we shall desire to participate in them. Like him, we shall give a full consent to the sentence which condemns us,² and while repudiating any further complicity with sin, we shall accept, if we have not the courage to claim, our share of the expiation.³

All those who associate themselves with this design of the Christ obtain thereby the benefit of the divine grace, the salutary virtue whereof they had been prevented from experiencing only by fear mixed with shame. This grace is free,

¹ Rom. v. 2 ; Eph. ii. 18 ; Heb. vi. 20 ; x. 19, 20 ; xii. 2. *Forerunner, Captain*, these titles of Jesus Christ make allusion to a victorious assault under the leadership of a chief who is himself the first to enter the stronghold. This chief marches bravely at the head of his soldiers, and the soldier who would not follow him would justly be expelled from the army and put to death. The salvation presented to us in the Gospel is not, then, to be attained by a mere passive acceptance ; but it promises a certain victory to the combatant who strives with all his strength.

² Jer. x. 24.

³ We make a distinction between *expiation* and *propitiation*. Jesus alone has made propitiation for the sins of the world. It is only the innocent who can *propitiate* ; every sinner *expiates* when he suffers and when he dies. The sinner who rejects the propitiation of Jesus Christ must himself alone expiate according to the degree of his culpability, which goes on increasing. Succumbing under the weight, his personality perishes. The expiation of the penitent believer is limited to the measure of the sins *actually* committed by him.

without money and without price ; it is a gift. The guilt is gratuitously remitted. It is not so, however, with the *punishment*, the deleterious consequences of the fault. These fall in part upon Jesus, as we have just seen, and in part upon each sinner individually.

From this point of view, which appears to us to be the true one, Jesus would not have expiated the whole ; nor does the Scripture assert that he has. Each one of us suffers, dies, and therefore expiates in a certain measure. But there is this difference between our expiation and that accomplished by Jesus Christ, that he dies the innocent for the guilty ; it is for the purpose of saving them that he gives himself over to the attacks of their malice, and the effect of his expiation is to prevent the total destruction of the penitent sinner's soul. His expiation alone is a *propitiation*.

The hardened sinner drinks to the dregs the cup of expiation ; the deleterious results of his sin will go the whole length of a complete suppression of his being. An eternal death is the wages of his obstinacy ; for him, as a matter of fact, it will be found that Jesus has not made any expiation.

The penitent believer, on the contrary, asks for and receives the new spirit which triumphs within him over sin, the antidote which neutralizes the mortal poison. He is, however, far from escaping entirely the consequences of his past or present faults. They all dog his footsteps continually : regrets, bad habits, physical or moral sufferings, complications, embarrassments, illnesses, the miseries of life and the miseries of death ;¹ all with one sole exception, the greatest and most terrible, the bondage to sin, of which the issue is eternal death, the total and final death of our soul, to which from depth to depth our first faults would have inevitably led us. As in the shipwreck of Paul and his companions, the vessel and its treasures are lost on account of the navigators' folly in refusing to follow the apostle's advice ; but when they at last conform to his instructions, they all have their lives saved, and with life saved, fresh resources and a new ship may be obtained. So is it with the saved soul. Sin had caused the loss of its innocence, but by

¹ The body is dead (proleptically) because of sin ; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. Rom. viii. 10.

faith it obtains pardon, and a new body will be given to it after that which it now occupies will have perished in the tempest of this world. And what has it cost to save our imperilled souls? Nothing less than the sacrifice of Jesus. To sum up, this sacrifice was indispensable, efficacious, meritorious; it deserves on our part eternal and unbounded thankfulness. The Christian, weeping, blesses that death which gives him life, and his gratitude will last as long as the imperishable existence for which he is indebted to Jesus Christ.

XI.

The certitude of our resurrection rests upon the formal and infallible promise of the Son of God: "This is the will of my Father, that everyone that beholdeth the Son and believeth on him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."¹ In spiritual communion with the Christ, the believer possesses an inward assurance; he knows in whom he has believed, and it is morally impossible for him to doubt the promises which to his eyes bear the inimitable seal of the Holy Spirit. Reconciled with God, become his adopted son by a moral and spiritual union with the Well-beloved of the Father, the Christian has found a reason for his existence, and has become worthy to live for ever. A son, he is also an heir; henceforth he has an appointed place in the home and at the table of the heavenly Father.²

From an apologetic point of view, and as an external proof fitted to win the attention of non-believers, the resurrection of Jesus is also the guarantee of a divine sanction: Jesus Christ, says the apostle Paul, "was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead."³ Eleven apostles and five hundred disciples saw Jesus living after his death; the Church has been founded upon their testimony.⁴ If Christ did not really appear,

¹ John vi. 40.

² Rom. viii. 17; John viii. 35.

³ Rom. i. 4.—Professor Gretillat has briefly and clearly established the apologetic value of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. *Exposé de théologie systématique*, vol. iii.; Dogmatics, I.; Special Theology, Cosmology, pp. 1 and 2; Neuchâtel, 1888.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 5, *sq.*—The authenticity of the Epistles to the Corinthians is generally admitted by modern criticism. This fact may then be considered

if he had not repeatedly proved the reality of his resurrection, it would be impossible to explain the indomitable courage, the unquestioned union, and the indefatigable perseverance of the first propagators of the Gospel. The foundation of the Church would be a psychological miracle more inconceivable than the fact which the Church itself declares to be the starting-point of its existence.

“But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep.”¹

United to Christ in his sufferings and in his death, we are going on towards the day when our Saviour, sharing the almighty power, will transform our body of humiliation into the likeness of his own glorious body. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit concur in the performance of this supreme miracle. Paul says: “If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”² The almighty power which has intervened for the creation of man and for the resurrection of the Christ will intervene for the accomplishment of our own resurrection. If there was a good reason for the miracle of man’s creation, we may the more confidently reckon upon the *promised* miracle which will endow the redeemed with the glorious organs of a new life.

XII.

It is an error in the so-called Apostles’ Creed that it speaks of a resurrection of the flesh (*carnis resurrectionem*). “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.”³ It is also an

truly historic, that the apostle, in support of the truth of the Gospel, establishes the reality of Christ’s resurrection upon the testimony of five hundred eye-witnesses. Most of these witnesses were still living as he wrote. The simple fact that the Corinthian Church was maintained upon the foundation laid by the apostle proves that that Church had been convinced of the evidential value of the testimony in question. The conviction of the Corinthian believers in this matter is for us a guarantee of the more force, as faith in the Gospel imposed many renunciations and exposed to many persecutions. It may well be supposed that the Corinthians did not fail to make full inquiry. How could the apostle’s statements have been accepted without examination?

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 20.

² Rom. viii. 11.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 50.

error to imagine that the future body will be composed of the same atoms as our present body. Paul's teaching is quite different: "Thou sowest not the body that shall be, but a bare grain . . . but God giveth it a body even as it pleased him."¹ So far from being identical with the seed from which it springs, the plant has not even the same outward form.

No doubt the germ of the resurrection body of which the apostle speaks is invisible and impalpable; but so, too, in fact, is every germ. That which is usually called seed, if carefully considered, may be recognized as being only an envelope, or rather a series of envelopes, like the bulb of a hyacinth. The true germ is mysteriously hidden in the central cell; and what is that germ, if not a molecule in which there dwells a vital force which is absolutely imperceptible? Inexplicable wonder! Every living being springs from a microscopic cell, an apparently empty vessel, which, however, contains in principle all the organs and most of the innumerable characteristics which will distinguish the future individual, including the power of transmitting these organs and characteristics to all its descendants. In the tiniest ovule there is a whole potential world. This extreme tenuity of germs being admitted, it is easy to suppose that at the moment of death some element of ourselves may survive in a form a thousand times more subtile than the air we breathe. If placed in a suitable environment, this impalpable nucleus of plastic forces may be able to manifest itself in a new shape by the assimilation of the matter which will form the resurrection body. The germination of plants, the developement of the bird in the egg, would be images of these future transformations.

"Doth not nature itself teach you?" says St. Paul. As a symbol of resurrection the metamorphoses of the lepidoptera deserve special mention. What a contrast between the butterfly which displays in the sunshine the brilliant colours of its wings, and the caterpillar that crawls at our feet! Enveloped in a shroud, the chrysalis is preparing for a higher life. By studying it with the microscope, the future butterfly may be discovered in it: the wings are folded between the first and second segment, the antennæ are hidden in front of the head;

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 37.

the feet of the pupa serve as sheaths for the future legs of the insect. The anatomist Swammerdam has discovered these organs in a rudimentary state in the body of a caterpillar that had not even reached the chrysalis condition. Might we not see a symbol in this fact too?

Richard Rothe, a profound thinker, had arrived at the supposition that our resurrection is being prepared in this life. He believed that, under the veil of the material nature, a new nature, a superior organism, is slowly being built up. On this hypothesis the human personality would find itself furnished with a provisional abode, as it might be called, at the moment when it quits the material body. The greatest modern French metaphysician, M. Charles Renouvier, is of the same way of thinking. He has supposed "the existence of an imperceptible organism which survives the actual perceptible body and preserves the powers required for the production, under new conditions, of a form of body similar or superior to that which has already been worn by the individual."¹

The naturalist Charles Bonnet, of the school of Leibnitz, and the physician David Hartley, of the school of Locke, had previously arrived at the same general views. Our compatriot, too, M. Eugène Mittendorf, has considered the question from an analogous point of view. He says:

The spirit being the dominating and ruling principle of the new existence, the body will be suited to its new conditions of life, and put into due relation with the activity which will be characteristic of the resurrection life. The former body has furnished the germ of psychologic nature, which, while assimilating to itself elements which are imperishable and glorious, assures the profound identity of the two bodies. For Christians, the life eternal has already begun here below by the fact of their union with Christ, the source of true life. The resurrection will be only the extension to their body of the work of revivification wrought by the Redeemer.²

In the caterpillar the appetites and functions of vegetative life are predominant. The organs of locomotion and intelligence are but feebly represented. Two enormous jaws and the

¹ *La grande question: l'Immortalité personnelle (Critique religieuse*, 1878, p. 192).—See in *Supplement* No. XIII., under the title *Palingenesis*, a longer excerpt from this article.

² *Essai sur la doctrine de la résurrection*; Geneva, 1862.

intestinal tube play the principal part. In animals generally the stomach is the seat of government of the individual. The butterfly seems to be an exception to this rule ; the heavy feet of the caterpillar are replaced in part by the wings, and the jaws by a slender proboscis. The caterpillar crawled upon earth and was repulsive, causing aversion ; the butterfly soars in the air and is attractive, exciting admiration. The caterpillar was voracious ; the butterfly eats no more, but only sucks the nectar of the flowers. The life of nutrition exists only at its minimum ; it has given place to the life of relation. Is it possible to imagine a more complete transfiguration ?

Yet this is but a feeble image of the contrast which will be established by the resurrection between our present and our future life. We are only creeping here below. "We groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our body," but while we groan we do not allow ourselves to be cast down ; we even rejoice beforehand in the prospect, for we trust in the faithful God who has raised up Jesus Christ, and who will surely raise us also in due time. Even in the hour of death the believer can sing the song of hope :

No more the dark passage I fear
Which leads me to bliss evermore ;
In life that exists even here
Are signs of the greatness in store.

The seed that the husbandman sows
Becomes the ripe corn in the fields ;
The snow gives its place to the rose,
The grub to the butterfly yields.¹

Life and death, death and resurrection, the new birth and the future life, all these master-ideas we shall find embodied in the ceremonies which have been called the two sacraments of the primitive Church : baptism and the Lord's supper. These will be the subject of our next chapter.

¹ William Petavel. The French words are :

Je ne crains plus le noir passage
Qui doit me conduire au bonheur ;
La vie entière est un image
De notre future grandeur.

Le grain qu'en terre je dépose
Devient épi dans le sillon ;
La neige fait place à la rose,
Et la chenille au papillon.

CHAPTER VI.

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER, SYMBOLS OF IMMORTALITY.

I. The baptism administered by John the Baptist—II. The baptism submitted to by Jesus—III. The baptism instituted by Jesus Christ and interpreted by his apostles, the symbol of a new birth—IV. The Churches have distorted both the rite and its meaning—V. Protest of the Baptist Churches—VI. Admissions of Pædobaptist theologians—VII. The history of the rite a protest against the alterations that it has undergone—VIII. Examination of an objection against baptism by immersion—IX. The Lord's supper an emblem of the sustenance of the new life symbolically conferred in baptism—X. This another symbol, the key of which has been lost by the Churches through their Platonism.

I.

If the sinful man is on the way to absolute destruction, if the immortalization of our nature is the purpose of the Gospel, we may expect to find this thought embodied in the two emblematic ceremonies which are, as it were, the escutcheon of the Church of Jesus Christ.¹ And, in fact, it is so, for both baptism and the Lord's supper tell us of death and immortality. In order that we may be convinced of this, let us begin by the study of baptism as it was instituted by John the Baptist, adopted by Jesus, and prescribed by him to his disciples.

¹ The ministry of Jesus is opened by baptism ; it is closed by the Lord's supper. The two ceremonies embody a common thought ; they both tell us of a death needful for the salvation of the world, and also of a new life born in baptism and sustained by the Lord's supper. Jesus speaks of his death as a baptism : Luke xii. 50 ; Mark x. 38.

It will be observed that we avoid the use of the word *sacrament*, the meaning of which has been unhappily falsified. According to the dictionary of the Academy, the sacraments "have been instituted in order to confer the grace of which they are the sign." The danger is lest to the sacrament should be attributed a magic virtue. If we are to avoid falling into fetishism, we are bound to maintain that without the concurrence of faith the sacrament is powerless to confer any grace.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

Chapter III.

In those days appeared John the Baptizer; he preached in the wilderness of Judea.

“Repent ye,” said he, “for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

It is of John that the prophet Isaiah speaks when he says: “A voice is heard in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

John had a tunic of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey.¹

The inhabitants of Jerusalem, of all Judea, and of the region round about the Jordan went out to John the Baptizer. They were baptized by him in the river after having confessed their sins.

But John seeing a great number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, said to them: “Ye offspring of vipers, have ye learnt to flee from the wrath to come?² Bring forth then fruits answering to repentance, and do not believe that it will suffice to say within yourselves: ‘We have Abraham as our father.’³ No, for I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And even now is the axe laid at the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit, is about to be hewn down and cast into the fire.

“For my part, I baptize you in the water with a view to repentance. But he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to bear. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire.⁴ With the fan in his hand he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor;

¹ These were the clothing and nourishment of the poor. Austerity was appropriate in an apostle of repentance. The true penitent considers himself unworthy to live; he keeps himself apart, he deprives himself of the pleasures of civilized life, his food is of the simplest, and his clothing the coarsest. The sackcloth worn by the Jews in time of mourning was made precisely of camel’s hair; it was at the same time a sign and an instrument of penitence. A leathern girdle would make the wearer all the more sensible of the coarseness of this tissue, the old French name of which, *camelot*, from the Latin *camelus*, seems to be an allusion to the costume of John the Baptist. It was a very coarse and cheap material.

² In other terms: “What are you come here for? No doubt for you this baptism is only another rite added to so many other formal rites, a mere *opus operatum*. Be not deceived; no rite will protect you from the wrath to come.”

³ Another mischievous illusion of the Pharisees: salvation by the privilege of birth.

⁴ This flame will burn out the impurities of believers; it will burn up the impenitent.

he will gather his wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn up in unquenchable fire."

Then Jesus, coming from Galilee, went to the Jordan and presented himself to John to be baptized by him. But John would have hindered him, saying: "It is I who have need to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me?" Jesus answering said unto him: "Consent to it now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Then John consented.

After having been baptized Jesus went up straightway out of the water, and lo! the heavens were opened before him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending in the form of a dove, coming upon him. At the same time was heard a voice from heaven, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

What, then, is the predominant thought in this baptism administered by John the Baptist? It seems to relate to a mortal danger threatening the sinners. This thought was symbolized by the ceremony in question. The object of the baptism was an escape from a "wrath to come." John the Baptist speaks in turn of the axe that cuts down the barren trees, of the fire that burns them to ashes, of the wind that carries away chaff and makes it disappear. The chaff that is not carried off by the wind becomes the prey of unquenchable fire. Then, adding acts to words, he plunges the sinners into deep water. In harmony with all the images in his discourse, this immersion is a new symbol of death. It is a simulation of a capital execution.

Let us note that those who came to John the Baptist began by confessing their sins. They remind us of certain malefactors who, urged by remorse, make voluntary confession of their crime and submit to the punishment. This has actually occurred. The English newspapers, some years ago, told the story of a murderer who, having taken refuge in Australia and being then no longer in danger of pursuit, spontaneously re-crossed the ocean to come to London and denounce himself, thus, as it were, himself putting the rope round his own neck. So it was with the Jews who sought the baptism of John; they acknowledged themselves unworthy to live.

The apostle Peter speaks of baptism as the antitype of the deluge.¹ God having declared that he would not send another

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 21.

universal deluge, the human conscience none the less claims the death of transgressors. On a reduced scale the immersion of baptism is a deluge voluntarily submitted to, even demanded, by the guilty individual. We would here again call attention to the manifold symbol presented by the deep water: it was at the same time the instrument of capital punishment, and a tomb; it was also a veil covering the sinner from the view of a God too pure to behold iniquity. The symbolism was so much the more admirable because the accomplishment of the rite was almost without danger and its application always easy, for water is never altogether lacking in the neighbourhood of human habitations. Fire and steel are, on the contrary, symbols of which the use could hardly be otherwise than dangerous. Lastly, the rapid and impetuous Jordan might be thought of as ready to carry off the baptized offender into the depths of the accursed lake, known by the name of the Dead Sea.

It is said that John baptized at Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water there.¹ According to the dictionaries which are recognized as authorities, to *baptize* in the original language signifies to *plunge*, and sometimes when it relates to living beings to *drown*.² The ancient classic authors employ this term in speaking of a ship which, leaking in all parts, *founders* and is *engulfed* in the waters of the sea; or, again, in speaking of the smith who dips into a vessel filled with water the red-hot iron that he has just been hammering; he makes it undergo a *baptism*. In the Septuagint translation the same term is used with reference to Naaman the Syrian, who *plunged* himself seven times in the Jordan.³

¹ John iii. 23. The very name of Ænon indicates a plentiful spring. In Matt. iii. 6 it is said that John was baptizing *in* the Jordan, not on the bank of the river.

² "Those who are being drowned in the sea": *hoi en tē thalattē baptizomenoi*, Bas., 256. "He killed him by drowning": *baptizōn auton apekteine*, Æsop, *Fab.* See the French-Greek lexicons at the word *noyer*. The French word *noyer*, to drown, is derived from the Latin *necare*, to put to death, immersion being no doubt the easiest and most usual mode of putting noxious animals, etc., to death. [In Dr. Dunbar's English-Greek Lexicon (Edinburgh, 1840) the first meaning of the verb to *plunge* is *baptizo*.]

³ 2 Kings v. 14.—In German, *Taufe*, baptism, *taufen*, to baptize, spring from the same root as *tief*, deep, Old German, *toufen*. Such, at least, was

The Jews went in crowds to John the Baptist because there was in the air the presentiment of a catastrophe. The epoch was indeed very threatening, not unlike our own. Israel, the frail sparrow, was struggling in the talons of the Roman eagle. The imperial legionaries in the midst of Jerusalem were like an axe placed at the root of the trees. The thunder-cloud could be seen forming, the distant rumblings, precursors of the lightning-flash that was soon to strike, could already be heard ; there were premonitions of one of the most frightful disasters that ever terrified the world.

In the same way as the voluntary vaccination-wound averts the disease by paying it a kind of tribute, so it was hoped that by the acceptance of the simulated death of baptism the divine anger might be turned away, and escape from the imminent peril secured. Touched by this repentance, God, by John's ministry in baptism, pardoned the true penitents. On the other hand, he rejected the Pharisees and Sadducees who, strangers to true repentance, thought to make of this immersion a magical device for reconciling themselves to God. The Pharisees and Sadducees are the hypocrites whose superstitious formalism will always seek to materialize religious ceremonies. John the Baptist warned these men against such culpable illusions. Neither baptism, nor circumcision, nor sacrifices, nor the fact of belonging to the posterity of Abraham, nor the sacred rolls of the Law, could ever save anyone. There is no salvation except in conversion and a new life.

II.

These remarks will enable us to perceive the sense and meaning of the baptism submitted to by Jesus Christ.

Jesus being without sin, and being therefore unable to confess any, it is easy to understand that John would decline to administer baptism to him. An innocent man is not to be executed. John naturally exclaims: "I have need to be baptized by thee ; it is I, a sinner, who would need to be

the etymology maintained by Luther. This is closely related to the English *dip*, *deep*, and the name of *dippers* formerly applied to the Baptists ; in Dutch, *doopgezind* and *doopen*, akin to the German *taufen*.

baptized by thee, and thou comest to me!" But Jesus insists. In his sympathy, although himself innocent, he wishes to share the punishment of the guilty. Jesus, who was to crown his ministry by an expiatory death, begins that ministry and prepares himself for it by submitting to the symbolic ceremony of baptism. Spontaneously he presents himself to receive it, in the same way that three and a half years later he will go forward towards death. His baptism becomes the earnest and the pledge of the sacrifice of his life. The solidarity which his love for sinners establishes between himself and them leads him, in anticipation of the reality, to submit in a figure to that death which the conscience of his guilty brethren makes them feel that they deserve. Thus it is that he will "fulfil all righteousness" according to the terms of his answer to John. His immersion will be the symbol of his entrance into the death of the cross. So, too, the Jordan will be the emblem of the sepulchre in which his body must one day be laid. Uniting himself to our lot, he shares our punishment, and descends with us into the tomb in order that he may enable us to rise again from it with him. But, as his sojourn in the tomb was to last but a short time, so his stay in the water must not be prolonged. Therefore it is said that he went up *straightway* out of the water. This word *straightway* seems otherwise inexplicable. Similarly in the somewhat extraordinary phrase, "The heavens were opened before him," the words *before him* or *for him* which appear in some important manuscripts would seem useless unless we perceive in the fact so recorded a prophetic allusion to the ascension of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit descends in the form of a dove. This apparition recalls the dove of Noah's ark and its pacific message. The dove of the baptism of Jesus would also be an emblem of the pacification wrought by the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ and of the reconciliation of God to men coming, as we have seen, after that ceremony which itself was a figure of the deluge.

Then the voice of God is heard proclaiming that the sacrifice, of which the baptism was the anticipatory type, has rejoiced the heart of the heavenly Father: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus takes care him-

self to give us the key to the meaning of those words. He says that he is loved by the Father because he lays down his life, and having voluntarily abandoned it, takes it again.¹

In the Gospel story there are only three occasions on which the voice of the heavenly Father is heard, and on each occasion it is to celebrate the praise of the Son who is about to sacrifice himself. It is heard first at the baptism of Jesus, then at the transfiguration, when the Saviour talks with Moses and Elijah of his coming death,² and lastly three days before the death of Jesus, at the time when he compares himself to the grain of wheat, which "except it die abideth alone, but if it die it beareth much fruit." Jesus adds, speaking of his death: "But for this cause came I unto this hour"; at the same moment was heard the Father's voice responding to his.³

To return to the words that were spoken after the baptism, may they not be considered as a prologue to the apostles' preaching? What say Peter and Paul, heralds of God himself, if not, in effect: "Jesus is the only and well-beloved Son of God; hear ye him"?

The expiatory death of Jesus Christ, his prompt resurrection, his ascension, the Pentecostal descent of the Holy Spirit, the preaching of the Gospel in all the earth, in a word, the whole Gospel appears to be contained in the story of the baptism of Jesus, like the oak in the acorn. At the same time, our own history as disciples of Jesus Christ is to be found there recounted in symbol, as we shall proceed to show.

III.

Prescribed for all Christians, baptism has even to the present day kept the entrance-door to the visible Church; but, thanks to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the rite has been enriched by a new element. The emergence from the water no longer signifies merely that the baptized sinner obtains a respite; it is

¹ John x. 17, *sg.*

² *Exodus*, Luke ix. 31. Moses, Elijah, and Jesus Christ are the only three men mentioned in Scripture as having fasted forty days. The religious fast is a symbol of a renunciation of life for the service of God.

³ John xii. 28.

the symbol of a double renovation : moral resurrection in the present life, bodily resurrection in the life to come.

The baptism of the primitive Church was, then, the emblem of a salvation wrought through death. Submerged and, so to speak, executed, the old man was considered to have perished in the water, from whence arose a new man, destined to a new life of holiness and righteousness. Christian baptism presented at first a sort of summary of the vital doctrines of Christianity. For the believer it was a symbol of his faith and a preparation for the supreme trial of death. He would say : “ My body is plunged in the water, it will soon be deposited in the earth ; it is about to arise out of the water, it will one day arise out of the midst of the dust. Meanwhile I am going to prepare by a new life for the life of the glorified saints.” Thus understood, the ceremony of baptism, a touching symbol of the most consolatory realities, was the source of profound joy.

If the sentiments of Jesus in his baptism become our own ; if our faith, responding to his love, unites us spiritually with him ; if, while suffering every day the deleterious consequences of our faults, we bear them with resignation ; and if, like Jesus, we consent to suffer with and for others, we, too, shall receive the Holy Spirit, that is to say, a new and higher life. There will come into our hearts an infusion of righteousness. A spiritual resurrection will anticipate the final resurrection of our bodies.

Such was the teaching of the apostle Paul :

What shall we say then ? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound ? Far from us be such a thought. We who died to sin, how should we live any longer in sin ? Are ye perhaps ignorant that as many of us as have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into the communion of his death ?

If, then, we have been buried in the waters of baptism and assimilated to Christ in his death, it is in order that like as Christ was raised from among the dead through the glorious power of the Father, so we also might rise to live a new life. If in order to die a death like his we have become, as it were, the same plant with him, we shall doubtless remain united, to rise again with him.

We know that our old man was crucified with Christ, in order that that organ of sin might be destroyed, and that we might no longer be

in bondage to sin ; for sin has no power over a being that is dead. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.¹

Elsewhere the same apostle says: "Baptized with Christ, you have been buried with him, that you may rise again with him."² Paul compares the water of believers' baptism to the sepulchre wherein the body of Jesus lay between the time of his death and that of his resurrection. In another place the apostle declares that the Israelites were baptized in the Red Sea. The sea swallowed up the Egyptian soldiers ; the Israelites themselves went down into the bed of the sea as into a sepulchre, from which they went forth alive only in consequence of a miracle. The water threatened them on all sides.³

The apostle Peter, too, after having spoken of the deluge, immediately adds: "Whereunto correspondeth the figure whereby we are saved, that is baptism."⁴

IV.

Unhappily, the symbolism of baptism has been lost in the practice of the traditional Churches. The immersion of believers has at last been replaced by a drop of water moistening the face of a little child. This alteration of the rite appears to us to be deeply regrettable, not because we attach a superstitious virtue to any sort of ceremony, far from it, but because the alteration of the rite has involved the alteration of important teaching embodied in it.

It is generally supposed that the purpose of baptism is to symbolize the washing away of a stain, and this, indeed, is one of its symbolic lessons ; but the accessory has been made to

¹ Rom. vi. 1-8.—The translation of the passage here given is to a slight extent paraphrased. A perfectly clear and expressive translation cannot be always absolutely literal. A certain freedom, for instance, explains the remarkable success of M. Henri Lasserre's translation of the Gospels. Limpid and spirited, it is even in some respects more exact than the versions which boast of their literalism. But be that as it may, paraphrase is admissible, provided that, while acknowledged, it remains concise and, above all, faithful to the *thought* of the author ; this is the principle that we have sought to carry out in this work, here and elsewhere.

² Col. ii. 12. Cf. Luke xii. 50 ; Mark x. 38, 39.

³ 1 Cor. x. 2.

⁴ 1 Pet. iii. 21.

supersede the essential : as we have seen, baptism was first of all a symbol of death and resurrection. Besides, this debased form of baptism imposed upon mere babes is an unwarrantable interference with their future liberty. The spontaneity of the believer's act in asking for immersion gave to the rite its chief value. If its spontaneity be suppressed, baptism itself might just as well be abolished.¹

As now practised in the traditional Churches, this ceremony has the disadvantage of favouring in a greater or less degree the superstitious idea of a magical salvation. The Anglican liturgy supports this mischievous notion. In the Reformed Churches baptism is little more than the symbol of a Pelagian idea. Man is born good, a new birth is not at all necessary. Besides, the soul is born imperishable ; why, then, bring out these ideas of death and resurrection ? There is no question of putting to death the old man, let him live ! an ablution will suffice.

We are thus brought back to the lustral water of pagan ceremonies ; and thus does the traditional baptism pervert the principal teaching of the Gospel.

V.

This abuse has been so painfully felt that many Christians have joined together in order to combat it. Under the name of Baptists they have founded numerous and flourishing Churches. In each of their temples there is a large cistern, into the water of which the neophyte is completely plunged after having declared that he wishes to die to the world and to be born to a new life. There was good reason for the protest of the Baptists, but, forced to create a new sect, they have erected a barrier which isolates them.² We believe it to be

¹ The baptismal liturgy of Neuchâtel contains this sentence : " Parents of this child . . . you pray God by his Spirit to produce in the child that new birth of which baptism is the seal." To affix the seal to a blank sheet is hardly a normal mode of procedure. Cf. Acts viii. 12.

² In England the isolation referred to in the text is very little felt. Not only is there much fraternal intercourse between the Baptist Churches and other Free Churches, but in a large number of Baptist Churches, probably now the majority, the question of baptism is not made a bar to communion. [Note by the Translator.]

much better to practise the immersion of believers while avoiding as far as possible a separation from the various evangelical communities. We hope that the Churches will have the wisdom henceforth to cease excommunicating those of their members who practise baptism by immersion.

Our hope in this matter rests upon the fact that a long controversy has at last led most evangelical theologians to the same conclusions on the two following points relating to ecclesiastical history :

1st. In the primitive Church, baptism was practised by immersion.

2nd. Believers only were baptized.

To which we will add : those who, out of respect for the instructions of the founder of the Church, desire to conform strictly to the rite as established by him, ought at least to be tolerated, if not also imitated.

VI.

We now quote some authorities in support of these conclusions :

Baptism being administered by immersion, says M. Reuss, entrance into the water would represent the death and burial of the old man. The rising up out of the water would correspond to the resurrection of the new man. The believer being thus baptized *into* the death of Christ, entered upon a phase of existence that marked the transition from the former life to that which was to follow, as the tomb had done for Christ¹ It is evident that in presence of this conception of baptism, that of infants is excluded from the apostle's thought and horizon.²

The learned theologian and philologist, Hermann Cremer, does not hesitate to translate the word baptism by *immersion* or *submersion*.³

In the primitive Church, as we read in Dr. Schaff's *Encyclopædia*, baptism was by immersion, except in the case of the sick (clinic

¹ Col. iii. 1 ; Gal. ii. 19 ; Rom. viii. 10 ; 2 Tim. ii. 11.

² *Épîtres pauliniennes*, vol. ii., p. 64.

³ *Eintauchen, untertauchen*.—His explanation is, nevertheless, very incomplete.

baptism), who were baptized by pouring or sprinkling. These latter were often regarded as not properly baptized. . . . Of sprinkling we read: the practice first came into common use at the end of the thirteenth century, and was favoured by the growing rarity of adult baptism. . . . In the same article it is stated that there is no trace of infant baptism in the New Testament.¹

Mosheim, Gieseler, Hase, Neander, Dean Stanley, and most of the ecclesiastical historians who belong to evangelical Protestantism, are unanimous on this point. As an example we will cite the statement of Professor Chastel, who says:

In describing the ancient rites of baptism we have almost constantly supposed it administered to adults. At the beginning, in fact, it seems to have been only to them, since they only were able to give account of their belief, and with full understanding to make the moral engagements suitable to the Christian vocation. One passage of St. Paul seems even positively to exclude the contrary usage, for in that case the sanctification of Christian children which Paul treats as depending upon the fact that they are the issue of believing parents would have been guaranteed by their own baptism.² It is true that in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles the baptism of whole families is spoken of,³ but there is nothing to prove that infants were comprised in them, and the less so because the profession of faith in Christ is there always required. Besides, the words *oikos*, *oikia*, as well as *familia* in Latin, designate the assembly of masters and servants, rather than that of parents and children. . . . The custom of baptizing none, or scarcely any, but adults, evidently prevailed until nearly the end of the second

¹ *A Religious Encyclopædia*, based on the *Real-Encyklopædie* of Herzog; edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., etc.; Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1883—at the word *Baptism*.

"In the ancient Church, before the establishment of the custom of deferring baptism, sometimes even to the death-bed, the rule was to baptize by triple immersion. As Tertullian says: '*Non semel, sed ter ad singula nomina in personas singulas tingimur*' (*Adv. Prax.*, c. 26). But when the sick and dying (*clinici*) had to be baptized, that rite was no longer practicable. In these cases baptism was administered exceptionally by pouring or sprinkling three times. This custom, however, was not established without considerable difficulty, and was for a long time regarded as insufficient (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. vi., c. 43). See Suicer, *Thesaurus ecclesiasticus*, at the word *klinikos*."—Eug. Picard, *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, article *Baptême*, vol. ii., p. 62.

² 1 Cor. vii. 14.

³ Acts xvi. 30-34; xviii. 8; 1 Cor. i. 16.

century. Tertullian, who mentions the baptism of infants as then already introduced, speaks of it only to condemn it, because of the importance of the engagements that accompanied it, which could not be entered into by infants. If the need was alleged of assuring to the child the divine pardon, he alleged in reply the innocence of that age. He therefore did not hesitate to advise the postponement of the sacrament until adult age.¹

A learned theologian of the Anglican Church, the late Dean Stanley, Chaplain to the Queen, expressed himself thus :

The change from immersion to sprinkling has set aside the larger part of the apostolic language regarding baptism, and has altered the very meaning of the word. . . . The practice of immersion, apostolic and primitive as it was, had the sanction of the Master, of the venerable Churches of the early ages and of the sacred countries of the East . . . it is still continued in Eastern Churches . . . though peculiarly unsuitable to the tastes, the convenience, and the feelings of the countries of the North and West.²

The reformers maintained in principle the true notion of baptism. Let us listen to Luther, who endeavoured, but in vain, to re-establish immersion. He said :

The immersion in water signifies that our old man ought every day to be drowned, with his sins and passions, and, added the reformer, he ought to be kept under the water, for the fellow can swim.³

So, too, Calvin :

Baptism is a symbolic representation of the blood of Christ ; it shows us that we are crucified with Christ, and that in him we possess a new life. . . . The word *baptize* signifies to *immerse* ; immersion was the custom followed by the ancient Church.⁴

VII.

Let us now consult the most ancient monuments of the primitive Church.

¹ Chastel, *Histoire de l'Eglise*, vol. i., p. 140, *sq.* See Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, c. 18.

² *Nineteenth Century*, October, 1879, pp. 697, 698, *passim*.

³ *Cat. min.*, iv. 12. Luther, as we have seen, understood the word *Taufe*, baptism, to be derived from the adjective *tief*, deep, in accordance with the primitive character of the Christian rite.

⁴ *Instit.*, lib. iv. 15, §§ 1-6, 19.

The stones of the Catacombs cry out against the debasement of baptism. The mural paintings of these subterranean galleries show us what this ceremony was for the Church of the first centuries. There is to be seen Noah at the door of the ark, which might be considered as a floating coffin upon the waves of the deluge. Upon the ark an egg signifies the resurrection, or a tree rises out of the vessel as a symbol of new birth in the midst of universal death. Often, too, may be seen a dove carrying an olive leaf or branch in its beak.¹ Beside the ark may be observed sometimes Lazarus coming forth from his tomb; sometimes Jonah cast forth by the sea-monster and standing erect on the shore, with the word *anastasis* (resurrection) inscribed in full at the bottom of the painting.

The picture of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea also reminds us of baptism. But the emblem most frequently met with is that of fish, sometimes painted, sometimes modelled in little figures of bronze, bone, or baked earth. The great fish is the emblem of Christ.² The little fishes (*pisciculi*) are symbols of the believers, because, as Tertullian says, "Our birth takes place in the waters of baptism." The dolphin, the saviour fish, carrying on his back a basket of loaves, represents Jesus Christ, who procures for man the living bread. In pagan antiquity the dolphin is known to have been looked upon as a friend of man; it brought into port those who had been shipwrecked.

In other frescoes, the water springs from the mystic rock, stricken by the rod of Moses. "This water forms a river, wherein swims the Christian, that diminutive of the sacred *ichthus*, which is the Christ. The fisher of souls casts his line and takes him."³

The earliest Fathers apply to the ceremony of baptism the names *regeneratio*, *innovatio*, *carnis abjectio*, *unda genitalis*, *nativitas secunda*: new birth, renovation, putting away of the

¹ This fact may confirm the meaning that we have attributed to the appearance of a dove after the baptism of Jesus, p. 173.

² The Greek word *ichthus* (ΙΧΘΥΣ), which signifies a fish, contains the initials of the name and titles of the great Chief of the Church: *Iesus* *Christos*, *Theou* *Uios*, *Soter*; Jesus Christ, God's Son, Saviour.

³ Th. Roller, *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, at the word *Catacombes*.

flesh, birth water, second birth. Gregory of Nazianzen goes so far as to call baptism "communion of the Word," because this rite unites us to the eternal Word by making us members of his body.

In the early Churches it was the custom for the deacon to present the catechumens to the bishop on the eves of Easter and Pentecost, before the first dawning of the new day. Wrapped in a shroud, they were plunged three times into the water. This triple immersion was the figure of a complete death, as well as of the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day. Then were offered to the neophytes milk and honey, the nourishment of babes, and white clothing, symbol of virginal innocence. Christian names were also given to them, which they adopted instead of their former pagan names. This custom originated the use of the word *baptize* in the sense of giving a name. Thus the twilight hour, the new clothing replacing the shroud, the refreshment offered to the neophytes: everything in this ancient ritual spoke of the death of the old man and the birth of the new man. The frame was worthy of the picture. How all that has been changed!

The triple plunge was maintained among the Greeks until the eighth century, and in the West until the sixth. Even at the present day, in all the Greco-Russian Churches, baptism is still administered by immersion. It is so, too, in the Armenian, Coptic, and Nestorian Churches.

In the West, Thomas Aquinas, in the thirteenth century, recommended immersion as the safest practice. Sprinkling did not prevail until later than that. In 1311 the Council of Ravenna allowed a choice between the two rites.

At Rome, in the early centuries of the Church, the neophytes were taken to the Tiber. In England, the monk Augustine baptized the new converts in the rivers or in the sea. Sometimes the immersion took place in cisterns or wells, where no running water was available.

These tanks or reservoirs were often made in the form of a tomb. The baptistery received the name of *piscine*, a pond peopled with fish, or of *natatorium*, a lake for swimming in. It was by preference dug in the immediate neighbourhood of a

spring or a stream, so that the water might be both fresh and abundant.

These archæological details, which we take from the Abbé Martigny's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* evidently lend their support to the signification that we have recognized in baptism. Other archæologists, as Augusti, De Rossi, Garucci, De Vogüé, etc., have shown that the baptisteries, of which vestiges in a more or less complete state of preservation are still to be found in the three continents of the ancient world, are so many proofs of the fact that baptism was administered by immersion.

As for the baptism of infants, it is impossible to quote a single example earlier than the third century. Even in the third century only one mention of such baptism has been discovered. Born in the fourth century, Augustine, son of the pious Monica, was instructed by her in all the truths of the Gospel; yet he was baptized only at his own request after he had passed his thirtieth year. So, too, Gregory of Nazianzen, John Chrysostom, Basil, Ephrem, Ambrose, all brought up in the principles of Christianity, were baptized only after having attained adult age.

Let us recall a clear testimony rendered to Conditionalism by the baptism of the ancient Church. M. Picard says :

This singular idea, that the soul mortal by nature acquires immortality by baptism, is found already in Hermas: "Handed over unto death, men enter the baptismal water; they come out thence destined unto life."¹ In baptism man receives afresh the Spirit of God, received a first time from the breath of his mouth and lost by sin. He thereby becomes immortal.² Gregory of Nyssa attributes to the soul alone the immortality that results from baptism: "The body remains mortal because of sin, but it becomes capable of resurrection by union with the body of Christ in the holy supper."³

To sum up: the traditional rite is a grave departure from the primitive baptism as it was instituted by John the Baptist, adopted by Jesus Christ, and by him prescribed to his dis-

¹ Lib. iii., simil. ix., c. 16-18.

² Tertull., *De Baptismo*, c. 5. See Irenæus, *Adv. Hæres.*, lib. iii., c. 17.

³ Article already quoted, *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, vol. ii., p. 59.

ciples. This conclusion is evidently forced upon us by a careful study of the texts of Scripture and of the customs of the Church in the first centuries.

VIII.

Let us, however, examine an objection that has been raised against the primitive rite.

It had, no doubt (says Dean Stanley) the sanction of the apostles and of their Master. It had the sanction of the venerable Churches of the early ages and of the sacred countries of the East. . . . The practice is still continued in Eastern Churches. . . . But he adds: The practice of immersion . . . is peculiarly unsuitable to the tastes, the convenience, and the feelings of the countries of the North and West.

That which Dean Stanley speaks of as a motive of convenience is often nothing more than laxity or weakness. Moreover, there is nothing to prevent the warming of the baptismal water. The argument used by Dean Stanley cannot therefore be sustained, and we cannot but subscribe to the protest of M. Steinheil:

Have Christians the right to debase a sacrament by despoiling it of its divine symbolism? Would they not do much better to invoke a blessing on infants, as Jesus did, and to administer baptism under normal conditions rather than mutilate it by a premature administration.¹

Experience has proved that the solemn presentation of the little child in a Christian assembly would have all the advantages of pædobaptism without its disadvantages. If the child becomes the object of the prayers of the family and friends present, the purpose of the pious parents is surely attained.²

Pastor Alfred Porret has expressed views very similar to those of the venerable M. Steinheil. He has thus written:

Either we are greatly deceived, or there is here one of the questions which will come to the front in the near future. In our opinion it is difficult to avoid being struck by the poverty of the arguments from Scripture in favour of pædobaptism, and by the factitious and sophistical

¹ *Tel baptême, telle Eglise*, p. 52; Paris, 1879.

² The *Christian World* of 16 Oct., 1890, on page 522, under the heading *A Dedication of Infants*, contains an interesting account of a presentation of infants in a Baptist place of worship. This innovation is thought likely to promote the projected union of the Baptist and Congregational Churches.

character of most of the reasoning by which it is upheld. We believe that no impartial historian will traverse the statement of the illustrious Neander to the effect that infant baptism obtained a footing gradually in the second and third centuries as a consequence of the disastrous idea that the sacraments are necessary for salvation, but that such baptism was unknown in the apostolic age. We cannot avoid also asking ourselves in the name of experience whether the sense of the importance of the new birth is not seriously diminished by the value that is attributed to baptism when received in a condition of unconsciousness, and whether anything could be worse than the sad state of things, compounded of superstition and formalism, in which we now live, or, rather, in which we are now perishing.¹

While awaiting the general abandonment of the baptism of infants, it is exceedingly desirable that, as a measure of transition, the pastors and ministers who preside at the baptismal ceremony should warn the parents against the dangers and the abuse of that ceremony. Every time when it is observed, those present should be informed that the modern rite is defective, and that in principle it would be preferable to replace it by the imposition of hands, reserving the ordinance of baptism for adult age. It is the fact that when the parents are Christians, the children who have been baptized have no greater privilege than those who remain unbaptized. The salvation of the children depends upon the prayers that may be offered for them, the education that they may receive, and in the end upon the decision which they will themselves come to when they have reached the age of reflection.²

¹ *Evangile et Liberté*, 12 Sept., 1884.

From the debasement of baptism to its entire suppression there are but two steps; one of these has lately been taken by the National Church in Zürich. Henceforth all the pastors of that Church are enabled to receive unbaptized persons as effective members of the ecclesiastical community.

² With regard to the age of reflection, it is of the greatest importance to make the children understand that that age begins very early. Ostervald's catechism contained a statement likely to lead to pernicious error on this point. In the chapter entitled *Of the confirmation of the baptismal vow* this question may be read :

What is the difference between the state in which you have been in childhood and that in which you will henceforth be?

ANS. The salvation of infants is assured; but those who have attained the age of reason are responsible to God for their conduct.

The ratification of the baptismal vow is usually made at the age of from sixteen to eighteen years. The child, *not yet a catechumen*, who might read

IX.

The symbolism of the Lord's supper makes a kind of pendant to that of baptism. Baptism being a figure of the birth of the new man, the supper represents the maintenance and developement of the new life. The new man receives as his nourishment the words, the example, the life of Christ, his Spirit; in a word, the Christ himself as figured by the broken bread in the supper and by the wine poured out into the cup. The communion continues the work of our immortalization.

"I am the bread of life," said Jesus, "the bread that cometh down out of heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die."¹ Is the bread a symbol of happiness? If it had been a question of happiness, Jesus would more probably have spoken of milk and honey, perhaps of the fatted calf.² Is bread a symbol of holiness? Equally little. To specify holiness, Jesus would have spoken of unleavened bread. The image chosen had, then, reference only to the maintenance of existence, pure and simple. Such bread might have a disagreeable taste, or even be mixed with impurities; but in any case nutritive meal must have entered into its composition, it prevents death from hunger; that is its sole destination, and the reason of its existence. The notions of happiness and holiness remain in the background. On the other hand, the notion of duration is brought into prominence in the same context. Jesus is the food that *abideth*,³ the living bread which gives imperishable life. We find on the lips of Jesus the expression used later on in the first Epistle of John with

this question might well conclude from that word *henceforth* that he was provisionally irresponsible. Officially declared irresponsible, he might think it safe to let his evil propensities have free scope until the time when, arrived at the age of reason, he would become "responsible before God for his conduct." We would replace the answer quoted by a declaration somewhat in these terms: As soon as they can distinguish between good and evil, children are responsible to God for their conduct; but considering the instruction that we have just received, the responsibility that we now assume will henceforth be increased.

¹ John vi. 27, 48, 50, *sq.*

² Cant. iv. 11; Luke, xv. 23.

³ John vi. 27, *menousan*, in contrast with the earthly food, which becomes decomposed (*apollumenên*) and perishes. In 1 Cor. xv. 6, *menein* has the meaning of *survive*.

relation to the believer who *abideth* while the world passeth away.

“He that . . . drinketh my blood hath eternal life,” said Jesus. “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves.” Is the blood a symbol of happiness? No, still less so than the bread; it would rather be a symbol of horror and disgust. The very thought of drinking blood, and most particularly human blood, is repugnant to the imagination. It revolted, and still revolts, the Jews especially, to whom blood is forbidden under heavy penalties; and so it was after this saying of Jesus that many of his disciples left him. Is blood a symbol of sanctification? Still less is it so, since such a drink was a defilement; but it is the symbol of life properly so called. Moses had said, “The blood is the life;” to drink it was for the Israelite a strong, clear, and precise image of the transfusion of a vital fluid. Desiring to inculcate a most important truth, Jesus did not shrink from a metaphor that must have been truly shocking to Jewish ears.

X.

As with baptism, so it has been with the Lord’s supper. Under the influence of Platonic ideas, the meaning of the symbol has been obscured. The meaning of the practice having been lost, the supper, too, became a magical operation, a sort of fetish.

Notwithstanding the Reformation, a remainder of fetishism has survived in the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation. Calvin approached nearly to the primitive conception: he saw in the supper a symbol of the spiritual communion of the human soul with the invisible but present Christ. Still, by retaining the notion of an inalienable immortality, Calvin did away with the absolute necessity for this communion. A man who is by nature imperishable can, if he will, do without communion with God. It will be possible for him to be reconciled to God and to love him without exactly seeking in him the alimentation of his being. That being so, logic asks what can be the great utility of the supper, and it is easily explained why in many Protestant Churches this ceremony has

so nearly fallen into desuetude. Abandoned to a great extent by the masculine portion of the flocks, its tendency is, alas ! to disappear. It is with it as with baptism : the ancient and veritable significance of these august ceremonies must be re-established, if they are ever to resume their proper position. They are the armorial bearings of which the degenerate Church has lost the meaning. Lest they should lose their nobility and vitality in the ritualism, the sacerdotalism, and the sacramentalism of certain sects, the evangelical communities ought to seek in the primitive doctrine of *ontological life in Christ* the key of these important symbols. The question is worth the trouble ; it is a question, as it seems to us, of the future of those communities.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SECOND DEATH, OR FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

I. Sin, a guilty revolt, tends towards the subversion and suppression of the conditions of human existence—II. Biblical symbolism of the fire and the worm, two agents of destruction—III. Principal characteristic of punishment in general and of future punishment in particular. Punishment essentially deprivation of a faculty ; the supreme punishment will be the deprivation of all faculties—IV. Accessory and minatory character of suffering—V. Admissions of several generally esteemed theologians—VI. § 1, Spiritual or metaphorical death ; § 2, Virtual or proleptic death ; § 3, Putative or presumed death ; § 4, Everywhere and always in Scripture death indicates a suppression, never a manifestation of life—VII. Morality and efficacy of this notion of future punishment. In the first place, far from being too mild, it is of a nature to inspire a salutary terror—VIII. In the second place, it is not barbarous ; although terrible, it leaves room for mercy. The divine compassion is present and dominant even in the depths of hell.

I.

At the Creation every substance, organic and inorganic, received from God its characteristic properties, by which it is constituted, and which it must needs retain, otherwise it changes its nature and loses even its name. For example, water if it loses its liquidity becomes ice or steam ; a temperature between 32° and 212° Fahr. is the condition of that liquidity. Exposed to the action of fire, wood ceases to be wood and becomes smoke and ashes. No creature can escape from these conditions of existence, which in science are called laws. The aim of science is the knowledge of these laws.

Man, the king of nature, is himself subject to laws. Of these some are physical or physiological, chemical or dynamic, understood by the hygienist and the physician ; some, too, are psychological, governing the spiritual part of man's being, and

it is the business of the moral philosopher to study and to define these higher laws.

The possession of immortality is also dependent upon obedience to certain laws; unhappily, as we have had occasion to show, philosophy left to itself has failed to discover these laws. In order to become acquainted with them we have had to consult revelation. What does the Scripture teach as to the conditions of a permanent life? It presents to us a saying from Deuteronomy and a saying from Leviticus, brought together by Jesus Christ in the Gospel: To love self, to love God more than self, and to love the neighbour as much as self, that is the triple basis of the laws by which "man shall live."¹

Man was intended, by a supreme love to God, to maintain uninterrupted communion with the source of life, and so long as that communion existed he could not die. But in the day when, by an act of rebellion, man broke the bond of love that united him to the Creator, the perishing process began.

This bond is for him like the fibrous root of the plant whereby it draws sap and life from the soil in which it grows. For man, to live is to be united to God; so soon as that union ceases he is like the river cut off from its source. Sin carries death in itself, as the grain of wheat carries in itself the ear, as a principle carries its consequence. Essentially it is death, because it separates us from the author of all grace, from him who said, "I am that I am," who is the absolute Being, the Being without whom nothing can exist. James has admirably exhibited to us this genealogy of evil in the profound saying, "Lust when it hath conceived beareth sin, and sin when it is full grown bringeth forth death."²

There is a law, universal, necessary, "sovereign, which destroys all who resist and vivifies all who conform to it."³ The docile subject of that law continues and grows; he who transgresses it, compromises his own existence, withdraws himself from the source of being and brings about his own

¹ Lev. xviii. 5; Ezek. xx. 11. Cf. Luke x. 27, 28; Deut. vi. 5; Lev. xix. 18.

² Edmond de Pressensé, *Essai sur le dogme de la Rédemption*, p. 73; Paris, Meyrueis, 1867.

³ A. Gratry. *La morale et la loi de l'histoire*, vol. i., p. 297. Paris, 1868. See also in *Supplément* No. IV. the observations of Prof. Charles Secrétan.

decay in the proportion of his deviation ; he becomes liable to complete destruction if he persists in his aberration.

When a branch, broken by the tempest, is detached from the tree that bore it and falls to the ground, it yet retains for some days its rich foliage. It is full of sap, and the fruit that is on it may even ripen in the soft rays of an autumn sun ; but its maturity will be imperfect, and whilst the branches that are left on the tree will be covered with leaves and flowers in the ensuing season, the branch separated from the trunk will be nothing but dry wood, the prey of worms or fire.

Worms and fire, these are images frequently employed in Scripture.

Separated from the source of life, the sinner is advancing by a slow and funereal march towards eternal death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," says the prophet Ezekiel. "If ye live after the flesh ye must die ; the wages of sin is death," says St. Paul. "Sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death," says St. James, the death which kills only the body, then that which will kill the whole man, the second death spoken of in the Apocalypse.¹

The ruin of the body, according to the Scripture, is but a symbol and a sort of prelude of the destiny of the impenitent sinner. It is a progressive and irresistible decadence, a continuous diminution of the two factors of human life, sensation and action. The dimmed eyes wander in increasing darkness, the dull ears have only an indistinct perception of sounds, the enfeebled stomach refuses nourishment, the knees give way under their burden, all the vital functions are retarded, a moment arrives when they are altogether interrupted and the man is no more.

But all does not perish with the body. The Old Testament

¹ Ezek. xviii. 4 ; Rom. vi. 23 ; viii. 13 ; James i. 15 ; Rev. ii. 11 ; xx. 6, 14 ; xxi. 8. What is death but the cessation of life, and what is life but a combination of action and sensation ? Death, in its absolute sense, must, then, be the cessation of all action and all sensation. That such is the meaning of the word appears from the use made of it by the apostle when he exhorts the believer to *mortify* or *make dead* the lusts of the flesh or sin, in themselves : *thanatoō*, *stauroō*, *nekroō* (Rom. viii. 13 ; Gal. v. 24 ; Col. iii. 5). These passages relate to "the *annihilation* of the evil element in man, of sin and the flesh." Professor Reuss, *Histoire de la théologie apostolique*, vol. ii., p. 163 ; 1852.

in more passages than one, the New Testament in the most explicit manner, reveal to us a prolongation of existence beyond the tomb.

According to the Bible, souls after death fall into two principal classes, the first of which includes those who have had faith in the divine pardon and have lived in the practice of good works. These, reconciled with God, confiding in his great love, especially as manifested in the sacrifice of his only Son, regenerated, having returned to the constituent principle of their being and submitted themselves to the rule from which for a time they had departed, live for ever in happiness.¹

The second class is divided into two categories: irreconcilable sinners, and those who have never heard or have not understood the good news of the remission of sins. These latter naturally find themselves on the way to perdition, but various declarations of Scripture allow us to believe that they will be subjected to a new test, and that a special gospel message will be addressed to them. We shall have occasion to recur to this point in our tenth chapter. For the present we need only consider what will be the fate of the incorrigible sinners.

II.

According to Scripture, it is fire that in the end is to destroy God's enemies,² fire, the symbol of utter destruction, which converts the diamond, hardest of substances, into a subtile vapour, breaks the granite, melts the rocks and transforms them into lava. With these terrible natural phenomena in view, Isaiah, when speaking of the fire that will consume impenitent sinners, might well exclaim: "Who among us can dwell with the devouring fire, who among us can dwell with the

¹ *Hina zōēn echēte*, John v. 40; xx. 31—that ye may have life. Such is "the final aim of the divine economy, and, as it were, the keystone of John's theology." Reuss, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 453. It may be added that the whole biblical revelation tends in the same direction.

² The water of the deluge, whereof baptism is a memento, is, as we have seen, another symbol of destruction often employed in Scripture. Water and fire are, in fact, two kinds of environment incompatible with human life; but while water buries the dead who have perished therein, fire causes a yet more radical disappearance of its victims. We believe that the fire of hell spoken of in Scripture is only an image of the destructive effects of sin.

eternal burnings?"¹ The implied answer is "None!" There is no life that is compatible with fire; but, according to the Scripture, the final lot of the wicked is destruction by fire, for "behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace, and all the proud and all that work wickedness shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."²

To the horror of this burning the Apocalypse adds the suffocating vapour of brimstone, another agent of destruction that would hasten the end of living beings exposed to it.

In a dozen passages of the New Testament the last sojourn of impenitent sinners is called Gehenna, a word which, as is well known, means the valley of Hinnom, in allusion to the ravine below the southern wall of Jerusalem. It was in the part of this valley called Tophet, or the valley of burning, that some kings of Judah had burnt alive their own children in honour of Moloch. Josiah, when he came to the throne, devoted this valley to infamy; he made it the sewer of the city, a place for refuse into which were cast all the abominations of the capital, the dead bodies of beasts of burden and of executed criminals. A fire constantly burning consumed these corpses; hence the expression "the Gehenna of fire."³ Such were the images evoked by the expression Gehenna employed by Jesus to make his hearers understand what a terrible final destiny was threatening impenitent souls. He said, "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna."⁴

Total destruction is then, according to the Scripture, the final lot of obstinate sinners. They are sheep which, having

¹ Isa. xxxiii. 14.

² Mal. iv. 1 [iii. 19].

³ *Gehenna tou puros*. See 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Jer. vii. 32, 33; xix. 2, 6; Mark ix. 48. This same valley became a field of battle when the Romans besieged Jerusalem. Afterwards the victors heaped up in it the dead bodies which were strewn over the ruins of the city. Josephus, *Wars*, vi. 8, § 5; v. 12, § 7. Cf. Jer. vii. 32. The French word *gêne* (constraint), which at first meant torture, is derived from the Hebrew substantive *Ge-hinnom*, in Greek *Gehenna*.

⁴ *Kai psuchên kai sôma apolesai*. Matt. x. 28. It has been said that although God *can* destroy a soul, he *will* never do so. That is to change the solemn warning of Jesus Christ into an empty threat. Philosophy suffices to show that God *can* destroy a soul that he has created. "I am not able to demonstrate that God cannot annihilate it [the soul], but only that it is of a nature entirely distinct from that of the body."—Descartes.

strayed away from the shepherd, are exposed to the wolf's jaws, to the pangs of hunger and thirst, to the agony of a miserable death. Authors of their own ruin, the rebels will "perish as mere animals destined to be taken and destroyed."¹ "They shall be as though they had not been;"² "as a vanishing cloud;"³ "as a dream when one awaketh;"⁴ "like a potter's vessel dashed in pieces;"⁵ "as ashes under the feet;"⁶ "in smoke shall they consume away."⁷ "The workers of iniquity . . . shall be destroyed for ever."⁸ Jesus compares them sometimes to fruitless vine branches, sometimes to bundles of dried tares, which are burnt up.⁹

This punishment is eternal inasmuch as it is definitive. Those who have neglected the poor and afflicted will go, Jesus says, into an eternal punishment.¹⁰ We note in passing that the expression *eternal sufferings* (Fr. *peines éternelles*) is not biblical; there is nothing to warrant the introduction of that plural, which inaccurate revisers substituted for the singular *eternal chastisement*, as retained by Olivetan.¹¹

It should be observed that when the word *eternal* qualifies an act, the eternity is the attribute not of the act itself, but of the result of the act. It then denotes the perpetuity of the effect produced by the act or by the agent. Thus, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Jesus is said to have obtained an *eternal redemption*; a redemption eternal in its effects, although the act by which it was obtained was accomplished in one day upon the cross.¹² In the same Epistle an *eternal judgement*¹³ is spoken of;

¹ 2 Pet. ii. 12.

² Obad. 16. Cf. Job x. 19.

³ Job vii. 9.

⁴ Psa. lxxiii. 20.

⁵ Psa. ii. 9; Rev. ii. 27; Rom. ix. 22; Matt. xxi. 44.

⁶ Mal. iv. 3.

⁷ Psa. xxxvii. 20.

⁸ Psa. xcii. 7. Cf. 2 Thess. i. 9.

⁹ Matt. xiii. 30; John xv. 6.

¹⁰ *Kolasin aiónion*. Matt. xxv. 46.

¹¹ This alteration is as old as the Geneva version of 1588. Estienne's edition, 1556, rendered the words *eternal torment*, another error which has reappeared in the version of J. N. Darby, where we find *eternal torments*.

¹² Heb. ix. 12. Cf. ver. 25, 28; v. 9; vi. 2; vii. 25. On this point Alford remarks that *aîōnian*, eternal, here answers to the preceding *ephapax*, once for all, in the same verse. Grimm: *æternum valens*.

¹³ Heb. vi. 2. A nearly similar expression occurs Mark iii. 29, "an eternal sin." This rhetorical figure which assigns to an act the perpetuity of its effects is also found: 1 Kings ix. 13, "He called the cities the land of Cabul unto this day;" Deut. xi. 4, "The Egyptians destroyed unto this day;"

evidently it is only the effect of the sentence that is eternal. In Jude the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are named as permanent witnesses of the divine vengeance, being the prey of *eternal fire*.¹ The waters of the Dead Sea cover the site of the guilty cities, which were destroyed in a moment;² but the fire that consumed them has been eternal in its effects, having destroyed them for ever.³ The Dead Sea is the eternal witness of an historical catastrophe. So, too, in the passage of Matthew that is under review, the chastisement will consist in a gradual destruction, and this chastisement will be irremediable. This is a mode of speech by no means foreign to our modern languages; it is found in the expression “an eternal farewell,” *dire un éternel adieu*,⁴ synonymous with a final or supreme farewell; the chastisement spoken of by Jesus is likewise supreme and final. We therefore do not limit the duration of eternal punishment, as is sometimes supposed, but we believe that it implies a final destruction.

“The worm that dieth not” is, like the “unquenchable fire,” a symbol of definitive death. So long as the corpse, which, moreover, is perfectly insensible, is gnawed by the worm it cannot live again. If the worm never dies, there will be no more possibility of life for the being symbolized by the corpse. We shall deal more fully with the meaning of these emblems in the eleventh chapter.

III.

If we now endeavour to determine the essential character of future punishment, the way may be indicated by etymology.

Rev. xx. 2, “He laid hold on the dragon . . . and bound him a thousand years;” then he cast him into the abyss, to remain there shut in until the end of the thousand years. This principle of interpretation has been recognized by one of our honoured opponents: “When the Scripture qualifies redemption and the last judgement as *eternal*, the term applies to the consequences of those acts, and not to the acts themselves.” E. Arnaud, *Manuel de dogmatique*, p. 567.

¹ *Huḡechousai*, Jude 7. So also Libanius, speaking of Troy: *Keitai paradeigma dustuchias puros aiōniou*. Declam. v., p. 289.

² Lam. iv. 6.

³ Cf. Matt. xviii. 8; xxv. 41; Mark iii. 29; Dan. xii. 2.

⁴ *Æternum vale*, Ovid. See, too, 2 Thess. i. 9, *olethron aionion*, *eternal destruction*, synonymous with *irremediable destruction*. “One day is still left to us in which to change the severity of our *eternal sentence*.”—Massillon.

The six dictionaries of Passow, Planche, Alexandre, Wahl, Grimm, and Liddell and Scott are unanimous in deriving the Greek word *kolasis*, chastisement, from a root signifying to break by striking, to cut off, curtail, dock, prune, mutilate, dismember;¹ whence our word *iconoclast*, one who breaks or destroys images. *Kolasis*, therefore, designates chastisement by means of deprivation.

On careful consideration, it will be seen that chastisement most frequently involves the idea of a loss, a deprivation: a fine is loss of money; imprisonment, loss of liberty; death, loss of life. The signification is exactly that of the Latin term *castigare*, the etymological meaning of which is *to prune* or *lop*, and so of the French *châtier*, and the English *chasten*. It is to cut off the sterile branches: *Castigatio, amputatio, quæ arboribus luxuriantibus adhibetur*, according to the definition of Estienne's *Thesaurus*,² the very operation spoken of by Jesus himself in the similitude of the vine and the branches, where he says: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh it away, and every branch that beareth fruit he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit . . . If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a sterile branch, and is withered; these are gathered up and cast into the fire, and they are burnt."³ The wicked will be *for ever cut off* from the trunk of humanity, their destruction will be total and final: that is the eternal chastisement.⁴

¹ *Kolazō*, frequentative of *kolouō*, poet., whence *kolasis*, *mutilatio*, Wahl; *kolos*, maimed. In the LXX. the terms *kolasis* or *kolazō* are used in relation to capital punishment, banishment, confiscation, or imprisonment, all these sentences implying deprivation. 1 Esdras viii. 24. Cf. Ezra vii. 26; Ezek. xviii. 30, Greek. When the chastisement does not imply deprivation, as, for example, when it consists in the infliction of strokes, the New Testament and the LXX. employ the word *paideia*, admonitive correction (2 Chron. x. 14; Prov. iii. 11; xxii. 15; Luke xxiii. 16; Heb. xii. 6, 7), or sometimes the words *epitimia*, *elegxis*, *ekdikēsis*. An attempt has been made to distinguish between *kolasis* and *timōria*, as though the first of these words would designate rather a *correction* and the second a *vindictive punishment*; but it does not seem possible always to maintain this distinction. In French *peine*, *punition*, and *châtiment* are sometimes confounded, although usually *châtiment* is in order to the amendment of the guilty subject.

² In the same sense is used the phrase *to chasten* a composition, prose or verse.

³ John xv. 1, *sq.* To be in accordance with the traditional dogma, Jesus ought to have said: "They are cast into the fire, and are not burnt."

⁴ "In view of the contrast established in this verse between *life* and

According to the Bible, life is a loan, which God takes back from him who misuses it. The Creator does not oblige anyone to remain seated at the banquet of existence; to the righteous he grants immortality; but those who presumptuously endeavour to change the laws of their being exclude themselves, they attempt an impossibility, as would a man who should attempt to live with his natural position always reversed. The wicked will not succeed in destroying the laws, which are unchangeable, but they may use their liberty as an instrument for their own destruction. Spirits, like bodies, last only so long as they deserve to last. The unregenerate soul will not eternally survive physical death; the rust that eats through the scabbard will end by eating up the blade. There is no useless torment, but the gradual destruction of an individuality that is hastening back into the nothingness out of which the divine goodness had brought it forth; a terrible agony, and then a night without a morrow. This soul has no more power of perception or of action: it was, it loved, it lived; it loves no more, it is dead, it is no more!¹

In the sacred text there are not to be found any such expressions as “perpetual torments,” “endless sufferings,” an “eternal hell,” as there is no such phrase as “immortal souls.” On the other hand, an “eternal life” for the righteous is the subject of frequent declarations. This life is “endless”; righteousness, mercy, joy, and salvation are everlasting.²

IV.

But what is to be our answer to a certain would-be wisdom which, assuming to be wiser than the divine word, is disturbed at the prospect of a punishment without eternal sufferings, and calls it laxity? True wisdom would urge a reform of the traditional notion of chastisement. It is thought, erroneously

chastisement, the chastisement would seem to consist in an annihilation.”—De Wette upon Matt. xxv. 46. We may add that if *suffering* were the special characteristic of the chastisement, the second part of the verse would have spoken of the eternal *happiness* of the righteous.

¹ On the ontological relation between moral evil and the biological decay of the creature, see Chap. XI., sect. v., and our separate Study of Evil in *Supplement* No. V.

² Heb. v. 9; vii. 16; Psa. cxviii. 1; Isa. li. 6; lxi. 7, etc.

in our opinion, that suffering is the essential element in punishment.¹ A millionaire, upon whom a fine is inflicted, is punished, but far from experiencing any suffering, he perhaps laughs at the loss, for him altogether insignificant; he may even be proud of it as a display of his riches. Suffering may or may not accompany chastisement;² it may even be said that, as compared with chastisement proper, suffering is a benefit for him who is willing to profit by it. A vigilant sentinel, it protects the infant in the cradle and the wounded soldier on the field of battle. It awakes them, provokes their cries, and procures for them a salutary help. It is, moreover, the providential tocsin which makes the sinner aware of the imminence of his danger.³

Anyone foolish enough to fix his eyes upon the sun would at first feel a sharp pain; if, deaf to the warning of suffering, he persists, the pain will cease, but he will have lost his sight; thus blindness will be the chastisement of which the passing pain was only the prelude.

By the prevalent notion that conscious suffering is the essence of punishment, the axis of the sphere of divine retributions has been displaced.

The total destruction of the human soul will doubtless be

¹ French : *peine*, from Latin *pæna*; properly a ransom paid as damages or compensation for a crime : from the Greek *poine*, originally a penalty paid for homicide, and so *chastisement*, *expiation*, sometimes *retribution*, *price*, *recompense*, occasionally *sorrow*, *pain*.

² As an example of a chastisement without suffering may be cited the old English law that punished the suicide by causing him to be buried at night without any religious ceremony. So, too, by the old French law, the body of a suicide or one killed in a duel was doomed to be publicly and ignominiously dragged along on a hurdle. In certain states of North America criminals about to be executed are made insensible with chloroform. And even without chloroform decapitation and hanging, as now practised by civilized peoples, are in themselves deaths less painful and terrible than the agonies of many that are called natural. If suffering were the essence of chastisement, great criminals ought to be made to suffer tortures proportioned to the number and atrocity of their crimes. Yet in most civilized countries the law appoints one only punishment for murderers of every degree of guilt—viz., deprivation of life. Is it so that theology, which should be a guide of the legislator, has now to receive from him the teachings of divine wisdom?

³ See the considerations of Professor Ernest Naville in support of this view. *Le Libre Arbitre*, § 108.

preceded by sufferings proportioned in duration and intensity to the native vitality of that soul; the more richly a soul is endowed, the greater the mass of its vital forces, the more poignant will be the anguish of its dissolution. In this sense, "to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required;" but we do not see that the Bible makes the chastisement to consist mainly in the suffering.

It is worthy of note that Paul, the most didactic of the apostles, who protests that he "has not shrunk from declaring the whole counsel of God,"¹ never employs an expression, even in his most terrible threatenings, which implies the pretended eternal sufferings of the damned. He seems, indeed, to have carefully avoided every image that might have been misleading in that respect. He never speaks of hell, but he has tears for those who are perishing.²

Is a sanction required for the law that has been broken? That sanction is guaranteed by the infallible correlation between the sin and the partial or total death which overtakes the sinner. It is not written: The soul that sinneth shall suffer, but: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Death is the wages of sin, death with its fearful and painful accompaniments, but especially and above all death itself, the king of terrors, whose eternal silence renders to the violated law a homage worthy of its eternal majesty. The evil, the contempt of the law, is destroyed in the person of the evildoer; the serpent dead, dead is the venom; sufficiently vindicated, the law lives and triumphs for ever.

The Creator, jealous of the conservation of man, the creature of his predilection, and with a view to man's restoration, in his fatherly care has placed suffering in the dark and narrow passage that separates sin from death. It is the mission of suffering, as a vigilant guard, to make the victim of evil aware of his danger. In man, too, there is remorse, in addition to the physical and psychical sufferings of the animal world. The sinner, refusing to accuse himself, only too often makes the mistake of cursing the suffering, which is but the crook of

¹ Acts xx. 20, 27. Esoteric teaching is contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. Cf. John xviii. 20; Matt. x. 27. The reserve indicated in John xvi. 12 was provisional only.

² Philip. iii. 18, 19.

the great shepherd who is recalling to the fold his wandering sheep.

Suffering usually forms part of chastisement ; yet it is so far from being confounded with chastisement, and even from forming its principal element, that either of them may exist without the other. A criminal ignorant of his condemnation to death, to whom a soporific poison should be administered without his knowledge, would undergo his punishment, capital punishment, without being aware of it. He might die with a smile on his lips, but would it be said that he had not been punished ? No, the shortening of his life, independently of the punishment beyond, would surely constitute a certain measure of chastisement.¹

But pain always denotes the existence of an evil ; that is, a destruction, partial or total, in course of accomplishment. The pain of a violent blow is an indication of a contusion, or, in other words, a beginning of local death. The pain, which is essentially symptomatic and preventive, tends to disappear when the evil is cured or becomes incurable.

Sismondi, in his journal, tells of an officer of his acquaintance, Major de Besançon, who at the battle of Wagram was knocked down by a sword stroke, and then during two hours trampled over by horses ; although his head was “pounded to a jelly,” he said that he did not begin really to suffer until he found himself in the tent and in the hands of the surgeons. Sismondi thus concludes :

Providence has arranged the swoon as a remedy against the most excruciating pain ; all grave wounds cause a loss of consciousness, and intense suffering is hardly ever felt except when the patient has the courage to suffer ; that is, when the healing begins and personal effort is made to preserve the life.²

¹ There are dramas in which an evildoer escapes the due chastisement of his crimes ; but suddenly he falls, stabbed to death, and the spectators applaud this finish ; the public sense of justice is satisfied, yet the death has been so sudden that there could be scarcely any suffering on the part of the criminal. As for the future punishment, the spectators do not think of it. Perhaps, without any clear perception of it, they recognize the chastisement in the deprivation of life, the cutting off of the days which the criminal might have passed upon earth.

² *J. C. L. de Sismondi, Fragments de son journal et de sa correspondance*, p. 73 ; Geneva, 1857.

To sum up, Conditionalism is a consolatory doctrine, which presses forward joyously towards that epoch when death will be no more than a distant memory.

On the other hand, we believe that suffering will not fail to play a terrible part in future punishment. It will be the preliminary phase of that punishment. The supreme chastisement will put an end to the individual only after a painful decay beyond the tomb. In accordance with the scientific law of continuity, the impenitent sinner will become the prey of a long and lamentable decline. There will then be "weeping and gnashing of teeth," as there is even here below, to be followed in the case of the still rebellious by that dismal silence which the Scripture calls "the second death," the death from which none returns, and which kills even that which the first death had left alive.¹

V.

Notwithstanding the long tyranny of the Churches, the notion here presented has found more than one partizan. The Bible and logic have extorted some admissions from theologians the most orthodox. Our first quotation shall be from the pious and profound theologian Beck, of Tübingen, who has been praised for his wise reserve;² this praise will give all the more

¹ M. George Godet sees in the *second death* "the definitive separation of the soul from God, the source of its life" (*Chrét. évang.*, 1882, p. 559). But he could not deny that sin is itself a separation from God (Isa. lix. 2), and he admits that sin is a *spiritual death* (*Chrét. évang.*, p. 505, sq.). The second death would then be only a *first death* continued; this is equal to saying that it has no right to the title of *second death*. If, on the other hand, it should be maintained, as is done by M. Geo. Godet, that the first death is *physical*, and that the analogy between that and the second death consists in this, that while physical death *separates* the body from the soul, the second death *separates* the soul from God, we have to make two objections: first, that physical death does not merely separate; its principal effect is to *kill all activity of the body*, and the analogy would require that the second death should *kill all activity of the soul*; second, that to make the second death synonymous with moral separation from God is to make the second death begin here below; while the Apocalypse, which alone tells us of the second death, places it at the end of the world and after the last judgement. The definition given by M. Geo. Godet is therefore inadmissible, whether regarded from the point of view of analogy or from that of the texts.

Geo. Godet, *Chrét. évang.*, 1882, p. 563.

value to his assertions, those here quoted being taken from the very book in which he recommends reserve. If he speaks, it is doubtless with deliberation and full perception of the force of his words. He says :

There is a death which dissolves the union of soul and spirit.¹ . . . When death thus pervades the whole being, the personality comes to an end, *apōleia* (Luke ix. 25). It is not absolute nonentity, but absolute passivity in the powerlessness and misery of death, a cessation of the soul's personal and spiritual independence and power of activity, nothing being left but a life of dependent and powerless impulse and sensation, and that materialized as mere animal existence.²

We need not inquire what would be the use of a perpetuation of this impersonal residuum, nor what could be the eternal usefulness of these bacilli and vibrions of moral decomposition. It is enough for our purpose to show that in Professor Beck's view the personality no longer exists. The personality is the *ego*, and it is with that alone that we are concerned. Therein we see the very image of God, a reflection of the divine *ego*. When that image is obliterated, whatever remainder may be left is beyond the range of our present inquiry, and it matters little to us whether it consists of destructible or indestructible elements.

We have been asked what we mean by annihilation. We answer : the gradual diminution of the faculties possessed by the individual *ego*, and the final extinction of that master faculty by which we take possession of the other faculties.³

Once more : without the conscient *ego* there is no immortality worthy of the name ; who can wish for a life without

¹ On this distinction between soul and spirit see Chap. V., sect. i., and Chap. III., sect. iii., p. 86.

² " Als Auflösung des seelisch-geistigen Verbandes . . . In dieser Durchdringung des ganzen Seyns vom Tode geht die Persönlichkeit (Luke ix. 25) im Sterben auf (*apōleia*) ; es ist nicht absolutes Nicht-seyn, aber absolute Passivität in Todes-unmacht und Todes-jammer, ein Ausleben der geistig-persönlichen Selbstständigkeit und Selbstbethätigungskraft der Seele, wobei ein unselbstständiges impotentes Trieb und Empfindungsleben fort dauert, aber materialisirt als bloß animalisches Existenz. Matt. x. 28 ; xvi. 25, 26 ; Luke ix. 60 ; James v. 20 ; Heb. x. 39 ; Off. (Rev.) xx. 14, 15 ; xxi. 8 ; xxii. 14, 15 ; xiv. 10, 11 ; Mark ix. 42, *sq.* " — *Umriss der biblischen Seelenlehre*. Stuttgart, 1871, Kap. I., § 15.

³ See Chap. I., sect. vii. ; Chap. III., sect. iii. ; and *Supplement* No. III.

personality? The perception of ourselves is that which raises us from the animal to the human sphere. The infant has not the perception of his personality, and it is only in adult age that it acquires distinctness. In its nature precarious, it vanishes every day in the time of sleep; it becomes perverted in dreams, in the hypnotic trance, in mental aberration, in drunkenness, in second childhood. Without the loss of reason it is possible for an individual to possess alternately the consciousness of two distinct identities apparently independent of each other.¹ If the *ego*, which has been thought to be essentially indivisible, can thus become twofold, and by that very fact be for a time eclipsed, there can be no great difficulty in admitting that it might also definitively disappear. That which has had a beginning may also have an end; that which comes to an end may not begin again. Suppose that a human *ego* has deliberately involved himself in a state contrary to the conditions of his existence; that he has both perverted and consumed himself in a persistent rebellion against God; that the last effort of his expiring will has rejected the gracious offer of help; in a word, that he has by degrees lost all moral and even biological reason for his existence: how, why should he arise out of that inconscient state into which he has plunged himself? Is it conceivable that God will recall into rational existence one who has voluntarily thrown away his reason? Is there to be found an argument in support of this hypothesis of a magical restoration? We have not succeeded in finding one.

From the point of view of the moral sanction, the shipwreck of the personality might be considered as punishing the abuse of a conditional prerogative.

But let us now return to the admissions of theologians.

It has been said of Professor Nietzsche that "never was an exquisite delicacy of religious sentiment united to a judgement so solid and so sound." The following lines will show to how great an extent he, too, departed from the traditional theory. He says:

The sinner invokes, provokes, and invites death. It is certain that

¹ M. Azam. On the duplication of the personality in somnambulism. *Revue scientifique*, 2 Aug., 1890. [See also an article by F. W. H. Myers on Science and a Future Life in the *Nineteenth Century* for April, 1891, p. 636.]

the question is not one of purely spiritual death, but of the fact that evil tends towards non-existence, to the violation and suppression of all life. . . . The soul is dependent upon the Creator, it has not an absolute immortality.¹ It is certain that it has been created and constituted with a view to obtaining an eternal life; but it loses the life that is personal to it in the measure in which it becomes a stranger to the truth, to love, and to salvation. It follows that with the progress of sin the soul advances towards the destruction that awaits it in hell; in other terms, towards its death. . . . There is nothing in the Word of God, or in the conditions of the kingdom of God, to require the admission of the perpetual existence of the damned, the indestructibility of an individual incapable of becoming holy and happy. . . . The notion of annihilation is evident in the passage which represents death and hell as being cast into the lake burning with fire and brimstone. There, in fact, death and hell cease absolutely to exist. . . . Further, as the first death puts an end to the existence of the body, the analogy implies that the second death is the cessation of the existence of the soul.

Nitzsch concludes by setting forth a fourfold alternative :

Eternal damnation is an hypothesis that supposes either the absolute necessity of universal salvation, or an absolute nonentity, or, thirdly, an inconceivable existence in nonentity, or, lastly, an individual existence accompanied by a purely passive and privative sentiment of redemption and of the kingdom of God. Incapable of action, either right or wrong, the sinner would be nothing but a ruin.²

When the *ruin* is complete it puts an end to the existence of the ruined object.³

According to the celebrated commentator Delitzsch, the wicked who "return to Sheol" return very nearly to the state of passivity and inertia that is anterior to existence here below.⁴

Professor Twesten, who was a colleague of Nitzsch in the University of Berlin, admitted for the lost a state of suffering,

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 16; Eccl. xii. 7.

² *System der christlichen Lehre*, 5th edition, §§ 121, 122, and 219.

³ This may serve as a reply to Professor J. A. Beet, who, in his articles on New Testament Teaching on the Future Punishment of Sin, in *The Expositor* for 1890, insists strongly on this notion of dilapidation, which he places in opposition to that of destruction. The traditional dogma being dislodged from its old positions, tries to find a refuge in the midst of these "eternal ruins."

Commentary on the Psalms, ix. 18, *sq.*

of internal corrosion, resulting in a sort of consumption, a dullness, and finally an annihilation of the personal consciousness. The punishment would become eternal through its definitive and irreparable character, but it would not at last cause any sensation.

Rothe, the famous dogmatician, Ritschl, and their followers have reached analogous conclusions; the same may be said of a large number of Conditionalist theologians. Such is also the case of several representatives of traditional evangelism. Among the chief of these may be mentioned Professor F. Godet, who has paid special attention to the point in question.¹

The Roman Catholic clergy are unhappily in bondage under the heavy chain of tradition. All the more significant, therefore, is the avowal of a priest of the Oratory. It is Father Gratry who says:

Since man does not exist by his own power, is not his own origin, has not in himself the source of his life, but, on the contrary, needs always to be sustained by God, if he should separate himself from his source, so as to have no source outside himself, it is clear that he must speedily be exhausted, must decrease and go down towards nonentity. Therein lies the whole question of life and death.²

This conception is in such close conformity with the nature of things that it sometimes slips into the writings of those even who are opposed to it, as for example in the following passage from the last work of the late Frederic de Rougemont:

The spirit, seduced by the flesh through the allurements of sensuous enjoyments, vegetates in a deadly powerlessness, which would result in its death and annihilation if it were not indestructible.³

Does it not seem that this pretended indestructibility comes in at the end of the sentence like a *deus ex machinâ* in order to rescue the eminent author from the claims of logic?

¹ For quotations which leave no doubt as to the view of the venerable Neuchâtel theologian, see Chap. XI., sectt. i. (at end), iv. (§ 2), and ix.

² *Connaissance de l'âme*, vol. i., ch. 6. See also our Chap. I., p. 38, note 2.

³ *Un mystère de la passion*, p. 397.

VI.

§ I. SPIRITUAL DEATH.

We are now about to penetrate the principal entrenchment of traditional exegesis. It opposes us with certain passages of the New Testament wherein death seems to mean a life, since those of whom it is predicated still exist, perceive, and act. This state has been called *spiritual death*. This death, which is treated as synonymous with perverted life, is the condition of impenitent sinners, and it is said that it may be prolonged to eternity. Eternal death, which is not a biblical phrase, would designate a *perpetual life* in endless sufferings.

For example, the words of Paul to the Ephesians are quoted : "Ye were dead in your trespasses,"¹ and it is argued thus : "The death of the unconverted Ephesians was a *spiritual death* ; that death had not destroyed them ; therefore the victims of spiritual death may live for an indefinite time." To this we reply : Every death is the cessation of vital functions, every death kills. Spiritual death kills the spiritual life. When that life is extinguished, physical and psychical life may still exist, but only provisionally ; having no guarantee of immortality, the physical and psychical life will perish in their turn. Man without spiritual life is an incomplete being ; if sin destroys in him the aptitude to receive that life, man becomes a monstrous being, and nature teaches us that monstrosities are incapable of long life. Tortoises have been seen to move some time after their heads were cut off ; but decapitation was certainly not for these reptiles an assurance of longevity. The palm-tree of which the top withers will surely die ; so, too, spiritual death, so far from excluding the complete death of the individual, is really its sinister prelude. Spiritually dead, the Ephesians were on the way to absolute nonentity.²

¹ Eph. ii. 1, 5 ; Col. ii. 13. These texts, and others similar to them which we shall presently mention, were embarrassing to Olshausen and Nitzsch, who were otherwise very favourable towards Conditionalism. We shall soon see that at the bottom of their latest scruples there was in reality only the subtle and tenacious *à priori* of inalienable immortality. To many a theologian habit has become a second nature.

² As to the ontological consequences of spiritual death, see Chap. III., sect. iii.

It is high time to renounce that traditional illusion which, by a fatal confusion of categories, makes *life* a synonym of *happiness*, and *death* synonymous with *suffering*. It will have to be admitted that these terms never lose their specific and ontological meaning. Everything allows, and even commands, that their fundamental notion should be left to these words. It will never be "absurd," nor "quasi disloyal," it will always and everywhere be reasonable, honest, and obligatory, to respect a rule of interpretation which is the basis and the very reason of the existence of evangelical Protestantism.

What, in fact, is death?¹

In Scripture, as well as in ordinary language, death designates primarily and habitually the cessation of bodily life, and when it relates to inanimate existences their destruction. This is its proper meaning.²

There are also figurative meanings of death, but these retain everywhere and always the fundamental notion of the proper meaning: they all imply the end of an action and a sensation; if the word relates to a sentiment, the suppression of that sentiment; if it relates to a habit, the suppression of that habit.

In relation to human life there are, as it seems to us, six of these figurative uses, viz.:

¹ Etymologically the French word *mort* is a branch from the Sanscrit root *mṛita*, *mṛi*, to die; Zend, *maretan*, mortal man; English, *to mar*.—A contemporary thinker defines physical death as "The last degree of bodily weakness."—"The second state of death, that of putrefaction, *reduction to powder*, is designated in the Celtic tongue *moër*, in Latin *mors*, *mortis*, in French *mort*, in Italian *morte*, in Spanish *muerte*; Mars is the god who kills according to Mommsen. From *mar* the French has made *marais*, English *marsh*, German *moor*, *morast*, *marschland*. The *moor* is a boggy and unhealthy place. The Greeks called a swamp *helos*, from the Gallic noun *hel*, English *hell*. A swamp or marsh has always been looked upon as the abode of the death principle, the resort of hideous monsters, whose fetid breath poisons the whole surrounding region. Satan is the prince of the lower, infernal region. Hercules destroyed the hydra (*hudōr*) of the marsh of Lerna; this poetic fiction recalls to the mind the benefits of drainage and hygienic works.—*Mur*, ripe, formerly *meur*: ripe abscess, ripe age; in relation to fruits: arrived at the stage of pectic fermentation. Thus death, *mort*, means in fact *putrefaction*." See Lenglet-Mortier, *Nouvelles et véritables étymologies médicales, tirées du gaulois*.—The *Dictionnaire de la conversation* defines death as "The complete and definitive cessation of organic acts in animated beings."

² Philip. ii. 27; James ii. 26. In speaking of things, to *die* is to *cease to exist*: a *dying* industry, the fire is *dying* out.

1. *Spiritual* death, of which we have already spoken.¹
2. *Proleptic* death.²
3. *Putative* death.³
4. Death *personified* as a destructive power.⁴
5. *Ethical* or salutary death, synonymous with the annihilation of sin in the believer's heart.⁵
6. The *second* or definitive death, whereof the physical and spiritual deaths are only the forerunners.⁶

By *spiritual* death is meant the cessation of the functions of the spirit, the *pneuma*.⁷ This expression is somewhat hyperbolic. In fact, men spiritually dead are often referred to as having still a spark of divine life; but this spark is so diminutive, so hidden under the ashes, so nearly extinct, that it is often treated as a quantity that may be neglected. Hence the expression of *death* for a state that is rather a lethargy, sometimes compared in Scripture to a heavy sleep.⁸

We will proceed to a further study of *proleptic* and *putative* death, because the texts that speak of these, not having been properly understood, have unhappily been invoked in support of this contradiction: a *living death*, or *death a special manifestation of life*.

§ 2. PROLEPTIC DEATH.

In contrast with physical death, *spiritual death* might be called *metaphorical*. It becomes *proleptic* when contrasted with the second and final death. By anticipation the sacred writers sometimes use the word death to designate *progress towards death*. In establishing this proleptic meaning we shall not turn aside from the historic principle of interpretation. It is suffi-

¹ Matt. viii. 22; John v. 25; Rom. vi. 13; Eph. v. 14; 1 Tim. v. 6; 1 John iii. 14.

² John v. 24; Rom. vii. 9, 10; Eph. ii. 1-5; Col. ii. 13; Rev. iii. 1, 2.

³ Luke xv. 24, 32.

⁴ Rom. v. 14, 17, 21; vi. 9; vii. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 54-56; Rev. xxi. 4.

⁵ Rom. vi. 2, 11; vii. 6; viii. 13^b; Gal. ii. 20; v. 24; vi. 14; Col. ii. 20; iii. 3, 5; 1 Peter ii. 24. To this *ethical* death may be joined the *death towards legalism* of Rom. vii. 4, 6; Gal. ii. 19; v. 18.

⁶ Matt. x. 28; Rom. i. 32; vi. 16, 21, 23; vii. 5; viii. 13a; James i. 15; v. 20; 1 John v. 16, 17; Rev. ii. 11; xx. 6, 14; xxi. 8.

⁷ See Chap. V., sect. i.

⁸ "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead," Eph. v. 14; cf. 1 Thess. v. 6.

cient to open a grammar, or a manual of practical lexicology, otherwise called a dictionary; that of Littré, for example, where we read: "He is dead, sometimes has the force of the future, *he will die*:"

If in Aulis my daughter but once sets her foot
She is dead . . .¹

This simple remark will be the key that will open doors of which the traditional interpretation seems to us to have forced the locks. By anticipation or prolepsis the fruit is seen in the flower, and that is looked upon as already accomplished which is about to be performed, is in the course of execution, or is merely probable.² Thus it may be said, for example: "He is a dead man," for: "He is, or appears to be, in mortal danger;" "Do not stir, or you are a dead man!" instead of, "You will immediately die." In Genesis, God, appearing to Abimelech, says to him: "Thou art but a dead man;" literally, "Thou, dead!" Yet Abimelech survives. So, too, Isaiah, speaking to

¹ Si ma fille une fois met le pied dans l'Aulide
Elle est morte. . . .

Racine, *Iphigénie*, Act I., scene 1.

² See Winer's *Grammaire du Nouveau Testament*, sect. xl., and Bescherelle's *Grammaire*, No. 544. It is by prolepsis that one of La Fontaine's personages of an optimist disposition speaks in the past of that which he desires to possess:

It was, when I had it, of size reasonable.

This figure of speech is frequent in the Bible: John xvi. 21, "a man" for the child "born into the world"; xvii. 4, Jesus declares that he has "finished the work" of which a most important portion remained to be accomplished. He adds: "I *am* no more in the world . . . I *was* with them," at a time when he had not yet quitted his disciples. In the ecstasy of prayer eternity begins, the notion of time vanishes. 1 John iii. 9: "He that is born of God sinneth not," a prolepsis of thought, virtual holiness; cf. 1 John i. 8, 10.

See also in the original Matt. xvii. 11; xxvi. 2; xxviii. 18, 20; John xiv. 3; xvi. 10; 2 Tim. i. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 54, etc.

In commercial transactions there is an implied prolepsis in the drafts with which, before being turned into cash, debts are discharged.

A prolepsis is also to be found at the heart of the controversy as to the relative value of faith and works, as to imputed and infused righteousness: "God calleth the things that are not as though they were." Faith implies the works of which it is the germ. Faith is like the direction taken in pursuit of an object. The march is indispensable, but it occupies the inferior position of a mere mechanism, as compared to the direction which implies knowledge and will. The two theories of salvation by that which we *do* and by that which we *believe* are reconciled and united in the idea of salvation by that which we *become*.

Hezekiah, says: "Thou shalt die;" literally, "Thou, dead!" Yet Hezekiah was to have time to set his house in order, and, in fact, he had still fifteen years to live.¹

Death, indeed, always designates a destruction; but it is important to distinguish between partial and complete death, death in progress and death at its term, death at work and death finished, death latent and death patent, between virtual and actual death. It has been said that we are dying all through life, that a preacher is a dying man speaking to dying men. Death may mean a slow or sudden disappearance of life, the time during which a person is dying, or a certain mode of dying. Sometimes it is an agent, sometimes a result. The death of plants and animals is generally gradual; analogy would lead to the supposition that the death of souls is also gradual. The sinner leads a dying life, ending in the second death, which is complete and definitive.²

¹ Gen. xx. 3; Isa. xxxviii. 1. See also in the Hebrew Gen. xxiv. 13; l. 24; and Hos. xiii. 1.

² "To die is sometimes synonymous with to *cease gradually*," Littré, seventeenth use of the word *mourir*. In Latin this twofold meaning would be clearly expressed by the phrases *mors moriens* and *mors mortua*, *mors processus* and *mors eventus*, the march towards a destination, and the final halt there.—In his recent *Manual of Dogmatics* (p. 549), M. E. Arnaud identifies spiritual death, eternal perdition, the separation of the soul from God, and the second death. Like M. Geo. Godet, he forgets that the second death takes place only after the last judgement, when the rejected are to be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, a symbol of final annihilation. Rev. xx. 6, 14; xxi. 8.

As we have seen, if the death of the soul were that which is asserted, the second death would be found identical with the first, which it would only perpetuate. But it is said that the rejected will be "cast into the lake of fire," which "is the second death" (Rev. xx. 14, 15). That which is already there needs not to be cast in. From our point of view, the image is quite plain: physical death having taken place, a final and terrible chastisement will put an end to the dying life of the obstinate sinner. The two deaths are not identical, but they have a common character which our opponents are not able to indicate. There is nothing to prevent the second death being for the soul just that which the first death is for the body, namely, the end of action and sensation.

The confusion of M. Arnaud's statements is in contradiction not only with the texts in the Revelation, but also with many categorical declarations of both the Old and the New Testament. According to the Scripture, moral separation from God constitutes not death, but sin. Isaiah says, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God." "If ye live after the flesh, ye must die"; "Sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death"; "There

From this point of view let us return to some of the passages that are brought forward as designating a spiritual death, and let us see whether they do not rather speak of creatures that are on the way towards death.¹ The Ephesians before their conversion were on the way towards eternal death; they were virtually dead, moribund. Their activity was all morbid; they were in the way of perdition, lost, and, as it were, already dead. Paul indicates the end to which sin would have fatally led his readers if they had not received the Gospel. Meyer says: "The expression is proleptic, and ought to be taken in its natural sense; the death will become complete in the world to come."² In Germany the name of Meyer carries considerable weight, especially in relation to Paul's epistles. Our interpretation is further supported by the following considerations:

In the same passage there is another case of prolepsis, forming a kind of pendant to this, representing the same men as already raised up with Christ and sitting with him in heaven. "God . . . raised us up with Christ and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places." "A magnificent anticipation,"

is a sin unto death;" these are the statements of Paul, James, and John. To sin is to die; it is not yet to be dead. Sinners are dying men, not corpses. Sin leads to death; it is mortal; it is not death itself. Death is the wages of sin; the wages are paid after the service. We should observe and respect the distinctions that are made as by a common accord by the Bible, nature, and reason.—See Isa. lix. 2; Rom. vi. 21, 23; vii. 5; viii. 13; Phil. iii. 19; James i. 15; 1 John v. 16, 17; and 2 Cor. iv. 3, "The Gospel is veiled in them that *are perishing*," not in them that *have perished*.

¹ In truth, *metaphorical* death and *proleptic* death seem sometimes to be confounded. At bottom they are both nearly related to hyperbole, and that is the reason why it is possible to recover from death of those kinds. The essential point is to remember that no kind of death has power to immortalize any person or thing; and secondly, that so far from immortalizing, every death suppresses, or is held to suppress, provisionally or definitively, one or more kinds of activity. In order to live for ever, it is not sufficient to die spiritually.

² *Proleptisch . . . so gut wie todt gewesen*. So, too, Cremer in his *Lexicon* at the words *thanatos* and *nekros*. Cf. Rom. vii. 9; viii. 10: "The body is dead because of sin." Physical death is looked upon as an acquired fact. The body is mortal (vi. 12); it must die; it is virtually dead. "The body is adjudged and devoted to death."—Bengel. "Under the power of death."—Alford. "Mortal, and will certainly die."—Cobbin. *Hyperbolice et per prolepsin quasi jam mortuum*.—Grimm, *Clavis Novi Testamenti*. "Irrevocably doomed to death."—Professor Fred. Godet.

writes M. Louis Bonnet ; “ a taking possession of the heavenly glory by those whom Christ has redeemed, who are still living and striving upon earth !”¹ None the less does the apostle declare to be heretics those who affirmed that the real resurrection had already taken place.² He writes elsewhere : “ Those whom God justified, them he also glorified.” But according to the same epistle : “ We rejoice in *hope* of glory.” To the Colossians the apostle says : “ For ye died,” that is to say, ye have broken with evil ; and he adds : “ Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth ;”³ or, in other words, the sin which still lives.

“ I was alive apart from the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died.”⁴ Placed in presence of a law which I did not succeed in fulfilling, I recognized my guilt. I saw myself condemned and lost. Paul uses an expression similar to that of Isaiah when he saw the Lord : “ Woe is me, for I am undone !”⁵

We may also quote from the Second Epistle to Timothy (i. 10) this declaration : “ Christ abolished death,” while according to the First Epistle to the Corinthians (xv. 26) : “ the last enemy that shall be abolished is death.” In the former passage the apostle treats a future triumph as though already attained.⁶

The angel of the Church in Sardis is said to be “ dead ” ; the commentary quickly follows : “ Stablish the things that remain that are ready to die.”⁷

Another apparently decisive proof : Jesus sometimes calls “ sick ” those whom he elsewhere calls “ dead ” ;⁸ and Paul

¹ *Le Nouveau Testament avec notes explicatives*, 1852, *in loco*.

² 2 Tim. ii. 18.

³ Col. iii. 3, 5.

⁴ Rom. vii. 9, 10. “ I received a mortal blow ; ” “ I saw myself a dead man.”—Fausset. “ The passage of sin from the latent state to the state of an active force was for Paul a mortal blow.”—Professor F. Godet, *Commentaire*, vol. ii., p. 106.

⁵ Isa. vi. 5, *nidmeti*, it is all over with me ; I perish.

⁶ So, too, believers are then and there saved (Eph. ii. 8), and elsewhere they are exhorted to work out their salvation (Phil. ii. 12 ; cf. Heb. ix. 28). In 1 Cor. ii. 6, “ The princes of this world are coming to nought.” See, too, 1 Cor. xv. 27 ; cf. 25.

⁷ Rev. iii. 2.

⁸ Matt. viii. 22 ; ix. 12 ; Mark ii. 17 ; Luke v. 31 ; John viii. 24.

speaks of them not indeed as “dead” but as “them that are perishing,” or as “without strength.”¹

“He that believeth,” says Jesus, “hath passed out of death into life.”² Here, again, the meaning may be regarded as proleptic. He who by faith is united to Jesus passes at once from a dying state, from a beginning of death to a beginning of new life, or, as Professor F. Godet has put it, “from the sphere of death into that of life.” There is, then, in this passage nothing that requires us to banish from it the ontological notion of life. Jesus speaks of the true life that endures; the dying life of the unconverted sinner is in his view only an anticipated death.³ The believer, on the contrary, while awaiting the resurrection of his body, receives within himself the principle of an endless life.

“The mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the spirit is life,” says the apostle.⁴ The prolepsis is evident. As Professor F. Godet says: “The end is on one side death, on the other side life.” M. Stapfer translates: “Leads to death . . . to life.”

In these passages there is nothing to hinder us. The same may be said of the threatening addressed to Adam with reference to the forbidden fruit: “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. ii. 17). In fact, Adam did not entirely die in the day of his disobedience. Unless we admit that it was an empty threat, we must have recourse to

¹ *Apollumenoi*, 1 Cor. i. 18; 2 Cor. ii. 15; iv. 3; 2 Thess. ii. 10. *Astheneis*, Rom. v. 6.

² John v. 24; cf. vi. 50, 51.

³ As we have previously shown, the terms “life” and “death” never lose their ontological meaning. For example, in this passage, “The Son giveth life to whom he will” (John v. 21). M. Geo. Godet objects, exclaiming: “What! give the life of sense and volition to people who already have it! What can be the meaning of such a saying?” (*Chrét. évang.*, 1882, p. 506). We reply that to substitute an eternal life for one that is dying, to engraft a new life, is to give life. Jesus elsewhere calls himself the bread that gives life; to whom does he give that? Surely to those who already have life. The assimilation of the bread implies an already existing life, but to maintain, to perpetuate it, is not that one way of giving it? Besides, the sinner’s life is not only precarious; it is incomplete, meagre. That which Jesus confers is normal, full, harmonious, abundant (John x. 10). It is none the less essentially and primarily always a prolongation of existence.;

⁴ Rom. viii. 6.

the proleptic interpretation. When he sinned the first man received a *mortal stroke*. Physical death, which was its consequence later on, would eventually be followed by an absolute death.¹ Even if, with Julius Müller, we take the *day* of disobedience to mean an *epoch* including the whole time of Adam's survival, the death will still have the same fundamental meaning. That continued life, even though prolonged beyond the tomb, would end in the cessation of all life. There is no reason to suppose the life to be interminable.²

§ 3. PUTATIVE DEATH.

This is the presumed death of the prodigal son, who has long been supposed *lost* and *defunct*;³ not having sent any news of himself, he had passed for dead. Here, again, the fundamental notion remains, since from the subjective point of view of the father who speaks, the absent one had *ceased to live*.

A similar remark applies to the sheep that had wandered, which the shepherd might easily suppose altogether *lost*.⁴ So, too, the *value* of the piece of silver in the other parable in the same chapter *did not exist* for the proprietor so long as the coin was not recovered.⁵ In fact, it would be the value of the coin, and not the mere piece of metal, that the poor woman would care about. In all this there is nothing to invalidate our definition of death.⁶

¹ See Auberlen, *Le Prophète Daniel*, translation by H. de Rougemont, p. 160, *sq.*

² This interpretation of the word "day" has in its favour the fact that the adverbial expression *rega*, *berega*, or *kerega*, would have been much more suitable to indicate an instantaneous death. Num. xvi. 21; Job xxi. 13; xxxiv. 20; Ps. vi. 10 [11], etc.

³ Luke xv. 24, 32.

⁴ Luke xv. 3-6. Cf. 1 Sam. ix. 3, 4, 20. "The sheep lost *to the shepherd*." Cremer's *Lexicon* at the word *apollumi*.

⁵ Luke xv. 8, *sq.*

⁶ Dr. R. F. Weymouth has made an examination of classic literature similar to that with which we have been occupied in respect of the New Testament. In view of an attempt to attenuate the meaning of the verb *apollumi*, which was said not always to signify *destroy*, but only to *remove certain attributes* of a being, Dr. Weymouth has carefully reviewed the texts quoted to prove it. By his kind permission we reproduce in *Supplement* No. XIV. the results of his inquiry.

§ 4. EVERYWHERE AND ALWAYS DEATH MEANS THE CESSATION OF AN ACTIVITY.

To sum up, it is our right and our duty to maintain everywhere and always the historical and grammatical meaning. Interpreted in accordance with this principle, the New Testament as a whole teaches us that death is at its work in every one of us. The body is first to succumb, the soul surviving; but the soul being deeply tainted, sick unto death, will not survive for an indefinite period. Left to itself, it advances by a slow and painful process towards a final destruction which will be the second death, complete, absolute death, the end of the whole individual.

The definition which explains death as "life under a different aspect"¹ is first obscure and then inexact. There is not merely *difference*, but *radical opposition* between life and death. And such a definition is not in harmony with the texts.² On the other hand, we affirm, after having put it to the proof, that the biological meaning is not merely admissible, but is required in every Scripture passage in which the terms occur that have been the subject of our study. It is a skein which is easily unwound when begun at the right end of the thread. The confusion resulted from a preconceived idea which perverted the natural meaning of the words.³

VII.

Nevertheless, it is not enough to set free the biblical doctrine from the accretion of ages; it is needful to penetrate its deep meaning, and to justify it from a moral and rational point of view, otherwise it would be no more than a sterile formula. Arisen out of its tomb, it demands its due place in the preaching of the Gospel; but it is treated as a stranger, it is said to

¹ *Chrétien évangélique*, 1881, p. 22, and 1882, p. 559.

² The apostle exhorts to "make dead" or "mortify" sin under its various forms (Col. iii. 5, etc.). Is it possible that this death of sin can admit of its revival under a different form?

³ 1 Thess. iii. 8 has been quoted against us: "Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord;" and we are asked, "To live, is it not here to rejoice?" Be it so, but let us take the contrary idea, which would be a *mortal sorrow*. The ontological idea remains latent. See, too, Chap. XI., sect. iv., § 2.

interfere with the harmony of revealed truths, and to be contrary to the analogy of the faith.

In its defence we shall show that its claims, based upon exegesis and history, are ratified by conscience, by reason, and by experience, and that the charges brought against it are really applicable to the usurping dogma that has supplanted it.¹

FIRST CHARGE.

It is said that by mitigating the penalty the doctrine of Conditional Immortality would "diminish the fault in the eyes of many. . . . Annihilation is not so much a penalty as a favour for the wicked; the frequency of suicide is the evident proof of this. Those who kill themselves hope for nonentity. To preach annihilation would be likely to benumb consciences. . . . The new dogma might produce baneful effects. Care should be taken lest, in attempting to dissipate the mystery, we should at the same time get rid of that salutary fear which is produced in our minds by the unknown much more readily than by evil which is foreseen."²

We remark, to begin with, that this last assertion is diametrically opposed to the experience acquired in the administration of penal justice. There was a time when in England sheep-stealing involved hanging as its legal consequence, but the penalty was very rarely applied. Witnesses were not to be found, and juries would not convict. The severity of the law overshot the mark; it introduced uncertainty, "the unknown," into the case. Sheep-stealers became all the more confident. At that time they swarmed; they have nearly disappeared since the penalty has been reduced. It has been recognized that it is not so much the extreme severity of the threatened punishment as the certainty of its execution that imposes a respect for the law. Now, it is a fact

¹ We have not succeeded in separating dogmatics from morals. We console ourselves, like M. Charles Bois, with the thought that the distinction is not obligatory; Calvin, Sartorius, Nitzsch, Rothe, Vinet, and other great theologians have not made it. Martensen admits that the contents of the two sciences are the same.

² *Chrét. évang.*, 1881, pp. 59, 70, *sq.*, *passim*.

that such a certainty does not exist in respect of eternal torments. No one believes in them without some reserve. They are like those bars that are fixed too high, so that the horses pass under instead of leaping over them. M. Bost, senior, compared them to an elastic band "which stretches to a certain extent and then breaks and recoils;" when faith is in question the recoil is unbelief. To threaten with eternal torments is to use the rusty weapons of a former age; their proper place is the museum of the history of dogmas. In its contact with paganism, traditional theology has received an impress of barbarism; it will do well to follow the incontestable progress of human jurisprudence.

"At heart, without being conscious of it, those who preach eternal torments do not really believe in them," said the eminent pastor, A. Rochat. "Saurin preached them," observed one who was present. Rochat's reply was: "Saurin did not really believe in them; when anyone believes in them he confines his statements to our Saviour's own words as to judgement to come, and he trembles."¹

One of our honoured opponents has acknowledged that the revival of the doctrine that we are defending is a reaction against the enervation of the traditional teaching: "On one hand the present-day advance of immorality, on the other hand a certain enfeeblement of preaching, have led to a study of the means by which Christianity may recover its moralizing influence and activity, which are on the decline."²

It is this moral side of the doctrine of attainable immortality that has won the adhesion of one of the most illustrious English preachers. Dr. R. W. Dale says: "There is a general avoidance of the appalling revelations of the New Testament concerning 'the wrath to come.' . . . The appeal to fear is being silently dropped . . . But the menaces of Christ mean something. The appeal to fear had a considerable place in

¹ This declaration has come to us from a venerable witness who was present and heard it. We presume that Rochat meant to say that the dogma in question would not bear examination. In order to admit it, an implicit faith is needed in mysterious words of which it is not sought to discover the true meaning.

² H. Berguer. Article *Conditionnalisme* in the supplement of the *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*.

his preaching ; it cannot be safe, it cannot be right, to suppress it in ours."¹

Seeing that eternal torments are no longer preached, and that there is nothing put in their place, the sinner may take what he thinks an advantage of this doctrinal uncertainty ; he will say : " In the condition of suspense in which I am left, I see nothing that is undoubted except the divine mercy. The tacit consent of our spiritual leaders allows me to hope that after a period of trial the heavenly Father will bring about a complete and general amnesty. Let us then eat and drink, for to-morrow we die ; or if we survive, as we are assured, there will be no lack of time in which to solicit a pardon which God's goodness could not help granting. If there be a morrow after death, that morrow may take care of itself. What matters the time of the return of a prodigal son ? The longer his absence lasts, the deeper and more lively will be the Father's joy when he sees him return." Thus it is seen that the combined dogmas of compulsory immortality and God's eternal mercy provide the most favourable pillow for the sinner's sleep.

It is high time for the traditional doctrine to be opposed by the biblical dogma of the immortality of the righteous and the gradual annihilation of the wicked. We are told that annihilation is too mild a penalty, one not likely to inspire a salutary terror. We would ask in reply, Is the death penalty too mild ? does it not inspire any terror ? On the contrary, it is because it appeared to them too severe, too frightful, that Victor Hugo, in "The Last Day of a Condemned Convict," and other philanthropists, have demanded the suppression of capital punishment.² The death penalty has always been looked upon by legislators as the most terrible of sanctions, and it is very rarely that a convict fails to plead for a commutation of the

¹ See in *Supplement* No. II. the preface to *The Struggle for Eternal Life*. For some years we inhabited a village in which there was a very zealous pastor. Most of his evangelical colleagues of the Canton of Geneva have at one time or another occupied his pulpit. Neither the pastor nor his colleagues have ever to our knowledge preached eternal torments. Hell, in the traditional sense, has probably not been once mentioned. One of our honoured opponents, when he preached in that same church, did not care to expound, still less to defend, the dogma in question.

² See H. Freuler, *Rapport de la majorité de la Commission du Conseil des Etats* on the subject of capital punishment, p. 66 : Berne, 1879.

death sentence to one of perpetual penal servitude. Death looked in the face makes the bravest turn pale. How, then, will it be with annihilation, that aggravated capital punishment, that second death without a ray of hope to soften its long and terrible agony? If there is a truth that is commonplace, it is that of all instincts self-preservation is the strongest, the most persistent, the most indestructible. Stifle it, it speedily revives; witness so many unfortunates who, after having plunged into the river, strive earnestly by swimming to regain the bank.

Rather suffer than die
Is the motto of men.¹

But it is objected that in capital punishment that which strikes terror is not so much death as the fear of a mysterious unknown. The objectors may be reminded that an element of the unknown forms part of the prospect of gradual extermination, and that this doctrine has the right to claim for itself all that is really efficacious in the teaching that we oppose. We do not teach an immediate annihilation when this life is over; final extinction does not constitute the whole of the penalty. But is it, therefore, not a penalty? If it is considered that self-preservation is the most imperious of all instincts, it will be seen that of all morally admissible penalties the final deprivation of existence is the most dreadful.

Shall we be told of a suicide committed with a light heart on account of a mere thirst for nonentity? In order to provoke a voluntary death, there must be extreme suffering, a deluge of troubles. Moreover, a suicide is always accompanied by remorse and bitter regrets. The fear of death and the love of life are the strongest motives in the world. In our days, as in the time of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the fear of death holds many in hard bondage.² There are but few who are free from its shackles.³ Against this desire of existence

¹ La Fontaine. *Fable of Death and the Woodman*. The condition is understood that the suffering be not at the same time excessive and unending. The French words are :

Plutôt souffrir que mourir,
C'est la devise des hommes.

² Heb. ii. 15.

³ Look at Prado, a criminal executed at Paris the 28th Dec., 1888. His attitude is most insolent. He repulses with disdain the prison chaplain,

"will be shattered that materialist doctrine called nihilism, a senseless philosophy which the German speculations of Schopenhauer and Hartmann will never enable sound reason to accept."¹

In the depths of the heart of those who commit suicide there is always the vague hope of obtaining mercy.

It is privation of happiness, not existence itself, that is insupportable. The man who kills himself wishes a happy life; if his suffering were removed he would eagerly plunge into the joys of life. The act of suicide repudiates only an accidental mode of life, not life itself.²

An unfortunate is about to plunge into the river, believing that her lover has betrayed her; prove to her that he is willing to marry her, she will at once recover a passionate desire for life. To the insolvent banker who is about to shoot himself, hand over a sufficient sum of money: he will forthwith throw aside his murderous weapon.

Death is terrible; the second death will be doubly so. Only exhibit it as it is, logical, natural, certain, imminent, irremediable, painful, infamous; exhibit it with its anguish, its disruption, its terrors, as the loss of all good, the accumulation and climax of all evils; some very strong minds may perhaps make a mock of it all, but their bravado will hardly conceal the trouble that actually fills their soul. A legitimate emotion will spread through your audience. "The thought of sufferings that will end only with existence, a thought attainable although terrible, is very much more efficacious than one that loses its power, either because it brings about its own prompt rejection or because it is simply incomprehensible."³

. . . Carelessness in relation to death may pass for a natural instinct among the sleepy and dreamy Orientals, but it makes our nature shudder as would a monstrosity. "Everything that is most calculated to per-

saying: "I do not believe in the existence of a God who has not cared to deliver me." But in presence of the guillotine his face became frightfully pale. "The livid hue of his features at that moment could not be depicted."

¹ G. A. Hoff, *Journal du protestantisme français*, 31st Jan., 1880.

² E. Caro, *Le Pessimisme au dix-neuvième siècle*, p. 229; Paris, 1880.

³ Ami Bost, *op. cit.*, p. 30. As to the fearful fate of the impenitent, as set forth in the Gospel, see a letter of Rev. Edward White in the *Christian World* of 12th Feb., 1891.

suade that death is not an evil has been written . . . yet I doubt whether any sensible person ever believed it, and the trouble taken in order to persuade others as well as the writers themselves of it shows plainly that it is no easy enterprise. . . . Every man who can see death as it is finds it a terrible thing." That is the truth. I am more grateful to La Rochefoucauld for this loose and careless expression of a sentiment so natural than for all the brilliant polish and conciseness of his most celebrated paradoxes. Apart from faith in the individual immortality of souls,¹ every really living man who says that he is not terrified by the idea of death either lies or deceives himself; so, too, do those writers lie or deceive themselves who pretend to have no care as to their future life.²

There are cases of mental derangement; there are also cases of moral derangement; there are sons of perdition whom the eloquence of Jesus himself will not save; there are "seared consciences," souls corrupted to such an extent that in them the instinct of self-preservation itself succumbs in the ruin of all their faculties. There is no doctrine that can be in itself a restraint all-powerful to prevent such abuses of human liberty. Jesus Christ teaches us that it is in man's power to "destroy himself."³ It is worthy of God's character to abstain from imposing his benefits; *beneficium invito non datur*. God will not force an unending life upon beings who reject the normal conditions of existence. He leaves to man the possibility of suicide, which he punishes not with eternal torments, but with the second death; as the apostle says: "Your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost, and if any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy."⁴

Those who have hitherto committed suicide have not heard of an attainable immortality, which as yet is unhappily but little known; they have been brought up in the hereditary

¹ "In our day it is no longer possible to conceive of immortality except as happy, or as expiatory with happiness in prospect, and therefore *not terrible*. The idea of an eternity of sufferings is too repugnant to reason and to the modern conscience for the imagination to continue to be terrified thereby, as in the middle ages. All the terror is now in the idea of nonentity."—P. Stapfer.

² Paul Stapfer, *De l'amour de la gloire et du désintéressement littéraire Bibliothèque universelle*, 1890, p. 564.

³ *Heauton apolesas*. Luke ix. 25.

⁴ 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19.

belief, and that has not prevented them from causing their own death. Exaggeration has rather tended to lull conscience to sleep. The Conditionalist on his part unreservedly believes in Christ's threatenings, because for him they have not the false and excessive character that is assigned to them by the traditional interpretation. Himself a candidate for immortality, an heir presumptive of the crown of life, he will not by suicide plunge himself through a dismal period of weeping and gnashing of teeth into the fearful abyss of eternal death.

Our opponents would probably be considerably embarrassed if we were to ask them where and when our point of view has exerted a baneful influence; can they bring forward any examples that justify their fears?

Too often the fact stated in the following remark of one of our predecessors is overlooked; we reproduce his words in order, if possible, to dispel all misunderstanding:

We have never said that the fate of the wicked would be only to die for ever. A chastisement may end in death after having begun with strokes causing weeping and gnashing of teeth. So it was, too, with the martyrs, who were made to endure frightful sufferings and were afterwards burnt. The punishment will not consist only in death, nor only in strokes and sufferings; and that is why the Lord did not say, "These shall go away to eternal death," nor, "These shall go away to eternal torments," seeing that the punishment consists in strokes, weeping and gnashing of teeth, and then death.¹

In other terms, final extinction does not by any means exclude the sinister train of woes by which it is preceded. The two notions are combined in the expression "death-agony."

The lay writer just quoted added by way of conclusion:

Are you still really convinced that the torments of the lost will be eternal? If you are no longer fully convinced of it, teach it no more without loyally announcing that it is contestable.

Ah! if you will but rather declare to the man who has not the happiness of believing, that if he is not converted that which will be eternal for him will not be torments, but the second death, after strokes, weeping, and gnashing of teeth, according to the just measure of him who

¹ *Fin des méchants d'après la Bible*. Pamphlet in 8vo. Lausanne [1866]. The author was the late advocate, Frank Burnier.

will judge in all righteousness and equity, you will see that such a man will listen, he will become serious, thoughtful, will hang his head and answer nothing, for, in fact, there is no answer. And why should this not be to the full glory of God, who speaks of a thousand generations when it is a question of mercy, and only of three or four when it is a question of punishment?

If rightly considered, the penalty of final extermination is so grave, so distressing, so dreadful, so dismal, that it has sometimes been thought too severe.¹ In order to the acceptance of its rigour the following four considerations may be urged: First, it is just; second, it is categorically taught in the Scripture; third, it is in conformity with the laws of nature; fourth, it is compatible with the notion of the divine goodness.

This last characteristic will enable us to meet a second charge that has been brought against our conception of future chastisement.

VIII.

SECOND CHARGE.

By a contradiction difficult to understand, M. George Godet speaks of the penalty as “brutal,” which he has only just treated as too mild. He says: “It is the solution of an impotence that crushes those whom it cannot persuade . . . a useless cruelty, an act of vengeance. . . . Suffering which results only in nonentity is without purpose; it appears cruel because useless.”²

We may say that by this rule it would be necessary to charge with cruelty all the benefits that God bestows upon the wicked, for their wickedness renders these gifts useless, and even baneful. In our view suffering is a benefit, the supreme remedy of the heavenly physician; a remedy that is bitter, but worthy of the divine wisdom, which undoubtedly adapts it to our needs.

In the gradual extinction of the guilty soul there is neither constraint nor brutality; there is only the Creator’s respect for

¹ Such was the sentiment expressed by the natural philosopher, H. B. de Saussure in his lectures on metaphysics: *Forsan dicunt: Annihilatio malis foret sufficiens poena. Respondemus hanc esse nimis magnam.* We owe this unpublished quotation to the kindness of Professor Ernest Naville.

² *Chrét. évang.*, 1881, pp. 58, 60, 64.

his creature's liberty, with a door remaining constantly open to repentance and healing so long as the sinner does not close it with his own hand. The sinner destroys himself, according to the Scripture;¹ he spontaneously makes himself the blind executor of the chastisement that he suffers. In the ruin of Jerusalem, for example, and in order to chastise that greatest of crimes, the murder of his only Son, God does not directly intervene, but he leaves to itself the cherished nation which in misguided folly rejects its Saviour and rushes on to be shattered against the Roman colossus.

The useful purpose assigned by M. Geo. Godet to eternal sufferings, viz., the salutary terror which they might inspire in those creatures who should witness them, is equally attained without interminable sufferings in the doctrine that we are defending. The remembrance of the terrible end of the wicked will remain as a perpetual menace for free beings who might be tempted to rebel against God.

The "useless cruelty" is then only in the hypothesis of endless torments which he who inflicts them knows certainly and declares will never result in the conversion and salvation of the victims.

It is morally reasonable that there should be retribution beyond the tomb, that the test, which here is sometimes suddenly interrupted, should be completed, and that the free agent who persists in evil-doing, and rejects the last appeals of divine compassion, should in the end perish miserably and definitively. It would, on the other hand, be unreasonable and shocking to imagine a revolt as eternal as God himself and torments prolonged for ever.

M. Geo. Godet tries to defend what he calls the mystery, which we prefer to call the fiction, of eternal sufferings by invoking the "equally insoluble" problem of the apparent injustices which shock us here below. We say that this is not "equally insoluble," for by our opponent's own admission the injustices of this life may be adjusted hereafter. He says: "There will be infinite compensations in another life," but on the hypo-

¹ Psa. vii. 15, 16; xxxiv. 21; xciv. 23; Prov. viii. 36; xiii. 6; Isa. ix. 17, sq.; Jer. ii. 19. But there is nothing to prevent us from supposing the possibility of salvation so long as there is conscient suffering.

thesis of unspeakable suffering, beginning immediately after death and never coming to an end, there can be no compensation. The two cases are not alike.

As it was said by Clement of Alexandria, "The divine goodness prevails even in chastisement." It is with a view to the sinner's salvation that God inflicts suffering; it is also in mercy that he causes that suffering to result in death when it becomes useless as a warning. The wicked man himself is thus the object of the heavenly Father's compassion even to the end of his existence; and thus are fully justified the Scripture declarations: "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. . . . He will not keep his anger for ever. . . . The Lord is gracious in all his works."¹ The divine love penetrates, even to its lowest depths, a domain from which that love had been too long banished by traditional dogmatics and popular belief.²

Terrible will be the penalty of the obstinately wicked; every sensible man will tremble at the prospect of such a lamentable fate; yet although it is verily dreadful, there is nothing in it incompatible with the notion of the divine goodness. The most perverse and corrupt of men will at last be, as the Scripture expresses it, "as though they had never been." Lacking the good news of the Gospel, five hundred millions of Orientals make this final extinction the goal of their most strenuous efforts; they desire it, indeed, because they have not, like the Christian, the notion of an existence free from sin and pain; and this extinction is desirable only in a condition of hopeless misery. We may well admire the bounty of the true God, whose supreme chastisement, following the long sufferings which are the last appeals of fatherly solicitude, inflicts upon his most guilty creatures a destiny which is the very ideal imagined by the principal heathen religions. Their paradise does not rise above the lowest depths of the Christian hell. The *Nirvana*, which to the Buddhist seems the chief good, is

¹ Psa. ciii. 9; cxxxvi. ; cxlv. 9, 17; Micah vii. 18.

² One day we asked a traditionalist theologian whether the divine love had any place in hell. He replied: "No place at all." It would follow that God, who is love, would not be everywhere present! Does not this frank avowal, which ends in a contradiction, plainly indicate the falsity of the ecclesiastical dogma?

but the last of evils in the revealed religion. And God in his mercy confers this benefit upon those who have obstinately refused to accept from him a higher boon.¹ The Gospel is thus superior to the pessimist religions and philosophies by the whole height of heaven and of the joyful immortality promised to the disciples of Jesus Christ.²

Future punishment remains severe without ever ceasing to be merciful. The suffering which accompanies it is fearful, but so long as it lasts it is an appeal to repentance, and therefore an occasion for hope, the indication of a possible salvation. At last it vanishes, when the moral perversion becomes irremediable. Then the reason for the suffering disappears. To assert its continuance with a merely vindictive purpose would be to slander the God of the Gospel, by attributing to him a malignity worse than that of the Etruscan or Mexican divinities. But it is not so ; unconsciousness will put an end to the existence of the incorrigible individual, and the suppression of that focus of infection will be a benefit for the moral universe. By the operation of pre-established laws the senseless suicide of which the wicked man is guilty will definitively rid the world of an element of disorder.

Together with all the best motives of action at the disposal of traditional Christianity, the doctrine of Conditional Immortality possesses resources which are superior. Life in Christ, the love of that which is good, beautiful, true, the eternal delights of communion with God and with his saints, the splendour of heaven, the pains of hell so far as they may be conceived of without offence to the supreme love, all these chords are made to vibrate by the Gospel, rightly understood ; it banishes the false notes, and replaces them by new harmonies.

The Conditionalist Christian sitting by the bedside of a

¹ Rev. S. Cox, D.D. Quoted from his article in *Good Words* in a letter by Rev. S. Minton, M.A., reprinted from the *Christian World* in a pamphlet entitled *Life and Death* ; London : Elliot Stock, 1877 ; p. 77.

² Compared with the blessedness promised in the Gospel, extermination is a terrible fate, and the way that leads to it is fearful too ; yet final nonentity is better for man than an eternal life in the continual practice of sin. The divine goodness will thus be manifested either in conferring a new life upon the repentant sinner, or in finally abandoning the obstinate sinner to that definitive death which will put an end to fruitless sufferings.

dying man, who has been revolted by the traditional dogma, says to him : “ My friend, my God is not the one who exasperates thee ; deign to listen to an affectionate appeal : my God loves thee, and will always love thee, do what thou wilt. Thou mayest reject him, thou canst not legitimately hate him ; death is not his work if he does not exist. But he does exist, and Jesus, his living image, reveals to thee in his own person a divine unreserved love ; he has suffered more than thee, before thee, and for thee. God chastises only with regret ; he did not owe to thee the present life, he offers to thee a better life gratuitously. If thou preferrest nonentity, he will respect thy freedom ; if the prospect of eternal death seems pleasant to thee, I will not begrudge thee the only consolation of thy absolute wretchedness. My tears shall flow without giving thee offence. I will be silent, but remember that so long as a breath of life remains to thee, or a ray of personal consciousness, thy heavenly Father’s arms will remain open to receive thee, open still the well-spring of his compassions, open, too, all the treasures with which he can still endow thee ! ” If there are sinners who would be moved to suicide by such an appeal, we believe that they belong to that class of desperate men who “ are perishing,”¹ for whom, the apostle says, the Gospel is a savour of death. He did not look upon that as a motive for ceasing to preach the Gospel.

We conclude by saying that in our view a life eternal is the greatest of benefits ; an eternal death is the greatest of evils ; sin, the mother of death, is that which is most odious. What more can be said ? Is it possible reasonably to adduce arguments more powerful than these ?

Thus it is that, in spite of formulas, an instinct which is the voice of God himself has restrained the lips of many of the most orthodox preachers, as, for example, those of Rochat, that apostle of the revival, of whom Vinet said : “ Oh ! if I could but speak like him ! ” He is addressing a last appeal to hardened sinners ; does he speak to them of endless torments ? Not at all. Without being aware of it he expresses himself as though he were a veritable Conditionalist ; and who, to-day, among non-Conditionalist preachers, would have the courage,

¹ *Tois apollumenois.* 2 Cor. ii. 15.

we do not say to blame Rochat, but even to replace the "death eternal," of which he speaks by torments eternally renewed?

In leaving you, the traveller towards eternity is moved by the deep feeling of sadness which is felt by one who is obliged to abandon a wretch whom drunkenness and the icy breath of winter have plunged into a state of lethargy from which nothing can rouse him. Neither entreaties, nor offers of help, nor pictures of the threatening danger, nor anything else will move him; he only stirs to repulse the helping hand held out to him; and in his delirium he takes as sweet repose the slumber which is for him the forerunner of death. The traveller, seeing the uselessness of his efforts, regretfully and with a heavy heart quits the poor fellow. As he goes away he calls out to him once more: "Are you, then, determined to perish?" . . . And I, too, call out once more to you poor sinners who have rejected all my words, you who are taking pleasure in a slumber which will quickly lead you to eternal death. I, too, hold out my hand to you once more saying: Are you really determined to perish? . . . Will you not come to Jesus that you may have life? . . . Will you not listen to the kindly voice that calls to you: Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall give thee light?¹

Is there any conception of future punishment which, without wounding the Christian consciousness, can inspire a more salutary fear? Can the terror produced by a superstition be called a salutary fear? No; for the reaction that follows upon the dissipation of a superstition produces unbelief. While it commends itself to the Christian consciousness, the prospect held out to us in the Bible maintains the terrible notion of that which is irreparable. We await the proposal of a better solution; if a better be not found, by what right shall this one be set aside, which seems to reconcile so many elements of the difficult problem?

¹ *Sermons* of A. Rochat, p. 34, *sq.* Paris, Delay, 1846. See, too, p. 217.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY IN THE WRITINGS OF THE EARLIEST FATHERS OF THE CHURCH.¹

I. The apostolic Fathers : *Epistle* ascribed to *Barnabas*, *Clement of Rome*, *Ignatius*, *The Pastor of Hermas*, *Polycarp*—II. Recent discovery of the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*—III. The apologist Fathers : *Justin Martyr*, *Tatian*, *Irenæus*, *Theophilus of Antioch*, *Clement of Alexandria*, *Arnobius*—IV. The purpose of the incarnation according to the great *Athanasius*, surnamed the Father of orthodoxy—V. Latest echoes of the primitive teaching : *Lactantius*, *Nemesius*, *Theophylact*, *Sophronius*, *Nicholas of Methone*.

IN our introductory chapter we stated that the biblical doctrine of Conditional Immortality was that of the earliest Fathers of the Church. The time has now arrived for producing evidence in support of that statement.

I.

The apostolic Fathers never speak of a native immortality ; an immortal life is in their view the exclusive privilege of the

¹ At the beginning of this chapter we must express our regret that circumstances have prevented us from extending our researches, and especially from discussing the value of certain passages that seem to be contradictory. Happy the man who can put each Father into agreement with himself ! Although we have verified most of the quotations in the original texts, the value of one or other of these testimonies may be disputed ; that, however, is of little consequence, if only it be recognized that the fundamental thesis of the chapter is sufficiently established. That appears to us certain. Nevertheless, we desire to see our examination completed, the more so because the mine is rich and deserves to be more fully explored than it has been, particularly in French-speaking countries. Meanwhile, we refer our readers to the excellent work of Rev. Edward White, already more than once mentioned, in which chap. xxvi. contains, in addition to numerous extracts not here reproduced, indications of special works on this important subject. See in *Supplement* No. XV. a synchronical table of the Church Fathers, and their opinions as to the future life.

redeemed. The punishment of the rejected consists in a gradual destruction of their being, which finally becomes total. This punishment is called eternal, as being definitive and irremediable; we have already shown in the Scripture this use of an adjective, qualifying not the momentary action but the permanent results of the action.¹ Neither do the apostolic Fathers speak of a universal salvation; they teach that the unquenchable fire will consume its victims; in a word, they all with one accord appear to be Conditionalists.

Before quoting the apostolic Fathers, properly so called, we will mention the epistle ascribed to *Barnabas*. Although apocryphal, this writing must not be passed over in silence, for it has come down, at least in part, from the highest antiquity. The Chevalier Bunsen placed its origin in the last years of the first century; it was read aloud in the public worship of the primitive Church, and Tischendorf found it forming part of the Sinaitic manuscript. In it we read:

The way of darkness is tortuous, it leads to death eternal with torment;² those who walk in it go towards that which destroys the soul. . . . He who chooses evil will be destroyed with his works . . . the fate of the wicked will be that of the Israelites who were bitten by the serpents in the wilderness. They will be finally destroyed in the approaching day of judgement, when the world and the evil one will be exterminated.³

The work that perishes comes to an end; to perish with his works is to exist no more. Satan is the evil one who is to perish with the world.⁴ Chapter VI. contains an allegory, wherein it is said:

The child is nourished with milk and honey; so too we, being nourished and sustained⁵ by faith in the promises and by the divine word, shall live and reign.

¹ Chap. VII., sect. ii., p. 194.

² *Meta timōrias*. An infliction of suffering precedes death or the end of being.

³ xx., sq.; cf. xii. It is in the Epistle of Barnabas that the expression *eternal death* is first found as a synonym of the second and definitive death.

⁴ *Sunapoleitai to Ponēro*.

⁵ Literally, *made alive, zoōpoioumenoi*. As in the writings of the New Testament, the notion of the sustentation of life takes precedence of the notion of mystic enjoyment.

The first epistle of *Clement of Rome* is held to be authentic ; Bunsen attributes great importance to it from the standpoint of history as well as of doctrine. It also was read publicly in the Churches. This epistle teaches that “life in immortality is a gift” which God grants to believers only. Clement does not confound death with immortality ; death is a result of immortality. The death of such as Cain, Pharaoh, and the bad men of the Old Testament is identified with the death reserved for all the impenitent.¹ The second epistle speaks of a “struggle to obtain immortality,” which implies that immortality is not inherent in our nature.²

The third to be quoted is *Ignatius* who died a martyr at Antioch about the year 115 of our era. He writes :

Be vigilant, as God's athlete ; the reward is incorruption and life eternal³. . . . That for which I seek is the bread of heaven, the bread of life, the flesh of Jesus Christ, and the divine drink, love incorruptible and perpetual life.⁴

Elsewhere he calls the Lord's Supper “the medicine of immortality, an antidote against death,”⁵ the pledge of a perpetual life. . . . How could we live without Christ ? . . . If God should reward us according to our works we should no longer exist.”⁶

The book of the *Pastor* was composed by Hermas about the year 140. Like the Epistle of Barnabas it forms part of the Codex Sinaiticus ; Bunsen compares it to Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. According to Hermas, men are like trees in winter ; without their leaves, all trees, whether dead or alive, are very much alike, and so it is often difficult to distinguish the righteous from the unrighteous ; but, says the *Pastor* :

The righteous are trees which will revive in the spring-time of the life eternal. Those men, on the contrary, who are absorbed in worldly pre-occupations will remain withered and dead in the age to come ; they

¹ *First Letter to the Corinthians*, iii., ix., xxxv. ; cf. xvi., sq., xlviii.

² *Second Letter to the Corinthians*, vii.

³ *Letter to Polycarp*, ii.

⁴ *Letter to the Romans*, vii.

⁵ *Pharmacon athanasias, antidotos tou mē apothanein. Letter to the Ephes.*, xx.

⁶ *Ouk eti esmen. Letter to the Magnes.*, ix., sq.

will be burnt up like dry wood . . . their death will be final . . . Those who are dominated by evil desires will perish for ever, for lusts are deadly . . . they consume . . . and kill the wicked.¹

Similar views are expressed in the epistle addressed by *Polycarp* to the Philippians. This Father, who had known the apostle John, died a martyr at the age of eighty-six years, soon after the middle of the second century. He ends the series of apostolic Fathers. He wrote :

If we are pleasing to God in this world we shall obtain the future world, for God will raise us up if we do his will.²

This notion of conditional resurrection brings us again to the Judeo-Christian point of view, which left in the shade the eventual and provisional resurrection of the lost.³

II.

Here may be placed the *Didachē*, or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, the text of which had for centuries been completely lost. Discovered by the learned Bryennios, Patriarch of Nicomedia, it was published in 1883. What date should be assigned to this document? Bryennios thinks it was written about the year 150. Dr. Lightfoot, Professors Funk, Massebieau, and a certain number of German critics, attribute it to the end of the first century. In any case it is difficult to exaggerate its importance.⁴

The series of precepts in the *Didachē* begins with a comparison of the two ways, that of life and that of death. The unity of the book is thereby distinctly indicated, since the last chapter shows us the ending of these two ways: for the wicked it will be death, that is to say, annihilation; for the good it will be life.

There are two ways, that which leads to life, to the eternal kingdom with the Lord, and that which leads to death, to the annihilation of the

¹ *Apothanountai eis telos . . . thanatoi . . . dapanatai deinōs. Similitudes*, iii., sq.; *Mandates*, xii., § 1, sq.

² *Letter to the Philippians*, ii.; cf. v.

³ Cf. Luke xx. 35: "They that are accounted worthy to attain to that world and to the resurrection from the dead."

⁴ The quotations that follow are taken from the interesting work entitled *La Didachē*; or, *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*. By Paul Sabatier; Paris, Fischbacher, 1885, *passim*.

wicked.¹ Believers who desire to follow the first of these must practise the love of God and of the neighbour, join the Christian societies in baptism and the Lord's supper, and in prayer and meditation await the great day when the Messiah will return. . . . We feel ourselves in a current strongly Israelite and Palestinian, without any mixture of Alexandrian or Philonian philosophy. There is here nothing which either nearly or remotely reminds us of the immortality of the soul. There are two ideas at the foundation of this eschatology, or rather one idea under two forms : the survival of a certain number of believers, and the resurrection of the rest. The eternal life is not conceived of here any more than in the synoptic Gospels apart from the body. The author has maintained purely Jewish ideas ; he ignores or neglects those of the Greeks. . . .

After the appearance of the great Seducer, the whole world is to pass through a trial by fire ; the wicked are annihilated, the righteous are saved. These are the endings of the two ways : some live, the others die, or rather they are annihilated. This idea comes out everywhere in the Jewish books of the first century ; it is found even in a prayer that was said by the scholar on leaving the place of study.²

Participation in the eucharistic supper confers immortality in symbol :

"We thank thee, O holy Father ! . . . Thou, O Lord almighty, hast created all things for thine own name, thou hast given food and drink to men for their enjoyment and that they may render thanks to thee ; and to us thou hast freely given spiritual food and drink and life eternal by thy Servant."

To sum up, the eschatology of the *Didachē* not only belongs to a Palestinian current of thought ; but by its numerous points of resemblance with the Epistles to the Thessalonians, it seems to depend upon very ancient tradition, very nearly reproducing the ideas of Jesus on the subject.³

¹ "Usually the noun *life* in the New Testament is taken in a too spiritual sense. . . . For the most part, this word designates not life in the Philonian sense, but life with the Messiah after his return. See Bruder, *Concord.*, N.T. *Græca*, p. 386."

² "I thank thee, O Lord my God, for having associated me with those who frequent this place of study, instead of leaving me among those who haunt the shops. I rise like them, but it is for the study of the Law, not for worthless affairs ; I take pains, but I shall be rewarded for them, while those will not ; we all alike are running, but my goal is the future life, while they will only arrive at the pit of destruction." Talmud of Babylon, *Berachoth*, 28b, Schwab's edition, p. 337.

³ Paul Sabatier, *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 150.

A passing reference may here be made to a document which has also come down from a high antiquity, the anonymous romance of *Paul and Thecla*. The author attributes to his heroine this declaration: "The Son of God is the ground of immortal life, for to the storm-tossed he is a refuge, to the troubled repose, the shelter of them that had despaired; and in a word, whoso believeth not on him truly shall not live, but shall die outright."¹ Thecla is addressing the surrounding crowd of heathens. The heathens were absolutely ignorant of the mystic meaning that the Churches have given to the words *live* and *die*; for them these verbs could only bear the meaning of the perpetuation or cessation of existence. This saying is, no doubt, taken from a legendary story; but since, according to a quotation of Tertullian, the document dates from the first half of the second century, it may very well serve to fix the meaning then given to the expressions in question.

III.

With *Justin Martyr* begins the series of apologist Fathers; his death took place in the year 164. In his dialogue with the Jew Trypho one of the interlocutors is an aged Christian, who is understood to represent the true biblical doctrine. Having repudiated the Platonic doctrine of the eternal pre-existence of souls, the old man is made to say:

The world was created, and souls also. There was a time when they were not; they are therefore not naturally immortal. I do not, however, say that all souls die,² for that would be too much to the advantage of the wicked. I say that the souls of the righteous remain in a better place, but the evil in a worse, awaiting the time of judgement. . . . The righteous . . . shall not die any more, but the wicked shall be punished so long as it shall please God that they exist and be punished.³

Justin then asks the old man whether he thinks with Plato

¹ *Praxeis Paulou kai Theklēs*. Edition of Professor Lipsius, 1891, § 37. We owe this quotation to the kindness of Professor E. Combe, of the Lausanne University. [See also Dr. Wm. Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, art. *Thecla*.]

² *Allu men oude apothnēskēin phēmi pasas tas psuchas ego.*

³ *Kai einai, kai kolazesthai. Dial. cum Tryph.*, § v. Cf. Irenæus, *Adv. Hæres.*, lib. ii., cap. xxxiv., § 3: "*Quoadusque ea Deus et esse et perseverare voluerit.*"

that the world and the souls that form part of it will be made imperishable by the divine will ; the old man replies that he does not hold that view, and says :

Now the soul partakes of life, since God wills it to live. Thus, then, it will not even partake of life when God does not will it to live. For to live is not its attribute, as it is God's ; but as a man does not live always, and the soul is not for ever conjoined with the body, since whenever this harmony must be broken up the soul leaves the body, and the man exists no longer, even so whenever the soul must cease to exist the spirit of life is removed from it and there is no more soul.¹ . . .

Although certain contradictions make Justin appear to be in conflict with himself, he introduces the same principles in his *Apologies*, thus :

God delays causing the confusion and destruction of the whole world, by which the wicked angels and demons and men shall cease to exist,² because of the seed of the Christians, who know that they are the cause of preservation in nature.³

¹ *Dial. cum Tryph.*, § vi. *Kai ouk estin hē psuchē eti*. [The translation of this and the following quotations from Justin is that of T. and T. Clark's series : *The Ante-Nicene Chr. Libr.*, 1867.] The text adds : " It returns to its starting-point," nonentity, or the original substance. Olshausen says : " Without being nonentity, this starting-point is equivalent to non-existence." *Quod idem est atque ouk einai* (*Opuscula*, p. 180). The distinction seems very fine drawn. Ullmann says that the soul then ceases to be conscient and personal (*Studien und Kritiken*, p. 430, 1828). In all this, do we not see a manifest tinge of Platonism ? In Platonism, which these Fathers had sucked with their mothers' milk, nothing comes out of absolute nonentity, and, therefore, nothing can return thither. But even from that point of view, what is a soul that is deprived of spirit, without liberty, without reason, without self-consciousness, in a word, without personality ? A human soul without spirit is like a body without a head ; but universal analogy teaches us that a decapitated being cannot continue to live.

The last hesitation of Nietzsche (an inconceivable existence in nonentity), of Delitzsch, and of Olshausen himself, may they not be also the result of some vestige of dualism ? And may it not be the case with M. Geo. Godet too ? He believes that the power of the wicked will one day be " paralyzed in the outer darkness" (*Chrét. evang.*, 1881, p. 60). If he grants to us a *total and final paralysis of all the faculties* of the wicked, we will willingly abandon to him all that remains, if there remains anything. It is open to him to come to an understanding with us on that basis (Cf. *Crit. relig.*, p. 17 ; April, 1882). If the paralysis is not absolute, there remains a *hostile power*, and therefore dualism. See, too, *Supplement* No. III., § vi. Putting aside the circumlocutions and the reserves of the Greek Fathers, Arnobius, as we shall presently see, speaks of a soul that perishes without leaving behind it " any residuum."

² *Mēketi ōsi*.

³ *Second Apol.*, vii. Dr. Donaldson's rendering.

We have learned that those only are deified¹ who have lived near to God in holiness and virtue.² . . . But if the soldiers enrolled by you, and who have taken the military oath, prefer their allegiance to their own life, it were verily ridiculous if we who earnestly long for incorruption should not endure all things in order to obtain what we desire from him who is able to grant it.³

But we, because we refuse to sacrifice to those to whom we were of old accustomed to sacrifice, undergo extreme penalties and rejoice in death, believing that God will raise us up by his Christ, and will make us incorruptible, undisturbed, and immortal.⁴

The *Epistle to Diognetus* has been attributed to Justin. In it there is mention of a punishment "which must continue until the end."⁵ There is, therefore, to be an end of that punishment. It is also therein stated that "God has given his only Son, who is righteous, immortal, and of an imperishable nature for men who are unrighteous, mortal, and of a perishable nature."⁶

One of Justin's disciples was *Tatian*, the Assyrian. According to this author it is the spirit which preserves the soul.

The soul is not in itself immortal, but mortal. Yet it is possible for it not to die . . . the ignorant soul is darkness. On this account, if it continues solitary, it tends downwards towards matter, and dies with the flesh; but if it enters into union with the divine spirit, it is no longer helpless, but ascends to the regions whither the spirit guides it; for the dwelling-place of the spirit is above, but the origin of the soul is from beneath.⁷

¹ *Apathanatizesthai*. According to its etymology, the primary meaning or this word is to *immortalize*. Its use in the sense of apotheosis shows that among the Greeks deification and immortalization were synonymous terms, immortality being the prerogative of the gods. The evident inference is that man, not being a god, without this process has not immortality.

² *First Apol.*, xxi.

³ *First Apol.*, xxxix.

⁴ *Aphthartous kai apatheis kai athanatos*. *Trypho*, xli. Cf. *First Apol.*, xlii., lii. The *Apologies* are addressed to the Roman emperor and senate. For these, immortality could not be anything else than the perpetuation of a glorious existence. Did not Marcus Aurelius on the approach of death exclaim ironically: "It seems to me that my immortality is already beginning."

⁵ *Mechri telous*, x.; cf. Dan. vii. 26: The work of destruction and its final result. It is in this epistle that is found the first mention of an "immortal soul."

⁶ *Idem.*, ix.

⁷ *Ouk estin athanatos hē psuchē kath'heautēn, thnētē de. Alla dunatai hē*

Theophilus, sixth bishop of Antioch, who like Justin was a convert from paganism, addressed to one of his friends a treatise which was intended to bring him over to Christianity. He thus falls into the ranks of the apologist Fathers. He puts this question :

Was man created mortal? Not so. Immortal? Neither so. What then? Man was made neither mortal nor immortal, for if the Creator had made him at once immortal, he would have made him a god; if he had made him mortal, God would appear to us as the cause of his death. Therefore neither immortal nor yet mortal did he make man; but, as we have said above, capable of either destiny,¹ in order that he might incline to the things of immortality, and keeping God's commandments obtain immortality as his reward, and so become divine;² but if he should turn aside to the things of death, disobeying God, he would become the cause of his own death. For God made man free and master of his own fate.³ But that which he through his negligence and disobedience did not⁴ acquire, God in his philanthropy and mercy now gives to him when men become obedient. For in the same manner as man by his disobedience brought death upon himself, so if he fulfils the will of God any man who desires it can acquire the life eternal. In fact, God has given us a law and holy precepts whereby any man who does them will be saved, and, attaining the resurrection, will inherit incorruptibility.⁵

The testimony of *Irenæus* has an exceptional value. A disciple of Polycarp, who, as we have seen, had known the apostle John, *Irenæus* was as it were the spiritual grandson of the beloved disciple. He was bishop at Lyons, where he died a martyr about the year 197. His teaching on the subject before us is most explicit. He says :

God created the heavens above us, the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, and all their grandeur; and so it is with souls and spirits. All

autē kai mē apothnēskēin. Thnēskēi men gar kai luetai meta tou sōmatos mē ginōskousa tēn aletheian. Contra Græcos, xiii. Cf. vii., xv.

¹ *Dektikos amphoterōn, amphidektos, mesos.* *Irenæus*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, and *Nemesius* come again to this intermediate position.

² Literally, god, *genētai theos.*

³ *Autexousion.*

⁴ This negative is a conjectural emendation of the text, reading *ouch* for *oun*, thus giving to a phrase that has puzzled the interpreters a clear and consistent meaning, which brings it into complete harmony with the context.

⁵ *Ad Autolyicum.* Lib. ii., cap. xxvii.; cf. xxiv.

creatures have had a beginning, and their duration depends upon the divine will. . . . The prophetic spirit speaks of God as the Father of all, who grants perpetuity of existence to those who are saved. For life is not from ourselves, nor from our nature, but it is bestowed according to the grace of God. He who preserves this gift of life and returns thanks to him who bestows it shall receive "length of days" for ever and ever; but he who rejects it and proves unthankful to his Maker for creating him, and will not know him who bestows it, deprives himself of the gift of duration to all eternity. The Lord spoke of those who are thus unthankful when he said: "If ye have not been faithful in that which is least, who will commit much unto you?" He thus teaches us that those who are not thankful to him for this short transitory life deserve the fate that awaits them, and will justly be deprived of perpetual life. . . . Souls receive their life and their perpetual duration as a gift from God, coming out of nonentity and continuing to exist because he wills that they should be and subsist. The substance of life comes from communion with God, and to be in communion with God is to know him and to enjoy his goodness. Men therefore will see God that they may live; they will be made immortal by that vision and by that intimate relation with God.

It was for this end that the Word of God became man. . . . This took place that man should not suppose that to himself belongs naturally the incorruptibility which is an attribute of God alone, and that he should not boast in his vainglory as though he were in his nature like to God. . . . Unbelievers will not inherit incorruptibility. The believer himself only possesses it as yet by his faith in the divine promise; it will actually begin only after the resurrection.¹

Here, as elsewhere in the writings of the earliest Fathers, incorruptibility means not a mystic purity, but the imperishability of the resuscitated body. The chastisement of the wicked will be eternal, because God's benefits are eternal. To be deprived of the benefit of existence is a punishment; to be for ever deprived of it is in fact to suffer an eternal punishment.²

Two passages have been urged against us in which Irenæus

¹ *Adv. Hæres.* Lib. ii., c. xxxiv.; cf. lib. iii., cc. xviii.-xx., and lib. i., c. vii., § 1.

² Irenæus seems to exhaust the vocabulary at his disposal in order to deny the immortality of the unsaved. The terms that he uses have a definitely ontological meaning: *athanasia*, *aphtharsia*, *diamonē*, *paramonē*, *paramenein*.

speaks of *immortal souls* ; but these contemplate a merely *relative* immortality.¹

Here we may quote Saint Perpetua, whose martyrdom took place at Carthage about the year 205. When the proconsul said to her, “Perpetua, wilt thou sacrifice to the gods of the empire?” she replied: “I am a Christian; I am called Perpetua, and am willing to die that I may have a perpetual life.”² The true faith of the primitive Church was thus declared by the ingenuous lips of this virgin martyr. So, too, by a striking contrast, the enemies of the Church had a correct notion of the Christian’s hope. Lucian, the great mocker, the second century Voltaire, derided them by saying, “These wretches have got it into their heads that they will be immortal!” And the heathens of Lyons, after having tortured the Christians, burnt them and cast their ashes into the Rhone, with the intention of preventing the martyrs’ resurrection.³

Clement of Alexandria died about the year 220. Having been a disciple of the celebrated Pantenus, he succeeded him as chief of the Christian school of philosophy founded at Alexandria. He says :

Let us observe God’s commandments and follow his counsels ; they are the short and direct way that leads to immortality.⁴

Even by the admission of our opponents the term that he uses can only designate an endless duration. Again he says :

When baptized we become enlightened ; enlightened we become sons ; as sons we become perfect and immortal.⁵

Here the writer establishes a very clear distinction between immortality and the virtues of which it is the crown and the reward.

Arnobius, the earlier one of that name, last of the apologist Fathers, lived at the beginning of the fourth century. His

¹ “*Sed incorruptibiles animæ quantum ad comparationem mortalium corporum.*” Lib. v. 7.

² A similar allusion to her name occurs in her farewell to her father : “If thou put no obstacle in the way, thou shalt one day have thy daughter in perpetuity.”

³ E. Doumergue, in the *Christianisme au XIXme siècle*, 11 April, 1884.

⁴ *Aidiotēta. The Pedagogue*, i. 3.

⁵ *Apathanatzometha. Ibid.*, § 6.

talents had made him famous. He was well known for his prejudices against Christianity, which he relentlessly attacked. Still, he could not contemplate without admiration the heroic courage of the martyrs. A new Saul of Tarsus, he could not always kick against this goad, and at last became a Christian; but, like the apostle Paul, he was distrusted by those whom he had so long opposed. In order to dissipate their doubts, he published an appeal to the heathens. It was at the time of the persecution under the emperor Diocletian; and after this courageous act the doors of the Church were opened to him. He is the most decided of all the Fathers in his opposition to Platonism. It is surprising, indeed, that the Church should have preserved his work, which is so contrary to the opinions that subsequently prevailed. This is how he apostrophizes the disciples of Plato:

What arrogance it is on your part to claim God as your Father and to pretend that you are immortal as he is! Inquire, search, examine what you are, what your fathers were, and how you have made your entrance into life. Will you consent to recognize that we are creatures either quite like the rest or separated from them by no great difference.

Your interests are in jeopardy, it is a question of the preservation of your souls; and unless you apply yourselves to know the supreme God a terrible death awaits you: not, indeed, a prompt and sudden abolition, but a long and grievous death-agony. None but the Almighty can preserve souls, give them length of days, and a spirit that shall never die, for God alone is immortal. As for souls, they are of an intermediate quality, even as Christ has taught us. They may, on the one hand, perish through not having known God, and on the other hand be delivered from death if they give heed to his threatenings and profit by his offered favours.

Let it be understood that in man's true death there is nothing left behind.¹ The death that is seen is only the separation of soul from body, not absolute destruction. But the true death is when souls that know not God shall be given over to be consumed in protracted torment. . . . Let us, then, avoid the vain hope of this new category of individuals who in their own insolent presumption assure us that souls are naturally immortal, of divine rank, offspring of God, inspired by him, exempt from the defilement of matter. In fact, souls are born at the very gates of the empire of death; but as the result of the divine

¹ *Hæc nihil residuum faciens.*

generosity they are allowed to prolong their existence on condition that they earnestly seek to know God. That knowledge is for them like salt, which, permeating their substance, protects them from corruption, or like the cement which serves to connect the stones of a building.

By putting off their insolence and cultivating sentiments of greater humility, your souls will prepare themselves for a new destiny. But God does not constrain anyone. The maintenance of our existence is by no means a necessity for him. He will not enrich himself by making us like gods; he will not impoverish himself by leaving us to fall back into nothingness.¹

IV.

It is easy to understand that a doctrine so definite was detrimental to the reputation of Arnobius, yet the same doctrine was taught by one so little suspected that he has been called the Father of orthodoxy, none other than the great *Athanasius*, who was the leading spirit in the Council of Nicæa. Such at least was his view when he composed his treatise on the *Incarnation of the Word of God*, which may be considered the most ancient treatise of Church dogmatics. M. Jundt, writing in the *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, calls this work a veritable philosophy of religion.² Athanasius writes:

God is good, or rather is himself the fount of goodness. . . . He made all things out of nothing through his own Word, our Lord Jesus Christ. And among these, pitying the race of men above all things on earth, and seeing that from the condition of its own nature it could not continue permanently, he graced them with something yet more. . . . He brought them into his own paradise and gave them a law, to the end that if they preserved the grace given, and remained good, they might have the life in paradise without sorrow, or pain, or anxiety, in addition to the promise of incorruption in heaven; but that, if they transgressed and turned aside and became evil, they might know that they would undergo the corruption in death which was natural to them, and no longer live in paradise, but thenceforth dying outside it, abide in death and in corruption. . . .

. . . The transgression of the commandment was making them return to their natural state; so that, having come into being out of non-

¹ Treatise against the Gentiles, bk. ii., chap. xiv.—xvi., *passim*.

² Its date is understood to be the year 319. Athanasius would then be in his twenty-third year.

existence, they also naturally suffer corruption back again into non-existence in course of time. For if, having once no existence,¹ they were called into being by the presence and loving-kindness of the Word, it was a natural consequence that, when men were destitute of the knowledge of God and were turned back again to non-existence (for evil is not being, and good is being), they should, inasmuch as they were called into being from God who is, be for ever left destitute even of being²—that is, that they should be destroyed and remain in death and corruption.³

Athanasius then proceeds to expound the purpose of the incarnation, namely : to save man from relapsing into nothingness, and to endow him with immortality in the renewed image of God. Through the effects of the transgression man is born to perish ; but by means of the incarnation he can by faith become united to the imperishable nature of the Word. The Son of God has appeared in order to communicate immortal life to men.⁴

V.

This doctrine was, as it were, drowned in the rising tide of the Platonic theory which was made to triumph in the Church by the false Clementines, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, Jerome, and especially Augustine. Nevertheless, the primitive teaching was maintained here and there.

¹ *Phusin echontes to mē einai.*

² *Kenothēnai kai tou einai aei.*

³ [The foregoing paragraphs are quoted from the translation published by the Religious Tract Society in the Christian Classics Series, pp. 52, 53, 54, 55.]

⁴ *De incarnatione Verbi Dei*, iii., iv., *sq.*, etc. "Notwithstanding this sound basis of faith, it must not, however, be supposed that Athanasius attributed immortality to the saved alone, for, like Dr. Watts and some other modern writers, he inconsistently taught, at least in the case of rejectors of Christ, 'that God would immortalize the wicked for an "eternal death" of conscious suffering.' The seemingly self-contradictory doctrine of Athanasius is well discussed and accounted for in the work above referred to, *The Holy Spirit the Author of Immortality*, 1708."—Edward White, *op. cit.*, p. 425.

The immortalization of man by Jesus Christ remained, however, the great force in the struggle against Arianism. Athanasius argues : "If the Son of God has had a beginning, he may also have an end ; in that case, our life depending upon his, the power by which the Saviour delivers us from eternal death would not be complete."

Lactantius, surnamed the Christian Cicero, a disciple of Arnobius, was, like his master, a partizan of Conditional Immortality.¹

Man, says he, stands upright with eyes raised to heaven because immortality is offered to him. Yet he does not possess it otherwise than as a gift of God, for there would be no difference between the just and the unjust if every man born into the world should become immortal. Immortality is, then, the wages and reward of virtue ; it is not inherent in our nature.²

According to *Nemesius*, who lived in the fifth century :

Man was originally neither mortal nor immortal, but in an intermediate condition. He was either to share the fate of his body, if he gave way to bodily passions, or to become worthy of immortality by following the noblest aspirations of his nature.³

Canon Swainson, in his learned history of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, shows by a curious example that the belief in Conditional Immortality lingered in the Churches sporadically for several centuries after the time of Athanasius. At the third Council of Constantinople, A.D. 680, under the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus, at the eleventh session, a synodical letter of twenty-one pages in length from *Sophronius*, who had been Patriarch of Jerusalem in the early part of the century, was read, in which, after reciting his faith in the Trinity, he proceeds to speak of the Incarnation, making special mention of the errors of Nestorius and Apollinaris ; and on a later page declares the true faith to be that " men's souls *have not a natural immortality*, it is by the gift of God that they receive the grant of immortality and incorruptibility."⁴

Theophylact, Archbishop of Acris, Metropolitan of Bulgaria, who died about 1107, was one of the best masters of exegesis of the Byzantine school. He seems to have had much the same tendency as Theophilus of Antioch. He has been

¹ Hagenbach, *Dogmengeschichte*, § 106.

² *Inst. div.*, lib. vii., cap. 5 ; cf. *Epitome*, cap. 35. *Non sequela naturæ sed merces premiumque virtutis*. See Carl Beck., *Christl. dogmengesch.*, p. 319.

³ *De natura hominis*, cap. i.

⁴ Page 250.

praised for penetration and correctness of expression. He says :

The angels are not immortal by nature, but by the effect of grace. If they share in immortality it is not inherent in them.¹

There are souls that perish, wrote *Nicholas* of Methone. Those souls that are reasonable, truly spiritual and divine, alone survive, attaining to perfection by the communication of God's grace and by the effort of virtue. . . . If any creatures are eternal, they are not so in themselves, nor by themselves, nor for themselves, but by the goodness of God, for all that has been created has had a beginning, and can only be preserved by the goodness of the Creator.²

The historian Neander called Nicholas of Methone the greatest theologian of his time. The lines just quoted show to what an extent he could rise superior to popular opinion. It is astonishing that they could have been written in the twelfth century. Darkness was at that time spread all over Europe, thick darkness, which was very soon to be illuminated by the sinister gleams of the torches of the Inquisition.³

¹ *Commentary* on 1 Tim. vi. 16.

² *Refut.*, p. 207, *sq.*; cf. p. 120. Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, § 174.

³ The triumph of the Platonic heresy was universal. Popes and councils were eager to put their seals upon the tomb of an ancient truth. As we shall see, the Reformers did not break these age-lasting seals. A few vestiges of primitive teaching have, however, been preserved in the text of certain liturgies. For example, in the Roman Missal, the order for Christmas contains this prayer : "*Post communion.* Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that as the Saviour of the world, born this day, is the author of divine generation to us, so he may also be himself the giver of immortality !" So, too, in the liturgy of the Anglican Church we find some characteristic phrases : "Perish everlastingly ;" "eternal death ;" "that in the last day . . . we may rise to the life immortal." In this Church, Conditionalism has continued latent, so to speak, and by a decision that dates from the year 1864 the constituted authorities have formally declared that the doctrine of an eternal hell is not an official dogma. See the pamphlet entitled : *Hear the Church of England, which is proved to have expelled from her articles the dogma of endless torments*, by H. S. Warleigh, Rector of Ashchurch, Tewkesbury ; London, Elliot Stock, 1872.

It may be added that the Roman Church admits a distinction between the punishment of privation and that of infliction (*pœna damni*, *pœna sensûs*). The former would be eternal, consisting in the privation of the beatific vision of God ; the latter might be mitigated, or even come to an end. Is not this an indistinct echo of the biblical doctrine : suffering followed by the privation of sensation ?

The poem of the *Redemption*, by Charles Gounod, also contains an echo of Christ's teaching (p. 31) :

Il a fait de sa chair le pain de notre vie !
Par ce miracle de bonté,
Son amour a versé dans notre âme ravie
Un levain d'immortalité.

Which may be rendered into English thus :

In his flesh he has made for our life the true bread.
By this wonderful bounty of God,
In our rapturous souls his love has now spread
Immortality's leaven abroad.

A hymn well known in French Protestant churches expresses the same thought :

Notre Jésus aujourd'hui nous présente
Un pain céleste, une manne excellente ;
Qui le reçoit avec humilité
Peut s'assurer de l'immortalité.

Or in English :

Our Jesus offers us to-day
Celestial bread, a manna pure ;
And whoso humbly takes it, may
Of immortality be sure.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEVIATION OF THE CHURCHES, AND THE DOCTRINE OF COMPULSORY IMMORTALITY IN AN ETERNAL HELL.

I. The corruption of the traditional dogma explained by the infiltration of heathen dualism—II. The apostles had predicted corruption in the doctrine of the Churches and the intrusion of false philosophy—III. The doctrine of Athenagoras—IV. Three Africans, Tertullian, Augustine, and Origen, secure the triumph of the Platonic doctrine—V. Feeble protests of Duns Scotus and Pomponatius—VI. Acknowledgements of the Reformers Luther and Tyndale—VII. Serious deficiency in Protestant dogmatics—VIII. Summary of the dogma called orthodox—IX. Pernicious consequences of that dogma—X. Alleviations imagined by evangelical theologians—XI. Scepticism of believers in respect of eternal torments—XII. Unstable equilibrium of eschatological agnosticism—XIII. Shrinking from the necessity of a doctrinal reform, Evangelism is lapsing into Universalism.

I.

How is the gold become dim? how is the most pure gold changed?

How is it that the firmament of evangelical doctrine has become darkened? How is it that night has closed upon it? How is it that the Church as a whole could so deviate?

All Protestants agree in admitting that during more than a thousand years the universal Church has deviated with respect to more than one important point. The fault of this deviation is attributed either entirely to the Popes or to Constantine the Great. Protestants are also very ready to imagine that the Reformers made all needful reforms. Unhappily that is only an illusion.

The Church of the second century already cherished in its bosom the germ of many a Romish error, and Protestantism is even now half Roman Catholic. Count de Gasparin has said:

We forge Protestant Fathers. . . . The truth is that the Fathers are the beginning, and for that very reason the condemnation, of Roman Catholicism. . . . It is just because the lapse begins with the Fathers that it is necessary to go back farther than their time.¹

Professor Ernest Naville, a thinker of the highest reputation, who is well versed in the history of philosophy, has made a similar declaration, as follows :

In the formation of Church science there were introduced *elements of ancient thought which were incompatible with the direct and true meaning of the Gospel*. Dazzled by the genius of Plato and Aristotle, the Fathers and the schoolmen accepted from these illustrious Greeks not only the part of their works that is eternally true, but also certain principles the consequences of which contradict the teaching of the living and true God. The philosophy accepted by Christians, and illustrated in modern times by such men as Leibnitz, Fénelon, Malebranche, *contains foreign currents which have come from Greece and India and tend to land the thoughts on the desolate shores of Pantheism*. The idea of God, of the almighty Creator, does not even yet reign completely above the ruins of the metaphysical idols set up by the errors of the sages. A noble task has been reserved for our epoch. A great harvest of truth is demanding reapers. While gathering up with pious care all that is pure in the intellectual heritage of past centuries, *we need to break away more than has yet been done from the false and unsatisfying doctrines of Greek tradition*, and by a serious effort of thought to succeed in placing the intellect itself, in its own primitive nature, in presence of the Gospel. Then will it be recognized, as I am fully convinced, that the Gospel is the true principle of science, as it is the true principle of civilization, and that Christian philosophy is the meeting of reason, as God has made it, with truth, as God has given it.²

Let us examine the history of dogmas. Just as in the autopsy of a dead body the baneful traces of a poison may be followed, so we shall show in the official doctrine of the Churches the deleterious influence of a diabolical falsehood. This falsehood is still sounded forth from the pulpits of truth. It promises immortality to sinners, even though impenitent.

¹ *Le Christianisme aux trois premiers siècles*, pp. 117-119.

² *Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, p. 178, 1875; and *Chrét. évang.*, p. 470, 1874. The italics are those of M. Astié's quotation. "The Fathers of the Church were only heathen philosophers christianized."—A. Schloesing, *Revue chrétienne*, p. 269, 1882.

"Ye shall not surely die," that insolent declaration of the Old Serpent, has become the basis of ecclesiastical eschatology.

In order the better to deceive, the seducer has transformed himself into an angel of light ; he has presented himself in the brilliant costume of science. Intoxicated with a false philosophy, the Church Fathers have conferred upon a heathen a title with which none of the apostles even were ever honoured ; they have called him the divine Plato.¹

II.

And yet the Church had been specially cautioned on this point. The apostolic Epistles contain various admonitions and predictions on the subject. Paul writes :

The mystery of lawlessness doth already work . . . take heed lest there shall be anyone that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit. . . . Where is the philosopher ? where is the disputer of this world ? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world ? . . . Greeks seek after wisdom ; but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block and unto Greeks foolishness ; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God . . . a wisdom not of this world. . . . The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but having itching ears will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts, and will turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside unto fables. . . . I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is toward Christ.²

"The craftiness of the serpent !" Is not the lying promise of unconditional immortality a part of his craftiness, and is it

¹ The late Rev. Edwin Hatch, D.D., in his recent volume on *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, shows that in the third and fourth centuries, under the influence of Greek logic, more importance was attributed to the letter of the formulas than to the primitive doctrine, and that the old orthodoxy then became a new heresy. He further indicates the need for a return to the true Gospel of Christ. See, too, Alex. Westphal's essay entitled, *Chair et esprit*, wherein he traces the developement of the two notions of *flesh* and *spirit* in the Old and New Testaments. Toulouse, A. Chauvin and Son, 1885, p. 150, sq.

² 2 Thess. ii. 7 ; Col. ii. 8 ; 1 Cor. i. 20, 22-24 ; ii. 6 ; 2 Tim. iv. 3 ; 2 Cor. xi. 3. The apostle, who quotes three Greek poets, does not invoke the authority of a single philosopher.

not at the foundation of Plato's dualist doctrine, the danger of which we have just seen indicated by Professor Ernest Naville? The Church, believing herself to be wiser than her founders, placed herself blindfold under the direction of the Academic philosophers. Clement of Alexandria said, in his early time, that the apostle Paul did not include in his blame "all philosophies, but only those of the Epicureans and the Stoics." Plato had taught the pre-existence and the imperishability of souls. His affirmation prevailed against the negation of the apostles and prophets. Christ, Paul, Peter, and John were made to appear Platonists.

III.

The author of the false Clementines is the earliest in date of the ecclesiastical writers who deviate from the primitive faith. Yet he in some passages contradicts himself by asserting that the soul "will end by being consumed in the flames of hell; for they cannot endure for ever who have been impious against the one God. . . . A supreme chastisement will put an end to their existence."¹

Then came Athenagoras, a native of Athens and disciple of Plato, who applied himself to the task of demonstrating the existence of a fundamental accord between the doctrine of Jesus and that of the great Athenian philosopher. He laid down as a principle that in creating man God's purpose was to make him live; it is impossible that God's purpose should not be attained; therefore man must live for ever, good or evil, happy or unhappy.

Athenagoras holds that the purpose of man's existence is that existence itself.² The Gospel, on the contrary, subordinates the perpetuation of existence to holiness. According to the apostle Paul, the purpose of the creation is the manifestation and the glorification of the sons of God.³ But this glory is not attained apart from the exercise of freedom; it

¹ *Homily* iii. 6, *sq.*, 59; xvi. 10; Antwerp edition, 1698.

² Here again is found the Platonic principle adopted by Thomas Aquinas, and recalled if not adopted by Professor Ernest Naville (*le Libre arbitre*, p. 318), who, however, has just cautioned us against the errors of Greek philosophy.

³ Rom. viii. 19.

depends upon the triumph of morality. The elect lay hold on eternal life; it is not imposed upon them. A compulsory immortality in wickedness, interminable sufferings which will never be of any advantage to the victims, these are blasphemous inventions. We raise our feeble voice in denunciation of the truly diabolical craftiness which, by presenting to the Church the seductive fruit of heathen philosophy, with subtilty and without noise, has at last attained to this shocking triumph: to cause God to be calumniated by his own elect.

Greek philosophy at that time was making a vigorous effort to substitute its dogma of the immortality of the soul for the old Jewish ideas of resurrection and an earthly paradise. The two forms, however, were still existing together.¹

IV.

There were three natives of burning Africa, Tertullian, Origen, and Augustine, who were most influential in completing the triumph of the Platonic doctrines.

Tertullian, who had an ardent spirit, and was an eloquent preacher but a most ignorant theologian, appealed to the revelations of a sister who had seen visions. In order to explain how the flames of hell will burn the wicked without devouring them, he alludes to the philosophical notion of a special kind of fire, a secret or divine fire, which does not consume that which it burns, but while it burns it repairs. So the volcanoes continue ever burning, and a person struck by lightning is kept safe from any destroying flame. The mountains burn and last, and so will it be with the enemies of God.²

Tertullian forgot that, according to the Scripture, God does not allow to subsist that which he consumes; it needed a miracle to prevent the destruction of the burning bush, while it is written of the wicked that by the wrath of God they will be "burnt up like stubble." The Bishop of Carthage lived in a time of persecution. Christians were seized and given over to wild beasts. The law of the Gospel prohibited vengeance on the part of Christ's disciples, but it sometimes seemed to

¹ Renan, *Marc Aurèle*, pp. 505 and 511; and *L'Ecclésiaste*, p. 29.

² *Apolog.* xlviii., cf. *Scorp.* iii.

them that an eternity of sufferings in hell would not be too much punishment for those who thus tormented them in the present life.

You delight in spectacles, exclaimed Tertullian, and there is a spectacle reserved for us in the day of judgement. How shall I admire, how rejoice, when I behold in the depths of the abyss so many proud monarchs and magistrates who have persecuted the name of the Lord; when I hear their cries in the midst of flames more terrible than they ever kindled to burn the Christians! There will be seen tragedians whose sufferings will force them to utter the true accents of pain; there will be dancers whom we shall see leaping in the midst of the flames, and fiery chariots going the round of the burning arena.¹

The spirit of vengeance impelled Tertullian to make out hell to be eternal. He goes so far as to speak of the immortality of the wicked: "An eternal life will be their portion," he says. Such expressions are, as we have seen, utterly foreign, and even contrary, to both the letter and the spirit of the Scriptures.

Tertullian's hell is a hideous field of carnage, a "perpetual slaughter;"² mortal sufferings without the relief that is brought by death. Such a doctrine causes horror; it is, however, logical, if the teachings of Plato are to be reconciled with those of Christ. In that case the Bible asserts contradictions. Ever slaughtered, the wicked are never put to death; they perish without ever being destroyed, and death becomes one of the aspects of life!

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, upheld with all his might these strange aberrations. For the dogma of Platonic immortality, he did that which later on was done by Calvin for the dogma of the predestination of the wicked; he perpetuated for centuries the triumph of a monstrous error.³ Impelled by the logic of his system, he condemned to the eternal fire of hell every little infant dying unbaptized.⁴

¹ *De spectac.*, xxx.

² *Æterna occisio.*

³ That the doctrine of native and inalienable immortality prevailed in the Church through the influence of Augustine after his controversy with Pelagius is expressly stated by Petavius. *De theolog. dogmat.*, vol. iii., p. 172; Antwerp, 1700.

⁴ *Multum autem fallit et fallitur qui eos in damnatione predicat non futuros.* *Opp.*, vii., p. 142.

It was with Calvin, his disciple, as with Augustine; their characters were affected by their sombre theology. Augustine devoted to eternal torments not only little infants, but also those wretched beings who in his time found reason to believe in the existence of the antipodes! In his letter to Pope Boniface, like Jerome he sanctioned persecution against heretics.

These facts confirm what we have said in a former chapter about the always deleterious effects of sin, even when pardoned. If the son of the pious Monica had not wasted his youth in guilty pleasures, he would have had the time needed for the acquisition of the necessary knowledge. Neither did he nor his predecessor Tertullian take the trouble to learn Hebrew. He had not even a good knowledge of Greek. Not being able to study the Bible in the original texts, Augustine found himself deprived of the best antidote against a false philosophy. The Old Testament, that bulwark of *monism*, remained almost a closed book to him.¹ Carried away by

¹ In theology *monism* is the doctrine which admits only one eternal principle. *Dualism* is, on the contrary, a "system of philosophy or religion which, going back to the origin of things, admits two contrary principles, both eternal, as, for example, good and evil, spirit and matter, the ideal and the real. This system is essentially *heathen*; it is found among the Persians under the names of Ormuzd and Ahriman, and although Christianity recognizes only one God, the Creator, eternal, by whom all things subsist, a dualism has made its way more than once into the developement of Christian dogma, not only in a coarse and material form, as with the Gnostics and Manichæans, but in a more subtle form in the discussions between Augustine and Pelagius as to the origin of evil, in the lucubrations of the spiritualist and antinomian sects of the middle ages, and in the conception of the devil as it is admitted in the Catholic Church, and even by many Protestant theologians."—J. Aug. Bost, *Dictionnaire d'histoire ecclésiastique*, article *Dualisme*. In a private letter to the author, Pastor Mittendorff, of Geneva, writes as follows:

"You have said that the Platonic doctrine of the soul's immortality contains a basis of dualism. That is perfectly true. It is right that the upholders of the traditional dogma should be confronted with the ultimate philosophical consequences of their system. Starting from the principle of the soul's indestructibility, they admit, as a final result of the exercise of human freedom, the persistent revolt and the eternal suffering of a certain number of creatures, that is to say, the eternal duration of an evil principle, of a state of rebellion against the principle of good, against God; that is, from the point of view of duration, the infinity of evil opposed to the infinity of good, or the introduction of dualism into the notion of the supreme Being.

every wind of doctrine, he was for seven years an adept of Manichæism, of a sect which actually rejected the Old Testament. From that heresy Augustine retained the evil leaven of dualism. His dogmatics were completely impregnated with it. The Western Church, and more especially the Calvinists and Jansenists, have had to suffer grievously for the errors of the Bishop of Hippo : those errors still hinder the progress of the Gospel.

The doctrine called orthodox provoked, as early as the third century, the equally excessive reaction of Origen. He, too, was a victim of the Platonic dualism. He imagined a hell that was nothing more than a purgatory ; from it men and devils come forth regenerated, and go to enjoy the felicity of the elect at the right hand of the heavenly Father. We shall devote our next chapter to the examination of this theory.

The Church maintained the endless tortures of Tertullian for heretics and those who were excommunicated ; to the general body of the faithful it gave the benefit of the prospect opened up by Origen. The idea of the indestructibility of the soul flattered human pride, and for the clergy purgatory became a source of honour and profit. On this basis was founded the system of indulgences. The well-paid priest had the power of sending more quickly to paradise any deceased person whose salvation might be somewhat doubtful to those left behind. The proverb is well known : “The fire of purgatory boils the monk’s saucepan.”

The abuse became so shocking that it provoked Luther’s Reformation.

“Now, this dualism ought to be repudiated in the name of philosophy and in the name of the Bible. There is only one Absolute, one Infinite, who is God, the principle of good, of whom the Scripture gives a sublime definition by calling him the ‘I am.’ This is exactly Paul’s thought when he says that ‘God only hath immortality,’ and that a day is coming when ‘God will be all in all.’ That which results from this conception is the annihilation of the devil, of the principle of evil. If God is the source of life, all who separate themselves from God are condemned to death ; annihilation is the logical consequence of sin as viewed from either the metaphysical, the juridical, or the moral standpoint. He who revolts against God puts himself outside of life.”

V.

Even before the Reformation the Renaissance uttered its protest against the Platonic immortality. As early as the thirteenth century Duns Scotus, while still professing to believe in the immortality of the soul, maintained that it was a doctrine not susceptible of demonstration by the aid of natural powers, *via naturalis*; for him it is one of the data of Revelation, an article of faith.¹

Some of the fifteenth-century humanists went further; they demonstrated by philosophical and scientific arguments that the soul is mortal as well as the body. They attributed their point of view to the teaching of Averroës, an Arabian philosopher and commentator of the works of Aristotle.

Peter Pomponatius, born at Mantua in 1462, became the chief of an Averroist school. M. Bartholmess calls him "the most influential professor of philosophy of his time."² Idolized by the youth of the universities, Pomponatius published in 1516 his famous book on the *Immortality of the Soul*, wherein he maintained a doctrine somewhat similar to that of Duns Scotus. This book was burnt at Venice by the public executioner; but at Rome Pomponatius was warmly defended by Cardinal Bembo. Said Pomponatius: "As a Christian, I believe that which, as a philosopher or scientist, I cannot believe." To which his adversary Boccacini replied: "Pomponatius should be absolved as a Christian and burnt alive as a philosopher." Pomponatius died a natural death four years later, and Cardinal Hercules de Gonzaga had a statue erected to his memory.

The doctrine maintained by this philosopher became for some years an almost official teaching throughout Italy. About the year 1500, immortality was the problem around which all philosophical questions revolved, and "throughout the sixteenth century, when a new professor of philosophy made his appearance before the students in the Italian Universities, whatever might be the subject that he proposed to treat, they were

¹ F. Bonifas, *Histoire des dogmes*, vol. ii., p. 330.

² *Franck, Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, article *Pomponace*.

always ready, in order that they might at once understand his views, to cry out : ‘ Speak to us of the soul ! ’ *dell’anima*. ”¹

The opinion that the soul is mortal was so widely accepted by the learned men in Italy that the Church considered it a duty to intervene. Pope Leo X. caused this doctrine to be condemned by the fifth Lateran Council. The absolute immortality of the soul separate from the body was proclaimed by a decree of the eighth session of that Council.

Pomponatius was condemned, says Renan, but was supported in secret. . . . What serious effect could be expected from a Bull counter-signed Bembo, and commanding belief in immortality ? . . . The Lateran Council was but a feeble effort to arrest the progress of Italy in the path on which she was going, and from which she could only be withdrawn by the great reaction produced by the commotion of the Reformation.²

It is thus seen that the triumph of the doctrine of native and inalienable immortality is of comparatively recent date. Its place in the chronological order of official dogmas is immediately before the immaculate conception of the Virgin and Papal infallibility.

VI.

There was a moment in which Luther seemed to take the part of Pomponatius against Pope Leo X. In his *Defence of all the Propositions condemned by the New Bull*, Luther placed the dogma of the immortality of the soul among the “ monstrous fables that form part of the Roman dunghill of decretals. ”³ It

¹ *Franck, Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, article *Pomponace*.

² The date of the Bull is December 19, 1513. As we have said, the book of Pomponatius on the *Immortality of the Soul* appeared in 1516 ; it would be interesting to know to what extent the author took account of the Pope's Bull, one part of which was directed against his academic teaching.

³ The Latin text of Luther's thesis is as follows :

“ Permitto tamen quod Papa condat articulos fidei et suis fidelibus, quales sunt panem et vinum transsubstantiari in sacramento, essentiam Dei nec generare nec generari, animam esse formam substantialem corporis humani, se esse Imperatorem mundi et Regem cœli et Deum terrenum, *animam esse immortalem* et omnia illa infinita portenta in romano sterquilinio Decretorum ; ut qualis est ejus fides, tale sit evangelium, tales et fideles, talis et ecclesia et habeant similem labra lactucam, et dignum patella sit operculum.

“ Nos vero, qui non Papani sed Christiani sumus, scimus quod nihil est fidei et bonorum morum quod non abunde in literis sacris sit expositum ut neque jus, neque locus sit *alia* statuendi ullis hominibus.”

has been supposed that Luther's indignation was due to the fact that the Pope allowed himself "to raise to the rank of a dogma a truth which had been always an integral portion of the Christian faith."¹ This view might perhaps be upheld if, in his enumeration of "Roman corruptions," Luther did not associate the dogma of the soul's immortality with transubstantiation and papal idolatry. He does not mention a single biblical article of faith. Native immortality there finds itself decidedly in very bad company. We find it difficult to understand that the great reformer could have applied the name of "monstrous *fable*" to "a *truth* which had been always an integral portion of the Christian faith." For the present we prefer to admit that he may have shared for a while the doubts that were then so generally prevalent with respect to the scholastic notion of the immortality of the soul.² It has, moreover, been remarked that Luther, who taught the sleep of souls between death and resurrection, hardly ever speaks of eternal torments.

Calvin, however, thought it his duty to devote one of his earliest works to the question of the sleep of souls.³ On this point he opposed the opinion maintained by the Reformer William Tyndale, the translator of the Bible into English, who died at the stake in 1536.

The true faith, says Tyndale, putteth [setteth forth] the Resurrection, which we be warned to look for every hour. The heathen philosophers, denying that, did put [set forth] that the souls did ever live. And the Pope joineth the spiritual doctrine of Christ and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together, things so contrary that they cannot agree any

¹ Geo. Godet, *Chrét. évang.*, 1882, p. 562.

² We may add that in the passage quoted by M. Geo. Godet the argument adduced by Luther in support of the immortality of the soul has little weight. It amounts to this: that the human soul must be imperishable because in the Apostles' Creed it is said, "I believe in the life everlasting;" as if the life everlasting were not, even from the traditionalist standpoint, the exclusive privilege of believers, and that of which non-believers will be deprived; for non-believers, therefore, there would be no immortality. The explanation given by the Reformer would then lead straight to Conditionalism. It should also be borne in mind that the explanation referred to appeared some time later than the thesis before mentioned.

³ *Psychopannychia*, Strasburg, 1542. The two prefaces are dated respectively from Orleans, 1534, and Basle, 1536.

more than the spirit and the flesh do in a Christian man. And because the fleshly-minded Pope consenteth unto heathen doctrine, therefore he corrupteth the Scriptures to establish it.¹

To the Swiss Reformer, Zwingli, belongs the honour of having risen superior to the ecclesiastical belief that all heathens were doomed to hell; he taught the virtual and implied salvation of men of good and true will in all religions.²

VII.

On the whole we are bound to admit that, recoiling from the immensity of the task, the theologians of the sixteenth century did not thoroughly examine the foundations of the theory formulated by Augustine. Not one of them undertook the reform of the traditional hell.

The Reformation, being concentrated upon the points that separated it from the Catholic Church, which for the Reformers were summed up in the authority of the Scriptures and justification by faith, did not submit to a new examination those doctrines that were not included within the bounds of its dominant preoccupations, and that did not form an object of the ardent polemics of the time.³

It may, however, be told, to the honour of the sixteenth century, that in 1562 the Convocation of the Anglican Church, presided over by Archbishop Parker, had the wisdom to suppress the "articles of religion" in which the eternity of sufferings was implicitly affirmed.⁴ It is a no less remarkable fact that the doctrine in question is absent from the confession of faith of the Reformed Churches of France, called that of La Rochelle.

The successors of the Reformers quarrelled, and then went to sleep. The religious re-awakening of our century contented itself with the acceptance of the traditional doctrine as it stood. Adopting the ready-made formulas of the Reformation, its

¹ *Confutation of Sir Thomas More*, 1531.

² See the dedication to Francis I. of his latest work, *Christianæ Fidei Expositio*, 1536.

³ Edmond de Pressensé, *Essai sur le dogme de la rédemption*, p. 23, Paris, 1867.

⁴ The Anglican "Articles of Religion" were originally forty-two; they were reduced to thirty-nine.

leaders seem to have had no sort of suspicion that those formulas contained a bastard mixture of Gospel with heathen philosophy. By a sort of intellectual indolence, evangelism has disdained the profound study of dogma, and is now punished for it by the felt lack of power to influence the class of thinking men. French Protestantism in particular has failed to make any deep impression outside its own borders.¹

Alone, or nearly so, one of the chief apostles of the revival, M. Ami Bost, attained to the point of view that we are defending. His work on the subject was the last that issued from his incisive pen. It was the worthy crowning of a career devoted without reserve or prejudice to the defence of truth.²

It is incumbent upon our generation to take up the uncompleted work of the Reformers. Happily, they have handed down to us the Bible and freedom of inquiry, the fulcrum and the lever, by means of which, with the help of God, the coming generation will raise and speedily put aside the stone that encumbers the way of truth.

This reform within the Reformation is all the more urgent because on the point in question Catholicism has an incontestable advantage over Protestantism. The doctrine of purgatory, although false in some respects, contains an element of truth which has been lost in the Calvinist dogma. This fact may perhaps partly explain the reason why Protestantism has made no advance in Europe since the sixteenth century, while Roman Catholicism, with the aid of persecution it is true,

¹ See Chap. I., sect. iii.

² See Chap. I., p. 24, note 3. We ought here to mention beside Ami Bost one of his friends, the father of him who writes these lines. Shortly before his death, which occurred in his eightieth year, and while in the full possession of all his faculties, A. F. Petavel arrived at the same conclusions.

In relation to M. Bost, we may here mention a characteristic incident. Some of the chiefs of the revival having felt the need of replacing Ostervald's translation of the Bible by a new version (which has been called the Swiss version), there was a discussion as to the text which should serve as the basis of the work. The superstitious notion of a providential text, together with the intellectual indolence before referred to, brought about the adoption of the Elzevirs' edition, which has borne the name of *received text*, the predominance of which is only a usurpation. Ami Bost had the courage to protest, demanding that account should be taken of the results of criticism; but this proposal was rejected, and its author had to retire from the committee of translation.

has reconquered various countries, as, for instance, Poland, the region of Gex, and a part of Savoy.¹

VIII.

The so-called orthodox doctrine appears in the standards of the Reformed Churches, and particularly in the Westminster Confession, which still holds its authority among the Presbyterians of England, Scotland, and America. It may be summed up thus :

1. Adam was created with a soul immortal as God himself, although his body was perishable.

2. The death with which he was threatened in the event of disobedience had a threefold character : it would put an end to physical life, separate the soul from God, and subject the soul to eternal torments. There are thus three kinds of death, two of which are rather life than death.

3. Adam's fall not only rendered our first progenitor subject to these three kinds of death, but also by the hereditary transmission of original sin has brought the same condemnation upon all his posterity.

4. Therefore, with the exception of a certain number who are the elect, every human being is even before his birth predestined to endless torments. Thus hell is to be the eternal abode of all children dying in infancy who are not the objects of a special decree.

5. Christ has borne the curse of the law ; yet in his case the eternal torments of the second death were limited, it is not said why, to the period of a few hours passed in the garden of Gethsemane and on Calvary.

6. These expiatory sufferings of Jesus during a few hours and his death protect the believer against the two kinds of death of the soul. As for the body, the Christian dies with the prospect of a resurrection at the last day.

7. The Gospel has introduced an infinite aggravation of the sentence pronounced by the law of Moses. Therein death by stoning was the only punishment of the greatest culprits. But

¹ See the article in the *Figaro* of 19 April, 1889, previously referred to, which exhibits that feature of Roman Catholicism which has been so skilfully turned to advantage.

the Gospel threatens the impenitent with torments which must last as long as God himself. This aggravated doom will have a retroactive effect upon the obstinate sinners of the Old Covenant.

8. The inhabitants of the eternal hell will be infinitely more numerous than those of the future paradise, for there is no possible salvation beyond the tomb, and all the heathen are to be there; all men who have not had sufficient faith, or who die without having here below heard of Jesus Christ, will rise again in order to suffer endless torments. Now, there can be no question that the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ have formed, at any rate up to the present time, only an insignificant minority of the human race.

IX.

Such is the Augustinian and Calvinist doctrine in its offensive nakedness, which the evangelical theologians of our day sometimes endeavour to hide under a Noah's mantle.¹ If it were but altogether dead we might apply to it the saying: *De mortuis nihil nisi bonum*, but it is well known that wherever it has maintained a breath of life it persecutes those who appeal from it to the Bible and free inquiry. Abusing its acquired position, it seems to have but one aim: to blight in its germ every effort to return to the primitive Gospel. We are therefore bound to denounce it openly as a superstition as dangerous as it is tyrannical. The summary of it that we have given may suffice to show its incoherence, but it is needful also to indicate its disastrous effects.

By presenting God in a false light it has discredited the Gospel. A theologian of the Anglican Church has brought out very clearly the logical results of this doctrine:

No man can deny that God is able to destroy what he was able to create. No man can deny that God had a power to choose whether he would inflict death upon the sinner or an endless life of agony. Which

¹ It will, of course, be understood that we do not at all underrate the genius of the great men who formulated this doctrine. On the contrary, we acknowledge and admire the logic which has courageously drawn the legitimate consequences from an erroneous principle, and the candour of a Calvin who admitted that his system was horrible: *Decretum quidem horribile fateor!*—*Inst.*, lib. iii. 23, § 7.

would he choose, the gentler or the more fearful doom? Will you say the latter? Why? There must be a reason. Is it to please himself? He repudiates this kind of character (Ezek. xviii. 23). His mode of dealing here contradicts it : where pain is sharp it is short. Is it to please his angelic or redeemed creation? They are too like himself to take pleasure in such a course. Did no pity visit the Creator's bosom they would look up into his face and plead for mercy. Is it to terrify from sin? To terrify whom? Not the lost, they are handed over for ever to blasphemy and evil. Is it, then, to terrify the unfallen, and preserve them from sin? Would it? What is sin? Is it not pre-eminently *alienation from God*? What would alienate from him so completely as the sight or the knowledge of such a hell as Tertullian taught? Pity, horror, anguish, would invade every celestial breast. Just fancy a criminal with us. He has been a great criminal. Let him be the cruel murderer, the base destroyer of woman's innocence and honour, the fiendish trafficker in the market of lust, the cold-blooded plotter for the widow's or the orphan's inheritance. Let him be the vilest of the vile, on whose head curses loud, deep, and many have been heaped. He is taken by the hand of justice. All rejoice. He is put to death! No; that is thought too light a punishment by the ruler of the land. He is put into a dungeon, deprived of all but the necessities of existence, tortured by day and by night, guarded lest his own hand should rid him of a miserable life, and all this to go on till nature thrusts within the prison bars an irresistible hand and frees the wretch from his existence. Now, what would be the effect upon the community of such a course? The joy at the criminal's overthrow, once universal, would rapidly change into pity, into indignation, into horror, into the wild uprising of an outraged nation to rescue the miserable man from a tyrant worse than himself, and to hurl the infamous abuser of law and power from his seat. And this is but the faintest image of what a cruel theology would have us believe of our Father which is in heaven! Nature steps in in the one case, and says there shall be an end. Omnipotence, in the other, puts forth its might to stay all such escape. *For ever and for ever!* Millions of years of agony gone and yet the agony no nearer its close! Not one, but myriads to suffer thus! Their endless cries! Their ceaseless groans! Their interminable despair! Why, heaven and earth and stars in their infinite number, all worlds which roll through the great Creator's space, would raise one universal shout of horror at such a course. Love for God would give way to hatred. Apostasy would no longer be partial, but universal. All would stand aloof in irrepressible loathing from the tyrant on the throne, for a worse thing than

Manichæism pictured would be seated there—the one eternal principle would be the principle of evil.¹

Can that be a true theodicy which allows the continuance in the universe of an ever-burning volcano, an ever-livid blotch, an ever-festering sore, a howling and cursing that will never cease? Is it possible for the human mind to conceive of “a destructive principle that never produces destruction, and of the destruction of a finite being that never comes to an end?”²

If a tree may be judged by its fruit, is that dogma beyond the range of criticism which espoused the barbarism of the Visigoths, and brought forth the tigers of the Inquisition? These read the Gospel in the light of the burning piles that they kindled; fashioning their own souls in the image of their ferocious deity, they thought that they were rendering service to heretics by tormenting them on earth to enable them to escape from unending torments.

Can that be an acceptable doctrine which obliges us to admit something like two different deities: one here below who is tender and beneficent, most frequently avenging himself for the ingratitude and wickedness of men by untold benefits; the other beyond the tomb beholding with impassive complacency the interminable sufferings of his adversaries? We read with horror the stories of the Inquisition or the history of the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, the Emperor Montezuma broiled on a gridiron over a slow fire, the description of that torture which was caused by the dropping of water perpetually night and day on the forehead of the victim until he became mad with the pain; but what are these torments of a few hours or days in comparison with a fire, fierce or slow, material or immaterial, which after a thousand millions of years would then only just have begun its work?

Just as Torquemada has discredited the Papacy, so the doctrine of eternal torments has dishonoured the Gospel. The Goliath of unbelief, who to-day so arrogantly defies the forces of the living God, has not a more effective weapon in his

¹ Rev. H. Constable, M.A., late Chaplain to the City of London Hospital, and Prebendary of Cork. *Duration and Nature of Future Punishment*, 6th edition, 1886, p. 217, sq.

² Aug. Bouvier, *Actes de la Société pastorale suisse*, p. 83, Geneva, 1885.

panoply than the reproach that the Churches adore a cruel God. Even the idolaters of India and Siam repulse our missionaries in the name of divinities who, as they say, are more clement than ours. If we may believe the assertion of a man who in his lifetime was an influential London minister, “nine-tenths of the bitterness and fierceness with which Christianity is assailed by its coarser and more malign opponents may be traced to this fatal spring.”¹

We will not accept, as arbitrators in this matter, the avowed enemies of the Christian faith, nor even freethinkers like John Stuart Mill, Professor Tyndall, Theodore Parker, Colonel Ingersoll, or Madame Ackermann, although these have all expressed their reprobation of this dogma ; but we will quote writers who are favourable to the Gospel. M. Charles Renouvier says : “An eternal hell is one of the scandals most effective in alienating minds from the Christian conception of the world and its destinies.”² The excellent Sismondi wrote :

I left the church in haste, that I might not have to speak with anyone of the indignation that the minister had excited in me by his preaching about eternal torments. . . . I am determined never again to enter an English church, that I may not be forced to listen to such blasphemies, never to contribute towards the promotion of that which the English call their reform,³ for by the side of it Popery is a religion of mercy and grace. I can put up with idolatry and atheism, but to attribute to the divinity an infernal malice is an outrage upon the object of my adoration which fills me with indignation.⁴

The traditional doctrine is largely responsible for contemporary scepticism.⁵ It has called forth the poet's cry :

¹ Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, *The Christian World*, 16 March, 1877, p. 196.

² *Critique religieuse*, April, 1880, p. 44.

³ Sismondi probably means the religious movement called the Revival.

⁴ *Fragments de son journal et de sa correspondance*, Geneva, 1857, p. 106, sq.

⁵ Among the former Earls of Shaftesbury there was one whose unbelief has remained proverbial in England. It is said that he had consulted several eminent ecclesiastics in order to ascertain whether the New Testament really teaches eternal torments. Upon their affirmative reply, he declared himself unable thenceforth to admit a religion so contrary to the idea that he ought to cherish of the Governor of the universe. But a Scottish minister, Rev. J. L. Robertson, in a sermon preached at Glasgow has expressed yet stronger indignation ; he declares that “the popular notion of eternal punishment is

Rather a desert heaven than your so cruel God,
Whom I could only fear and curse.¹

The aim of one of Tennyson's later poems, the ode entitled *Despair*, is just to bring out into strong relief the deplorable results of this same belief.² Mr. Thomas Walker, late editor of the *London Gazette*, has shown that it was a challenge intended by the Poet-Laureate to force the hand of the evangelical Churches with regard to a doctrine which has not yet been repudiated by any one of them.

Not long ago the president of a French tribunal wrote to us thus: "I am anxious to thank you. . . . You may boast³ of having brought me back to Christianity, from which I had been completely alienated by the frightful, atrocious, monstrous dogma of eternal torments. . . . That question had been the torment of my life."

It was Father Hyacinthe who said one day: "One of the starting points of contemporary unbelief is the error of the Churches in presenting to us a God who is either imbecile or ferocious."⁴

erroneous and very hurtful in its tendencies in so far as the conception . . . debases and distorts the character of God."—*Christian World*, 20 Jan., 1877, p. 71.

¹ Plutôt un ciel désert que votre Dieu cruel
Qu'il me faudrait craindre et maudire !

² And we broke away from the Christ, our human Brother and Friend,
For he spoke, or it seemed that he spoke, of a hell without help, without end.

* * * * *

Ah, yet, I have had some glimmer, at times in my gloomiest woe,
Of a God behind all, after all, the great God for aught I know ;
But the God of Love and of Hell together—they cannot be thought ;
If there be such a God, may the Great God curse him and bring him
to nought !

Tennyson puts this imprecation in the mouth of an unhappy disciple of Calvin. An eternal hell is likewise the pivot of one of Victor Hugo's dramas: *Torquemada*. The author makes an eternal hell the foundation of the theory of the Inquisition ; the stake is the supreme remedy that is to preserve the misbelievers from the unquenchable flames.

³ We must here say that the Conditionalists do not "boast" of the fulfilment of their duty, which is always imperfect.

⁴ *Conférence* of 21 May, 1886. A similar thought appears in the discourse entitled "An Apology for the Inquisition."—*Ni cléricaux ni athées*, p. 190. The God of the pretended eternal torments is all one with the God of the Inquisition. The defenders of an eternal hell might to some extent apply to them-

A prebendary of St. Paul's in London has expressed in a recent volume a very similar opinion ; he considers that at the present time it is of the highest importance to make an inquiry into this point.¹ The inquiry has been also demanded by the Rev. J. Foxley, chaplain to the University of Cambridge ; it is on the order of the day in the religious press of England.

X.

Thus challenged and closely pressed, the traditional dogma is ashamed of itself ; it hides itself, or else pleads attenuating circumstances. The position of Platonic orthodoxy becoming untenable, its defenders have imagined certain accommodations.

Thus, in spite of Augustine, of Calvin, and of the confessions of faith, the salvation of all children who die in infancy is affirmed, although it is not said to what extent they share in original sin ; what may be the consequence to them of that evil predisposition is a question that is not considered. The study of the problem being dreaded, it has been found more convenient to put it aside.

The traditional doctrine is further mitigated by the assertion that while the first death and the second are transmissible by inheritance, the third death is not. The assertion is, however, quite gratuitous, and Calvin was more logical. In order to be orthodox, that is logically Platonist, it must be admitted that, with the exception of the small number of the elect, humanity, like a great river, is rushing on over the precipice of eternal sufferings ; humanity, that is to say men, our fellow-creatures, by hundreds and thousands of millions.

The recent census shows that British India alone contains some two hundred and eighty-five millions of inhabitants. Supposing that population arranged in ranks of thirty abreast and one yard apart, they would form a column some five thousand four hundred miles in length, a column that would extend from Delhi to Lisbon. If we were to believe the

selves the words of the ex-Carmelite monk addressed to the ultramontanes : "It is because of you that the name of God, of the personal and living God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the God who hears and inspires me, because of you that the name of God is blasphemed all over the world !" — *Vi cléricaux ni athées*, p. 191.

¹ Rev. C. A. Row, *Future Retribution*, p. 3 ; London, 1887.

traditional dogma, all these millions of a single generation of Hindoos are marching towards the lake of fire and brimstone, not there to perish, but there to live for ever in torments. And we must not forget that the official doctrine does not admit any means of grace beyond death, nor any intermediate abode between heaven and hell.

And what a hell it is! To describe it we will simply quote a sermon by the celebrated preacher, Spurgeon. He says:

When thou diest thy soul will be tormented alone—that will be a hell for it—but at the day of judgement thy body will join thy soul, and then thou wilt have twin hells, body and soul shall be together, each brimfull of pain, thy soul sweating in its inmost pore drops of blood, and thy body from head to foot suffused with agony; conscience, judgement, memory, all tortured. . . . Thine heart beating high with fever, thy pulse rattling at an enormous rate in agony, thy limbs cracking like the martyrs in the fire and yet unburnt, thyself put in a vessel of hot oil, pained yet coming out undestroyed, all thy veins becoming a road for the hot feet of pain to travel on, every nerve a string on which the devil shall ever play his diabolical tune. . . . Fictions, sir! Again I say they are no fictions, but solid, stern truth. If God be true, and this Bible be true, what I have said is the truth, and you will find it one day to be so.¹

That sort of thing is preached even now, here and there, but some of the more compassionate theologians protest. They say: "We reject the notion of material fire. The sufferings of the future life will be eternal, but they will belong to the moral order." This is another pretended alleviation. Can those who so use it ever have tried to realize that eternity so glibly spoken of? In vain does the imagination attempt to embrace a number so vast as that representing the distance from the earth to the sun; but supposing as many centuries

¹ *New Park Street Pulpit*, vol. ii., p. 105, Sermon No. 66. Mr. Spurgeon would not now use the phraseology of a discourse that dates from the early years of his career. His theology has, then, been modified in some degree, although he would perhaps not be willing to admit it. We should be glad if, some day, he would explain the causes of his doctrinal evolution; it would be interesting to learn how he has come to think himself authorized to mitigate in any way that which he declared to be the immutable truth. In any case, his early sermons remain as authentic monuments of the old so-called orthodox preaching. [See an article entitled "The Christian Hell" in the *Nineteenth Century* for November, 1891, p. 712.]

as there are units in that number, and the moral sufferings of the reprobate lasting throughout all that duration : that would be but the beginning of sorrows.

But we shall be told of the philosopher Kant, who speaks of such a conception of eternal duration as childish. We reply that our business is not with Kant, but with traditional notions which are insulting to our heavenly Father.

Enough, however, of alleviations. An important article of faith is not to be veiled ; it either is such or it is not. It must be loyally proclaimed or else denounced. If believed, it should be preached from the house-tops ; if not believed, it should be opposed to the very end. If this dogma be false, it is a calumny against God and a stumbling-block in the way of humanity. All the resources of apologetics would not suffice to counter-balance its baneful effects.

Vainly, too, has it been thought sufficient to diminish the intensity of eternal sufferings. In vain is the penalty mitigated in spite of the Scripture imagery which threatens the reprobate with the most acute pains ; the most odious characteristic of the traditional teaching, namely, the disciplinary uselessness of interminable sufferings, can never be got rid of. A learned and thoroughly evangelical man once said to us that the softest easy-chair would fill him with horror if he had the prospect of continually sitting in it for only a hundred years ; but a century in eternity is infinitely less than a drop of water in the ocean.

It has been thought that dualism might be avoided by opening up the prospect of a day when the wicked " will be reduced to a condition of impotence to do harm." It is said that " suffering, sin, and death will for ever have disappeared."¹ Does not this involve contradiction ? A wicked man who no longer does harm is no longer a wicked man. A poisonous tree will always bear poisonous fruit. A wicked man, if he were all alone, would do harm to himself ; if he lives in society he will do harm to his companions. More than that : the universal law of progress requires a developement of evil in the reprobate. The cruelty of a Nero would be raised to the millionth power, without even then ceasing to become more cruel. Is that conceivable ? But we are assured that " sin will have disappeared";

¹ F. Bonifas, *Le Christianisme au XIXme siècle*, 20 Sept., 1872.

then the wicked will no longer be sinners, there will be no more eternal sufferings, nor even the possibility of alienation from God. Such a doctrine amounts to universal salvation ; it is no longer the traditional dogma, to which the defence was intended to apply.¹

We have now to show that if the majority of modern theologians mitigate hell, there are some—even in learned Germany—who are not afraid of invoking the nightmare of unending torture. For example, it is surprising to find so enlightened a theologian as M. Paul Chapuis translating without note or reserve the following passage from a manual of Kurtz. It may be noted that this astonishing paragraph occupies a position of honour ; it is the last but one in the volume.

Eternal condemnation consists, from a negative point of view, in an eternal rejection, away from the face of God, cut off from happiness which can only be found in God ; in an abode totally deprived of all light, of all life, of all joy or enjoyment ; in a society composed of the refuse of angels and men, where there is neither love nor sympathy. On the positive side this condemnation may be described as *an unlimited moral torture which nothing softens, nothing calms, nothing benumbs* ; an existence in company with the rejected from among angels and men, in torments caused by their abode deprived of light and of life.²

XI.

Believers themselves have become sceptical with regard to eternal torments. An English writer says :

The persuasion is general that things are not so bad as they are commonly represented to be ; that in some way or other, through the mercy of God, punishment will not be inflicted.³

A minister of the Church of Scotland, the late Dr. N. McLeod, chaplain to Queen Victoria, expressed himself thus :

¹ See *Supplement* No. III., § 6, and in note 1 on page 235, our reply to M. Geo. Godet, who, like M. Bonifas, supposed a *final paralysis* of the faculties of the wicked.

² *La Révélation salutaire de Dieu*, a manual of sacred history, translated from the fourteenth German edition, Lausanne, 1887, p. 427. The sentence that we have put in italics surely deserves that distinction.

³ Henry Dunn, *The Destiny of the Human Race*, vol. ii., p. 586 ; London, 1863.

It does appear to me that there exists a wide-spread callousness and indifference, an ease of mind, with reference to the fate hereafter of ungodly men, which cannot be accounted for except on the supposition that *all earnest faith is lost* in either the dread possibilities of future sin or of its future punishment.¹

Mr. Henry Dunn, who quotes these words, adds :

Even of professed believers the sad truth must be told, that few attempt to realize the awful condition in which mankind are supposed to be placed ; that many shrink from ever hinting danger to their nearest and dearest unconverted relatives ; and that some, it is to be feared, compromise with conscience for the absence of a life in the spirit of their creed by violent speculative denunciations on those who oppose it. The great multitude in the meantime live on and pass into eternity devoid of every sentiment of anxiety in reference to the world that is to come ; the popular theology being, we fear, but too truly expressed in an epitaph we have seen somewhere written upon the tombstone of a notoriously abandoned man who was killed by a fall while hunting :

Between the stirrup and the ground
He mercy sought and mercy found.

Is there, indeed, anyone who imagines his own father or child for ever burning in unquenchable flames ?

In the pulpit the preacher is assailed by distressing doubts ; he hesitates in his speech ; his reserve, his indefinite declarations, and perhaps a factitious vehemence, betray a secret scepticism which communicates itself to his hearers, troubles the believers, and hardens the impenitent. There is no lack of talent in modern preaching, yet it gains few converts, because it is incapable of inspiring a salutary fear. Paul made Felix tremble while speaking to him of judgement to come ; in our days the Christian orator, fettered by a dogma that cannot be avowed, can do no more than stammer out unintelligible threatenings.

Fifty years ago, John Foster, the essayist, wrote to our venerable friend, Rev. Edward White :

A number (not large, but of great piety and intelligence) of ministers within my acquaintance, several now dead, have been disbelievers of the

¹ *Parish Papers*, chapter on Future Punishment, London, Alex. Strahan and Co., 1862, p. 144, sq.

doctrine in question; at the same time not feeling themselves imperatively called upon to make a public disavowal; content with employing in their ministrations strong general terms in denouncing the doom of impenitent sinners.¹

An organ of the Wesleyan Methodists, quoted by Mr. Henry Dunn years ago, stated as a notorious fact that many Christians whose orthodoxy on other points has never been questioned are unbelievers on this. Some evade inquiry as unprofitable. Others preach the doctrine of eternal remorse, and consider future punishment to consist not so much in any direct infliction by the hand of God, as in the natural working out of confirmed depravity. Others are known to go much farther, and hold that eternal punishment is but a diminution of eternal joy in a state of salvation. The lowest order of happiness in heaven, say they, and the lightest suffering of hell, may, for aught we know, touch each other.

For our own part, we are able to confirm the truth of these remarks. The outcome of conversation with colleagues in the ministry has often been just this: "Your view may be correct, but it is not prudent to speak of it; do not by any means preach it!" As though the Gospel contained inopportune truths, and as though we were not required to publish the whole plan of salvation!

Besides, considered from the point of view of the most practical pastoral prudence, will it not be found that this doctrine, which we believe to be the most true, is at the same time the most useful? The certainty and clearness of the teaching, the confidence of the preacher, the threatened chastisement no longer revolting, but yet terrible and inevitable, at the same time biblical and rational, these character-

¹ *Life and Correspondence of John Foster*, vol. ii., p. 415, *sq.* Belief in eternal torments is also shaken even in the Roman Catholic Church. It is now a considerable time since Monseigneur Chalandon, Archbishop of Aix, in a sermon preached at Paris recommended the clergy of the capital to avoid preaching about hell, saying that "this question tends more to the alienation of men's minds from the faith than to their attraction towards it." The preachers of our days, finding the attenuation of purgatory not sufficient, "have to such an extent widened the conditions of salvation, that the dogma of the small number of the elect has given place to that of the small number of the reprobate."—Ch. de Rémusat, *La Vie future* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 June, 1865.

istics are likely to produce an impression a hundred times more profound than that made by an inadmissible theory which each one mitigates and manipulates in his own fashion.

It has been said that there is nothing more immoral than a law of which the application is neglected. A dogma in course of decomposition is even more deleterious; it corrupts the atmosphere of the religious life.

XII.

Recoiling from an honest return to the primitive teaching, ever fettered by the doctrine of eternal torments, not being able to justify that doctrine but desiring to stem the tide of scepticism of which it is the overflowing fountain, contemporary evangelism sometimes seeks a refuge in eschatological agnosticism as in a citadel. When alleviations are exhausted, and the cause becomes desperate, ignorance on this special point is set up as a principle. In Christian teaching the fate of the wicked becomes a reserved compartment, a sequestered domain, access to which is interdicted; and this procedure has "a show of wisdom in humility."¹

We have already quoted the saying of Pastor Rochat: "When anyone believes in eternal torments he confines his statements to our Saviour's own words as to judgement to come, and he trembles."² One of the latest champions of the traditional dogma has seized upon this saying and set it up as a standard; he said, "Therein lies our whole theology on the subject in question."³

Shortly afterwards the Synod of a Free Church carried the same principle a step further:

The pastors of the Belgian Christian Missionary Church think it neither prudent nor useful to refer in their preaching to the doctrine of eternal torments, which they accept in the very terms of the holy Scriptures, while refusing, with wise reserve, to examine it. . . . We never bring it prominently forward in the pulpit.⁴

¹ Col. ii. 23.

² See page 217.

³ Geo. Godet, *Chrétien évangélique*, 1882, p. 564.

⁴ Report of the Synod of the Belgian Christian Missionary Church. Extraordinary session of 1 Nov., 1882, pp. 23, 35.

In presence of a doctrine the examination of which is thus interdicted, what are to become of exegesis, dogmatics, reason, the religious consciousness, and that Christian faith which seeks to understand; *fides quærens intellectum*?¹ These are all immolated together upon the altar of an idol which, though clothed in ecclesiastical costume, is in fact none other than the heathen principle of a native and inalienable immortality.

Some will doubtless retort by saying that if examination is suspended it is done "out of respect for the word of Jesus Christ."² But there are more words than one of Jesus Christ; there are several, which need to be brought together and logically connected in order to the due maintenance of the authority thus invoked, which we, too, invoke. Here are some of these words which are too often lost sight of:

"Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose or forfeit his own self? That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction." Jesus compares the unrepentant sinner to the criminal who is put to death, to the barren fig-tree that is rooted up, to the vine branch deprived of its sap, to the tares which are burnt up. What is done with these images and declarations by the traditional dogma? It ignores them; and then it isolates two or three sayings apparently contradictory, and summarily opposes us with them as being irrefragable arguments. We shall have occasion to show, in a subsequent chapter, that, far from establishing the traditional dogma, these texts confirm the natural meaning of those that we have just quoted.³

The agnosticism wherein some of our opponents seek an entrenchment is a position so untenable that we find its defenders in flagrant contradiction with themselves. Here, for example, is M. Geo. Godet, who reproaches us with "wishing to dissipate the mystery" which is the last resource of the dogma that we are opposing. Before an insoluble problem he thinks we ought to imitate the prudence of Martensen, who left all in uncertainty. Whoever may be right, the believers in

¹ Anselm of Canterbury.

² Geo. Godet, *Chrétien évangélique*, 1882, p. 564.

³ See Chap. XI., sect. ii., *The Threatenings of Jesus*.

attainable immortality are evidently very wrong to defend so warmly that which they believe to be the truth ! Yet M. Geo. Godet “rejects Universalism in the name of Scripture and of conscience . . . and as presenting considerable practical dangers.”¹ On the other hand he admits that there will be “an evangelization of the dead, and that no one will be finally judged until he has had salvation clearly set before him.”²

We agree with both these views, and we congratulate ourselves on being to that extent in accord with our opponent ; but when he thus determines two eschatological questions on which there is still much controversy, has M. Geo. Godet no fear lest he should dissipate certain mysteries ? May not the Universalists on the one hand, and the old Calvinists on the other, fairly charge him with not observing that “sacred reserve” to which he exhorts us ? Be that as it may, fortified by his example we will continue to affirm other truths equally evident to our eyes, and also to condemn “in the name of Scripture and of conscience” that theological agnosticism which, halting in the rear of Scripture, refuses to see that “the things that are revealed are for us and for our children.” We should think we were holding the truth in captivity if we were not to declare that for us the final lot of the wicked is among the truths that have been revealed.³

If we have rightly understood M. Geo. Godet, he would have us hold to the received dogma while finding a remedy for its “inconveniences” in certain modifications that he suggests. We have seen that all such alleviations leave untouched the main “inconvenience” of an endless hell. We are further advised to “use only biblical terms” ; but how are these to be employed without attaching to them a definite meaning ? The minister of Queen Candace tried to understand the words that he read ; the apostle Paul blamed the use of unintelligible words. The human mind has a thirst for definitions. No doubt, as M. Geo. Godet very well says, the “vital question” is that of salvation ; but still it ought to be understood from

¹ *Chrétien évangélique*, 1881, p. 70, sq.

² *Ibid.*, p. 58, sq., 70.

³ Gieseler goes so far, in his *History of Dogmas*, as to maintain that of all evangelical doctrines, after Christology, eschatology is the one that the apostles have developed with the greatest care.

what we are saved. Salvation and perdition are correlative terms ; but, logically, perdition takes the first place. Put that aside, and the very foundation of evangelical preaching is gone. That is the reason why, if we may believe the *Journal religieux*, crowds have been seen “bursting with laughter on hearing the unexpected question : Are you saved ? To be saved, what does it mean ?”¹ It is impossible to answer that question without dealing with eschatology.

XIII.

The agnosticism that is recommended, being in unstable equilibrium impossible to be maintained, is at the same time very dangerous. Intended as a safeguard for the traditional doctrine, it is really more likely to favour the progress of Universalism. In our seventh chapter we have already shown that the impenitent sinner is quick to take advantage of the silence of certain preachers with regard to future punishment ; the signature in blank that is entrusted to him he fills in with optimist hopes. We believe that an almost mechanical repetition of threatenings that are not understood will lead to the same result. Agnosticism is in fact only a form of scepticism. The refusal to examine that which we are supposed to believe is caused by the weakness of belief and the fear of being convicted of error. Seeing that pulpit orators glide over the theme of eternal torments without daring to deal thoroughly with it, that they hesitate to plead that cause before the tribunal of reason and the religious consciousness, and that they base a colossal dogma upon two or three doubtful passages, as on the point of a needle, many a simple listener will come to the conclusion that in reality there are no eternal torments. The few texts that are invoked in proof will be in his eyes no more than hyperbolical formulas, from which it is understood that considerable discount is to be taken off. As, on the other hand, he is constantly told of the eternal mercy, this same simple listener will naturally be led to cherish the hope of a final and general amnesty. Supposed to possess an inalienable immortality, having eternity before him in which to become

¹ *Journal religieux*, 14 May, 1881.

reconciled to a God of love, he will not fail to put off indefinitely that disagreeable conversion, of the urgency of which he has not been made sensible. Thus it is that eschatological agnosticism blunts the salutary point of Christian preaching.

Evangelism, which thinks itself immovable, is, then, dragging its anchors and drifting helplessly in the direction of Universalism. As an indication of this may be mentioned the fact that Universalists are looked upon generally with favour, while several Conditionalist pastors have been deposed.¹ The traditional dogma, like a new Proteus, becomes transformed when closely pressed; it then becomes softened. It "is resolved to admit nothing but probabilities in these matters, and to await from the divine mercy, beyond time, unsuspected combinations such as are outside all our earthly categories."²

"Unsuspected combinations"! There is one, however, that

¹ In the pastoral conferences in Paris in 1885 it was a Universalist, Pastor Ducros, who was appointed by the party that was reputed orthodox to oppose the Conditionalism of M. Byse. This detail shows, by the way, how difficult it now is to find a theologian who will consent to defend the old ecclesiastical dogma. There is nothing to be said in its favour, yet it is thought right to put every possible obstacle in the way of those who would fain substitute a sound stone for the one that is crumbling, and so endangering the whole edifice of the faith. Conditionalists are shut out from the Evangelical Alliance. Contemporary evangelism may truly be said to have done its best to disparage, to discourage, to stifle in its cradle a most legitimate conviction. Short-sighted, if sagacious, it has more than once fired upon its true friends at the cry: "Conditionalism, that is the enemy!" When will the scales fall from its eyes? When will it be perceived that this victim of persecution is the direct heir of the Old Testament and the New? Will it be said of it: "This is the heir; come, let us kill him"? Will it be immolated for the sake of its rivals, the traditional dogma and Universalism, those illegitimate children of Christianity and Alexandrine philosophy?

² A. Gretillat, *Exposé de théologie systématique*, vol. iv., p. 602. "We hope for the salvation of all."—G. Godet, *Chrétien évangélique*, 1871, p. 70, sq. In a recent thesis, destined to oppose our conviction, M. Joseph Bès concludes as follows: "With the Scripture and the Christians of past ages we shall continue to preach the doctrine of eternal torments, with the secret hope that this preaching itself will serve to render the threat vain; we shall continue to announce tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, but retaining at heart an immortal hope for our fellow-travellers who have fallen by the way."—*Etude critique sur une théorie contemporaine de l'immortalité conditionnelle*. Thesis presented to the Protestant theological Faculty of Paris, the 7th July, 1890. Thus a certain dissimulation would form part of the programme of the evangelical ministry. "We are reproached with no longer daring to speak of perdition; this accusation is severe, but it is just."—Ch. Porret, *La notion du péché* in the *Chrétien évangélique*, 1890, p. 507.

everyone will suspect. Since you thus set the door of eternity ajar, allowing a transcendent mercy to appear on the threshold, each one of your readers will cherish the dream of a supreme and universal absolution. The meshes of your net are wide enough to let all your fishes escape, great and small, and you may be sure that they will have sufficient intelligence to take advantage of that fact, if indeed there be any advantage therein.

One who believes himself to be orthodox is surely universalist at the bottom of his heart; and "the heart has reasons which reason does not know." But to pass from the traditional dogma to Universalism is to quit a crumbling fortress only to get suffocated in a bog. It is falling from Scylla into Charybdis when, in whatever way, the rebel is allowed to imagine that he will inevitably be saved. Evangelism will have to pay dearly for its compromises with Universalism, which is the negation of its principle; for there is no ultimate danger for anyone if everyone must infallibly be saved, and if there is no danger, there is no salvation. The preaching of the Gospel of salvation becomes superfluous, since, with or without preaching, the final result will be the same, and all will end well for all. By becoming universalist, evangelism will cease to be evangelical. Deprived of the notion of a loss that is irreparable, it will perish like the bee that dies when it loses its sting.¹

Universalism is neither more tenable nor less pernicious than the official dogma; we can hardly doubt that our readers will come to this conclusion if they will but take the pains to study in the next chapter the arguments put forward by the believers in universal salvation.

¹ In England and America there are Unitarian churches which are also universalist. One of their periodicals, *The American*, recently confessed that these churches are incapable of taking part in the aggressive work of Home Missions. See the *Eglise libre* of 20 Dec., 1889.

CHAPTER X.

THE THEORY OF UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

- I. Starting from the same *à priori* as the traditional dogma, Universalism is a falling from Scylla into Charybdis—II. Origen and his successors down to our own days—III. Elements of truth in this theory ; it is right in teaching that grace has been or will be offered to all—IV. Relative novelty and esoteric character of Universalism—V. Irrational character of this point of view—VI. Its anti-biblical character—VII. False notion of the divine Fatherhood and of human Brotherhood—VIII. Fearful dangers of an excessive optimism.

I.

As its name clearly indicates, the doctrine of universal salvation supposes that all men without exception will sooner or later attain to eternal felicity.¹ This seductive hypothesis has taken various forms and names. It has been called at one time or another Origenism, from the name of him who first developed it into a system ; Apocatastasis, or Restitutionism, by which is meant the restitution of all things ; and, lastly, Universalism. There is an absolute Universalism and a Con-

¹ In here giving the meaning of *eternal felicity* to the word *salvation* we are simply conforming to usage, which warrants this deviation from its primitive signification. *Salus* in the original language is properly *conservation* or *preservation* of existence ; root, *salvus*, whole, intact ; *salva epistola*, a letter not destroyed. (Freund and Theil's Dictionary and Doederlein's *Synonymik*). So, too, in Greek, *sōzō*, to *preserve* or *rescue from destruction* ; root, *soos* or *sōs*, subsisting, surviving ; in Hebrew, *hoshia'*, which is used of altogether physical preservation, as in Ps. xxxvi. 6 [7]. In the Syriac version of the New Testament, called the Peshito, the Greek *sōzō* is always rendered by a verb signifying *to give life* ; the Saviour, *sōtēr* is the *life-giver*. (See the Dictionaries of Alexandre, of Passow, and for the New Testament those of Schleusner, Wahl, Grimm, Cremer.) The meaning of words has been forced and falsified to make them serve the needs of the traditional dogma.

ditional Universalism.¹ Absolute Universalism goes so far as to affirm that every man of every sort, even though destitute of all religion and of all morality, will at last infallibly be reclaimed to goodness, and so enjoy eternal happiness. According to the formula of one of the adepts of this system, "It is not possible for a man not to be saved." No human being would be able to withdraw himself or to be withdrawn from the final salvation reserved by God for him.

We shall now deal only with Universalism properly so called, which is absolute, according to the formula just quoted. We believe this doctrine to be without solid foundation in philosophy, anti-biblical, and dangerous. Our purpose in this chapter is to set forth some of the reasons for our conviction with regard to it. We shall not do this without regret, as we think of the disagreement with a number of our colleagues which will thus be made apparent; but do not the respect and affection in which we hold them make it our duty to lay before them the reasons which prevent us from sharing all their hopes? On their side, our brethren will no doubt take into account the seriousness of our intentions, and will not be offended at our frankness.

Like the traditional dogma, the doctrine in question has for its philosophical basis the Platonic theory of the inalienable immortality of every human soul, a preconceived idea which has been treated as an axiom. The baneful influence of this opinion upon Christian dogmatics shows the danger of a metaphysical *à priori* and the wisdom of the apostles when they warned the first disciples against all philosophies, Plato's included.

By the side of Revelation it would seem that there is room only for a system which, like that of Kant, declares itself incompetent in the domain of metaphysics, and is based entirely upon the incontestable facts of sensible experience or of moral consciousness.

We may, however, admit that if we had to choose among the philosophers of antiquity, the founder of the Academic school would present exceptional claims. There were in this

¹ As to *Conditional Universalism*, and that which has been called *Christian Universalism*, see *Supplement* No. XVI.

man the sublime aspirations of "a fallen deity with memories of heaven." We have more sympathy with him than with an Epicurus who denied all survival of the soul, with an Aristotle who hardly ever alluded to the subject, or even with an Epictetus who admitted only the survival of the just. Plato taught also the survival of the wicked, either with a view to their amendment, or for the infliction of the endless suffering reserved for great criminals. By thus recognizing the recompense of evil, as well as of good, in the future life, Plato came near to the Bible teaching, but he went away from it by his dogma of unconditional immortality, a dogma foreign and even diametrically opposed to the spirit as well as to the letter, of the Scriptures. We will therefore repeat the excellent adage: *Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas*. While admiring the philosopher, we will beware of his system, as we would avoid machinery of which the wheels would crush the incautious person who should allow even the tip of his finger to be caught in the cogs.

We have shown the lamentable results of the Platonic doctrine in the theology of Tertullian and Augustine, a theology that passes for orthodox, which turns the God of love into an executioner who would be eternally cursed by innumerable victims. Such a doctrine is felt to be a burden by its adherents themselves. Henry Rogers declared that for his part he would not be sorry to see every child die at the age of four years. Albert Barnes, the American commentator, admits that in the anguish of his soul he cannot at all understand why there are men destined to suffer for ever. Isaac Taylor says that the Gospel fills us with a universal sympathy which makes us sometimes regret that it should be true in all its teachings. Calvin, as we have seen, could not refrain from admitting that God's decree concerning the wicked seemed to him horrible. In a word, the traditional dogma leads to pessimism, because it makes evil eternal.

What, then, has actually come to pass? This: that, as extremes meet, the doctrine of eternal torments has come very near to that of universal salvation. With more or less reticence many partizans of the traditional dogma, not being able any longer to maintain it, have quitted their positions

and have turned towards the hope of universal salvation ; others have lost themselves in the obscurity of eschatological scepticism. On the bastions of the orthodox citadel of the eternity of sufferings, there remain sentinels only here and there, and soon, if these do not take care, the falling of the fortress will bury them in its ruins. But are the deserters quite out of danger? We do not think so ; it seems to us that there is only one secure position, and that is the biblical dogma of an immortality that may be acquired. Whatever we may do, speaking logically and theologically, a forced immortality leads to impossibilities. The example of Origen suffices to show that the most earnest piety, the most extensive knowledge, and the most noble genius, are unable to found any durable edifice upon the shifting sand of human inventions.

II.

Origen was born in the year 185, a quarter of a century later than Tertullian. Like him a child of burning Africa, like him he had an ardent soul ; like him he was a Platonist ; like him, too, he strayed into more than one singularity of doctrine. At first an even fanatical literalist, he afterwards became the great master of mystical interpretation. His intellect, vast and noble as it was, lacked equilibrium. Plato, a blind leader of the blind, had led Tertullian into a ditch. Origen saw the fall of Tertullian, but not perceiving the cause of that fall, he took the hand of the same guide, and in his turn fell into as deep a ditch.

The fanatical conceptions of Tertullian, who saw in every volcano a chimney of Gehenna, were to bring about Origen's equally extravagant reaction. Origen was the director of the Christian school in Alexandria ; he desired to defend the faith against the attacks of the Voltaires and Rousseaus of that epoch, particularly against those of Celsus, who had opposed the nascent Christianity with the weapons of argument and ridicule. The doctrine of an eternal hell offered a famous target for the shafts of this redoubtable adversary. Celsus had gone so far as to declare the God of the Christians " execrable," asserting that his religion " fascinates the minds of the simple with chimerical terrors." These provocations

drove Origen from one error into another of an opposite kind. To the eternal hell he with great force opposed the Scripture, declarations as to the suppression of evil and the pacification of the universe. Combining these promises of revelation with the preconceived opinion of an indefeasible immortality, Origen naturally arrived at the idea of a final conversion of even the most incorrigible sinners, and of Satan himself.

But from this point of view what was to be made of those passages which so clearly tell of the destruction of the wicked? Here it was that Origen called in the aid of the mystical interpretation. According to him, the sinner will not be destroyed, he is indestructible; it is only the sinner's sin that will be consumed in a baptism of fire. Thus hell would only for a longer or shorter time retard the entrance of its inhabitants into heaven; it would, indeed, no longer be hell, but a mere purgatory, and, as it were, the vestibule of the abode of the blessed.¹

Mystical interpretation thus made use of by Origen to serve the needs of his cause became, as is well known, the pest of exegesis, and the heroic effort of the reformers has not even yet completely delivered us from it. No doubt there are passages in Scripture, images, prophecies and parables which must be taken figuratively, but none the less does the rule remain that the metaphorical meaning is admissible only where the literal meaning would be absurd. But in the case before us, what is there absurd in the supposition that a being that has had a beginning may come to an end? That there is here absolutely nothing absurd is recognized in principle even by universalist philosophers and theologians.

Although Origenism never became the official doctrine, it won numerous partizans, especially in the East. Among them may be mentioned Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, who during eight years attended Origen's lectures; Pierius and Theognostus, Origen's successors in the school of Alexandria; Pamphilus of Cæsarea; the historian Eusebius, who also leaned towards Arianism; Gregory of Nyssa, Diodorus of Tarsus, and Theodore of Mopsuestia.

¹ *De principiis*, i. 6; *Cont. Cels.*, vi. 26; *Hom. in Ps. iii.* 1; *in Jerem. ii.* 3; *in Ezek. i.* 13.

In the West the influence of Augustine prevailed over that of Origen, whose doctrine however, more or less modified, reappeared after the Reformation with Petersen, Bengel, Oetinger, Michael Hahn, in Germany, Newton in England, Lavater at Zurich, and the venerable Oberlin of Ban de la Roche. Almost all are worthy of the highest respect. We cannot but acknowledge, with Bishop Martensen, that "the doctrine of apocatastasis is not always born of levity, but sometimes of a sentiment of humanity deeply rooted in the very essence of Christianity;" all the more reason is there for deploring that philosophical *à priori* which has too often misled the best of men.

We may mention along with Lavater in Switzerland, Made-moiselle Huber of Geneva, and Pastor Ferdinand Oliver Petitpierre of Neuchâtel.¹ To Petitpierre we owe a volume entitled *The Plan of God*. It was with reference to the controversy started by him that Frederick the Great, when appealed to by the Venerable Company of Pastors, replied: "If my honest and faithful subjects in Neuchâtel insist upon being eternally damned, I will not stand in their way." Petitpierre had to go into exile. In spite of all his zeal, his talents, and his virtues, he left but few disciples. The fault was in his system, which led to a deadlock.² In our own days Neander at Berlin, Tholuck at Halle, the prelate Von Kapff at Stuttgart, Professor Maurice and Rev. Andrew Jukes, in London, have to a greater or less extent adopted the same doctrine. In the case of Tholuck, however, a reserve must be made; he said: "Dogmatically I feel myself drawn towards this opinion [Universalism], but exegetically I do not know how to justify it."³ Dr. Tait, late Archbishop of Canterbury, in his book *The*

¹ *Le Système des théologiens anciens et modernes sur l'état des âmes séparées des corps*. London, 1729. See, too, the recent thesis of M. G. A. Metzger: *Marie Huber, sa vie, ses œuvres, sa théologie*. Geneva, 1887.

² The biography of this good man is to be found in a very curious volume entitled *Les quatre Petitpierre*, by Professor Ch. Berthoud; Neuchâtel, 1875. Petitpierre having resigned his charge, went to London, became a member of the Consistory of the Swiss Church there, gave lessons in French, returned to Neuchâtel, and four years before his death published his book entitled *Le plan de Dieu, tel qu'il l'a manifesté dans la nature et dans la grâce*; Hamburg, 1786.

³ Quoted by C. F. Hudson, *Human Destiny*; New York, 1862, p. 105.

Word of God and the Ground of Faith, expressed the hope that after the day of judgement the divine mercy will find in the infinity of the ages some means of reclaiming lost souls without compromising his justice. On the other hand, his colleague, Dr. Thomson, late Archbishop of York, leaned towards attainable immortality; speaking of the wicked, he says: "Life, to them, must be the beginning of destruction, since nothing but God and that which pleases him can permanently exist."¹

A letter from Dr. Cazenove in *The Guardian* would make it appear that Origenism, or a doctrine very similar to it, is prevalent at the present time in the order of the Jesuits; but it is impossible to examine a theology that shuns the daylight of publicity.

Returning then to Protestantism, we will further mention Archdeacon Farrar, one of the Court chaplains, whose volume, entitled *Eternal Hope*, produced considerable agitation in England. Dr. Farrar is author of a *Life of Christ* which has had the honour of passing through fifty editions. It may be imagined what an excitement was caused among religious people when they found that this eminent preacher and theologian also rejected the dogma of eternal torments. The editor of the *Contemporary Review* instituted a kind of jury, in which seventeen well-known theologians or philosophers were invited to state their views. Their statements appeared in three consecutive numbers of the *Review*. Of one of those numbers seven editions were issued. It is thus apparent that, notwithstanding the preoccupation of the public mind in England with political affairs, this discussion assumed the proportions of a notable event; it proves at the very least that the subject seems worthy of attention, and that anathemas on one side and supercilious disdain on the other are no longer seasonable. The cold water of dogmatic indifference will not be able to extinguish a fire so thoroughly kindled.

III.

On some points we are in sympathy with Dr. Farrar's optimism. To begin with, we also believe, and that even more positively than he does, that there will be an end of evil. We

¹ *Bampton Lectures*, 1853, p. 56.

derive profound consolation from the thought of that blessed day when sin will be no more than a remembrance. It cannot be denied that the Bible tells us of a final restitution of all things. The prophets of the Old Testament, so long ago, predicted the establishment of the kingdom of God in the whole world, and the renewal of the earth by righteousness. David declares that "all the ends of the earth shall . . . turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him. . . . Bless the Lord, all ye his works. . . . Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord"; these are the closing words of the book of Psalms.¹ The New Testament ratifies the Psalmist's utterances; it reveals to us God's purpose "according to his good pleasure . . . to sum up all things in Christ . . . that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. . . . It was God's good pleasure that in Christ should all fulness dwell, and through him to reconcile all things unto himself. . . . When all things have been subjected unto the Son, then shall the Son also himself be subjected unto him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all."²

This category of passages, however, ought not to make us forget the still more numerous texts which tell us of the previously accomplished destruction of obstinate sinners. Exegetical truth is to be found only in the synthesis of these two equally categorical lines of teaching.

We will, then, admit in the world of spirits as well as in the visible universe, an end of evil by way of gradual elimination.³ Moral evil, which we will define as a wilful return towards nonentity, would disappear, carrying with it into the abyss of nothingness its most guilty victims. The final restitution would be preceded by the voluntary death of many souls. Thus it is that in the analogy of nature a multitude of seeds

¹ cl. 6; cf. xxii. 27; lxxii. 11; lxxxvi. 9; ciii. 22; Isa. ii. 2; xix. 23-25; Dan. vii. 14.

² Eph. i. 10; Philip. ii. 10; Col. i. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xv. 28.

³ For the standpoint of natural science, see *De l'Élimination graduelle du mal*, from the English of Herbert Spencer. Paris: Sandoz and Fischbacher 1875.

perish between the time of sowing and the time of harvest, that myriads of germs and ovules are destroyed before development, and that thousands of species have disappeared in the many revolutions of the globe. The harvest will nevertheless be rich and joyous. God will be all, in all those who will have survived the destructive effects of sin : in all the saints, “the escaped of Israel, those that are left in Zion, that remain in Jerusalem, that are written among the living.”¹ It will be the universal salvation of the survivors.

A second element of truth in the doctrine that we are opposing is, as we believe, the hope which it affirms of a possible salvation in the life to come for a multitude of souls whom the Gospel message has not reached here below, or who have not been able to understand the meaning of the message. The patriarchs and prophets of the old Covenant were saved under conditions of very imperfect knowledge. The apostle Peter tells us of a preaching of the Gospel even to the dead. It would seem that the universal and final judgement cannot take place until every man shall have heard the preaching of the Gospel.² Beyond the tomb the Apocalypse places a tree of which “the leaves are for the healing of the nations,” these being apparently the heathens and the ignorant to whom God has not yet been revealed. The Reformer Zwingli taught that in every age God has had his own elect, even in idolatrous countries. “In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him.”³

If anyone, apart from the knowledge of Jesus Christ, had felt the need of a Saviour, had sought for him, had, so to speak, virtually

¹ Isa. iv. 2. See ch. ii., pp. 49 and 63.

² 1 Pet. iv. 5, 6. In an unpublished dissertation, which the author permits us to quote, Pastor Tophel thus paraphrases these two verses : “God is about to judge the living and the dead, and the proof of that is that the Gospel has been announced also to the dead. If it had not been so announced, the judgement could not yet take place, at least for them, for the position taken with regard to God’s grace is the criterion of judgement. It is true that, as men and in the flesh, they have undergone the judgement of physical death, the judgement that comes upon all the posterity of Adam ; but the Gospel has been announced to them in order that, accepting it, they might live according to God, according to the will of God, so as thus to escape the second and final judgement.”

³ Acts x. 35.

accepted him, he would be within the conditions of true faith, and would be the recipient of its benefits.¹

As for children dying in infancy, it is surely unmistakable that by the fact of heredity they must have brought with them in their very birth a certain inclination towards evil; consequently it would be difficult to affirm that their salvation is assured. It would rather seem probable that in another world they will attain the developement of adults, and will then be subjected to the probation which in this life they did not undergo.

In a word, to make use of the terms of a letter addressed to us by M. F. Pillon, we believe in "a continuance of probation after this life for those who, not having killed within themselves the moral faculty, have preserved a germ of immortality."

Jesus declares that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is alone unpardonable; it would seem, therefore, that all men who have not committed that sin may be pardoned "either in this life or in that which is to come."² This hope will not become a pillow of security for the sinner. To one who occupies our standpoint sin appears as a fire that damages, devastates, and in the end destroys the soul; senseless indeed would be the man who should allow his dwelling to burn under the supposition that later on he would have an opportunity of arresting the progress of the flames! Even when followed by pardon, sin leaves ineffaceable traces. In this thought there is a sufficient restraint, although we do not say that it is all-powerful. There is no panacea; God has not willed that any doctrine should have irresistible effects, yet if apart from Christian love there exist any effective motive, it must surely be the fear of that which is indelible in the consequences of sin.

Further, we believe that the mission of the elect will be to

¹ Vinet, *Revue chrétienne*, 10 May, 1883. See, too, the fragment quoted in *Supplement* No. III., § 5.

² "According to Matt. xii. 31, taken literally, the sin against the Holy Spirit being the only one that will not be pardoned, and that neither in this world nor in the other, it follows that all sinners definitively condemned will be so condemned for having committed that sin, which implies, in order that they should be able to commit it, a knowledge of the Gospel, and that by proclamation not outward, addressed to the ear, but inward, that of the Spirit, who makes himself understood in the heart."—G. Tophel, *MS. quoted*.

carry on the work of universal pacification undertaken by Jesus Christ and by his Church here below. It seems natural to suppose that the ignorant and the sickly already referred to are the people of whom the elect are to be the kings and the priests, the physicians and the spiritual leaders. Members of Christ's body, disciples of the Saviour, firstborn of the new creation, children of the first resurrection, the elect, at the epoch of the second resurrection, will doubtless have younger brethren whose education may be entrusted to them.¹

While these elements of truth belong naturally to the view that we are defending, we may be thankful to the Universalists for having maintained them at a time when the true biblical teaching was not heard.

IV.

Having premised and conceded so much, we shall begin the refutation of Universalism by two preliminary criticisms.

In the first place we charge it with a relative novelty : it does not appear in the history of dogmas before the third century. All the earliest Church Fathers are Conditionalist ; not one of them teaches Universalism. In the writings of Clement of Alexandria it is found only in germ.

Then the esoteric character of this doctrine also constitutes a presumption against it. Esoteric teaching is a secret doctrine which certain philosophers communicate only to a small number of adepts. This character is contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, which is to be preached upon the housetops. The apostle Paul said : "I protest . . . that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God."² But Universalism has always been more or less ashamed of itself, has had behind it an uneasy conscience. Origen admitted that "his doctrine might be dangerous for the unconverted"; he taught that "the doctrine

¹ In his lectures on *Redemption*, Pastor Choisy speaks of a ministry of intercession which the believer may be called to carry on beyond the tomb. In support of this idea he quotes Dr. Norman McLeod. It may also be found in the volume entitled *The Destiny of the Human Race*, by H. Dunn ; in *The Restitution of All Things*, by Rev. Andrew Jukes, and in the second part of Goethe's *Faust*.

² Acts xx. 20, 26, 27. See Chap. VII., p. 199, note 1.

of an eternal hell was a salutary error, eminently suited to alarm the sinner and convert him"; he even called it "an educational artifice used by God for the training of novices." He said, too, that "if the people were taught that the pains of hell would have an end, a large number of men would be seen to plunge without hesitation into excesses from which fear had thus far restrained them." This esoterism reappears in the exhortations of Bengel, who was not willing for that which he believed to be publicly preached. Dr. Thomas Burnet spoke of his doubts only in Latin and in covert expressions. Except for the Latin, it is often the same in our day.

Such conduct seems to lack sincerity, and, moreover, it is impracticable in an age of entire publicity. That which would most surely circulate among the people, and would make the deepest impression upon their minds, would be precisely that doctrinal point which it was intended to withhold from their curiosity. Secrets whispered in the ear of all the world are no longer secrets.

Universalism is timid and embarrassed because of a latent and unacknowledged sense of its own weakness. As we said at the outset, it has no solid foundation in philosophy, it does violence to the formal declarations of Scripture, and it is fruitful of dangerous consequences. Anti-rational, anti-biblical, and dangerous, these seem to us to be the characteristics of Universalism. Let us study it under these three aspects.

V.

From a philosophical point of view, Universalism is like an edifice built upon the sand, since it adopts as a premiss the dualist axiom of a native and inalienable immortality; and, as we have seen, to treat that as an axiom is only to beg the question.¹ For a long time the audacity of this gratuitous assertion secured its acceptance, but those who have examined it closely have seen it vanish like a vision. In disappearing it takes away from Universalism its very foundation. How, then, can eternal felicity be attributed to creatures whose duration is naturally limited? It is impossible except upon Conditionalist principles. Universalism has grown upon the trunk of

¹ See Chap. II.

Platonism ; that worm-eaten trunk now falling must carry the branch with it in its fall.

Not only is enforced immortality a gratuitous assertion, but it is in contradiction with universal analogy. All around us in the world we see the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest. Transformation as a condition of life, that is the great law of nature ; it is also the great law of the Gospel. Considered from this point of view, what is to become of free beings who resist the required transformation ? What must be the fate of men who, instead of progressing, recoil wilfully and obstinately towards mere animality ? Evolutionist science has shown that in nature there are retrogressions, degenerations, backward movements. For lack of culture even superior types are apt to return to the primitive type. The conscient being may revert to an inconscient condition, and, in fact, the sleep that takes possession of each one of us every day is a kind of daily menace of that inconscient state from which we have but just emerged.¹

Anti-metaphysical and anti-scientific, Universalism is also anti-psychological. It is a misunderstanding of the law which determines and fixes the character in accordance with the habits adopted. At the same time it is a denial of human liberty, which may, indeed, become restricted in the voluntary practice of evil.

The essential tendency of evil, when left to itself, to intensify, to accumulate and perpetuate its own misery, is what makes the weak point in all schemes of Universalism or Restorationism. Like so many optimist theories, the idea that all men shall become good and be saved at last is opposed by the course of experience here. The hard facts of the present life are all against it, and how are we to judge of the future but by the present. Supposing even that new influences of good were brought to bear upon the human will, who can "estimate the hardening effect of obstinate persistence in evil, and the power of the human will to resist the law and repel the love of God ?" Out of the very excess of love there sometimes comes a greater bitterness of hatred ; out of the very light of good a deeper darkness of evil. To assert therefore, in the face of Scripture and experience, that "all men will be saved" is

¹ Edgar Quinet has elaborated a discussion of this subject, to which we refer our readers. See p. 64.

to make a very hardy assertion. About all such optimism there is a tinge of unreality. It may please the benevolent, but it can hardly satisfy the really thoughtful mind.¹

Will anyone say that God would use forcible means for constraining the most recalcitrant to return to him? Surely not, for the supposition of such violence would be an outrage against him who created man for liberty.

Jesus looks upon sin as a malady of which he is the physician, as a progress towards perdition which he would arrest, as a decline which leads to death, and is an anticipated death, from which he would rescue the moribund.²

That is all true enough; but we cannot help asking what the Universalists mean by this death in which, as they admit, the malady of sin must logically terminate. Let them tell us what they understand by this death. Is it absolute moral corruption? But if the corruption is absolute there would be an arrest of the degradation; that backward movement would become stationary, which is a contradiction in terms. In our view the corruption ends in death, which is the cessation of life, and since it relates to individuals, the end of the individual functions. We cannot see any other issue.

Extermination may not be pleasant to speak of, but the evidence is undeniable. It is acknowledged that sin involves "the diminution of the being," "a decline."³ Logic demands a prolongation of the lines. We may fairly demand the admission that this gradual diminution may go on until that which is left is mathematically equal to zero. The sinful man is thus brought to the very confines of nonentity, reduced, so to speak, to the condition of latent existence characteristic of the primitive ovule. But multitudes of these primitive ovules are every day lost. Will it be said that to everyone of these God necessarily owes the unfolding of the present life, and of the life eternal? No one will make such an assertion. Still

¹ Principal John Tulloch, D.D., *The Contemporary Review*, April, 1878, vol. xxxii., p. 158.

² *L'Esprit du Christianisme*, lectures by Professor A. Bouvier, Geneva, 1877, p. 132. In a subsequent discourse the author speaks of sin as a "species of death," but this "species" does not enable us to determine the genus.

³ *Ibid.*

less will it be demanded that God should provide the conditions of a revivification for beings who after a first developement have wilfully retrograded. May it not be said that a being who by an abuse of his liberty has returned to the inconscient state has by that voluntary retrogression contracted a constitutional vice, a sort of evil bent, which would inevitably be manifested in a new developement along with the renewal of vital functions?

By promising to us an infallible salvation, universalist optimism audaciously flies in the face of all psychological probabilities. At the bottom it is not more moral than the theory of the *opus operatum* with which Roman Catholicism has been so justly reproached.

Professor Dorner, of Berlin, was one of the most highly-esteemed theologians of Germany. His sentiments with regard to Universalism were thus expressed :

Mr. White's doctrine appears greatly preferable to the universalist theory, for it more fully recognizes the rights of human liberty and of divine justice.¹

A recent article in Herzog's *Theological Encyclopædia* comes to a like conclusion :²

No one who firmly believes in the sovereignty of moral liberty can admit the probability of universal salvation. It is much more reasonable to suppose that a complete suppression of obstinate rebels will precede the triumph of final harmony. Such has been the view of two modern dogmaticians, Rothe and Dr. H. Plitt.³

Universalists in their turn reply by questioning us. They say : " Reason teaches us that there is an all-powerful and all-

¹ Letter to M. Byse. In order to see how near Dorner's views were to those which we are defending, it would suffice to read the last pages of his *Dogmatics*. The great Rothe was a Conditionalist ; Ritschl tended in the same direction. Baader, Weisse, Olshausen, Twisten, Karsten, Hermann Schultz, Von Rudloff, Gess, Glaubrecht, F. Ecklin, the preacher, Otto Funcke, have adhered more or less explicitly to the same general views.

Schoeberlein's death in 1881 deprived Universalism of its principal defender in the region beyond the Rhine.

² Herzog, *Real-Encyclopædie für protest. Theol. und Kirche*, 2nd edition ; article, *Apokatastasis*, by Professor J. Koestlin, vol. i., p. 483.

³ Dr. Plitt belonged to the community of the Moravian Brethren ; he was one of the two directors of Herzog's *Encyclopædie*. See his work entitled *Die evangelische Glaubenslehre*.

wise Creator. If the sinners are to be at last annihilated, to what end can the divine wisdom have called them into existence?" We answer that God has given existence, not to sinners, but to creatures capable of choosing good or evil. Supreme goodness could not but confer upon the most privileged creatures the supreme benefit of liberty; but liberty cannot exist without the danger of a baneful choice. Should the creature choose evil, it would follow under the hypothesis of an inevitable immortality that the creature would either come to repentance, or else, becoming more and more rebellious, would make the disorder eternal. God has guarded against this latter alternative by creating man not immortal, but immortalizable.¹ There are creatures who, on their own sole responsibility, break in their pride the bond of love that united them to their Creator, creatures who prefer non-existence to dependence of any kind. An enforced immortality would restrict their liberty. It is worthy of God's character to abstain from imposing eternal life upon beings who obstinately reject the reasonable conditions of existence.²

The force of logic has led a Roman Catholic author to the same conclusions.³ A great Protestant thinker is equally explicit: Professor Secrétan warns the sinner against "a direction tangential in relation to being which would lead to exhaustion, extinction, annihilation."⁴ The following passages from the same author are still more categorical:

We derive life from God. We can, by a voluntary act, cease thus to derive it, and continue an apparent life by consuming the portion of substance that we originally received, by exhausting the quantity of force implanted in us by the creative impulse; but in the delusion and torment of this isolated existence we drain our resources, we destroy ourselves. . . . By the use of his liberty, man has cut off from its

¹ *Dektikon amphoterōn*. Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad. Autol.*, ii. 27. See *ante*, p. 237.

² More than that. The law of continuous developement from which there is no escape being admitted, the possibility of a perpetual disorder in an individual is inconceivable. A being in a state of growing internal discord cannot but lose his individuality at last, or, in other words, cease to be; for individuality requires a certain harmony.

³ A. Gratry. See *ante*, p. 205.

⁴ *Revue chrétienne*, 5 March, 1882.

source his own being which he derived from God, and he exhausts it in a slow death-process.¹

The possibility of suicide which God leaves open to every man in this world is surely an analogy which suggests that a suicide of the soul is possible, and that immortality must be conditional. In the book of Wisdom we read that God created all things to the end that they might be ; he made man *in view of*² immortality, but the wicked have made a compact with death ; they have called it their friend, and have united themselves so closely to it that they have been thereby consumed.³ Certainly sinners have not been created to be destroyed ; yet even their destruction, and indirectly their original creation, will serve some purpose. The remembrance of their ultimate fate will oppose itself as an awful barrier against the abuse of liberty in the future life. The smoke of the cities of the plain, upon the black volumes of which Abraham looked from the heights of Mamre, inspired him with a salutary fear which he transmitted to his descendants. Thus Israel was, as a nation, preserved from the abominable vices of the accursed cities. In later times the bitter remembrance of the first captivity prevented a return to idolatry. So, too, the remembrance of the end of the wicked, that smoke of which the Apocalypse tells, will remain for ever as a testimony to the indefeasible rights of divine justice. It is written : " Their shame shall not be forgotten."⁴

Fertile in resources, Universalism borrows from the Platonic doctrine another subterfuge. That doctrine makes evil to reside not in the guilty will, but in matter, which being inert, insensible, is consequently innocent. Set free from the vile bondage of the body, the soul, as a white dove, would return to God in the abode of happiness. Death would become a magical means of salvation, and as it were a warrant of impunity. Suicide would here find excuse, if not even sanction and encouragement :

What is it then to die ? To break the bond unjust,
The union adulterous of soul with dust.

¹ *Théologie et religion*. Lausanne-Paris, 1883, pp. 24, 28.

² *Ep'aphtharsia* ii. 23.

³ *Etakēsan* i. 14-16.

⁴ Jer. xxiii. 40.

* * * * *

That hateful union is evil ; death is sent
 To break the bond, both remedy and chastisement !
 For at the moment when that union gives way
 The soul o'er viler elements resumes her sway,
 And straight on beams of immortality she flies
 To worlds of blessedness and truth beyond the skies.¹

Such is the doctrine which forms the basis of many a funeral oration. It is of a nature to dissipate all fears. The profligate who dies without having given any indication of personal faith is, according to the expression of F. W. Robertson, of Brighton, "a more or less prodigal son, who has set out for the father's house." Archdeacon Farrar quotes this formula with unqualified approbation. Does it not, however, contain a grave error? Physical death can never be an infallible means of healing for the soul; too often the moral element that characterizes the conduct of the repentant son in the parable is altogether lacking. To use consolation of this kind is not to lay healing balm upon the broken heart, but to make a wrong use of narcotics, forgetting that narcotics are poisons. The philosopher Kant said: "To administer opium to the conscience of a dying man is to commit a crime against him and against the survivors!"²

¹ Lamartine, *La Mort de Socrate*. The French words are:

Qu'est-ce donc que mourir ? Briser ce nœud infâme,
 Cet adultère hymen de la terre avec l'âme.

* * * * *

Cette horrible union, c'est le mal ; et la mort,
 Remède et châtement, la brise avec effort !
 Mais, à l'instant suprême où cet hymen expire,
 Sur les vils éléments l'âme reprend l'empire
 Et s'envole au rayons de l'immortalité
 Au monde du bonheur et de la vérité.

Béranger, moreover, wishing to excuse the suicide of two young poets, dedicated to their memory a song containing these lines:

Et, vers le ciel, se frayant un chemin,
 Ils sont partis en se donnant la main.

Which may be thus rendered into English:

And making their own way towards the heavenly land,
 These two have started forth together, hand in hand.

² *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, p. 81, sq., note.

VI.

Native and inevitable immortality, besides begging the question and being a theory without reason in philosophy, flies in the face of the most formal declarations of the holy Scriptures. The Bible tells us in so many words, and in a hundred different ways, that life is not immanent in ourselves;¹ that our immortality is dependent upon the tree of life; that the cherubim and the flaming sword keep the way of that tree; that we are not, but are intended to become, “partakers of the divine nature;”² that God “only hath immortality;”³ and that obstinate rebels will be destroyed “body and soul.”⁴ The sacred writers exhaust their vocabulary in declaring the total and definitive end of existence which awaits the wicked, so that it may fairly be asked in what stronger terms that doctrine could have been expressed. We have quoted the texts, we have established the fact. It has been recognized in principle by two men who stand at the antipodes of implicit faith and transcendent scepticism: M. Thomas Henry Martin, whose work on *The Future Life* received the approbation of Pius IX.; and M. Ernest Renan. We have already quoted M. Martin’s words.⁵ We now give M. Renan’s paraphrase of the passage in which the apostle Paul speaks of the chastisement in store for the impenitent:⁶

A great wrath, that is to say a terrible catastrophe, is near at hand; this catastrophe will come upon all those whom Jesus will not have delivered. . . . The unbelievers will become the prey of fire. Their punishment will be an eternal death; driven away from the face of Jesus, they will be engulfed in the abyss of destruction. A destroying fire, indeed, will be kindled, and will consume the world and all those who will have rejected the Gospel of Jesus.⁷

All this is a long way from the purifying fire, the *ignis sapiens*, and all the fantasies of Origen and the allegorists. The author

¹ John vi. 53.

² 2 Pet. i. 4.

³ 1 Tim. vi. 16.

⁴ See the *Supplement* No. VI.

⁵ See p. 90.

⁶ *Olethron aiōnion*, 2 Thess. i. 9; *olethros*, a term specially employed by Plato to express *annihilation*; *Phædo*, 37, 41, 44, 55, etc. On this important passage see *post*, Chap. XI., sect. iv., § 3, and the *Supplement* relating thereto.

⁷ *Saint Paul*, p. 248.

just quoted makes frequent reference to the fact that the first Christians were "a thousand leagues from the ideas of the immortality of the soul which have sprung from Greek philosophy." He further shows that, according to the New Testament, "all men die once, but the wicked will die twice, for after the resurrection and the judgement they will be replunged into nothingness."¹

M. de Boutteville has remarked that "Jesus had no idea of adapting the Platonic or Cartesian notion of the immortality of the soul to his dogma of a future life."² The learned Olshausen and Delitzsch, Professors Nicolas, of Montauban, and H. Vuilleumier, of Lausanne, have come to a similar conclusion.³ A commentator highly esteemed in the camp of evangelical orthodoxy, Pastor L. Bonnet, of Frankfort, also acknowledges that "the heathen doctrine of the abstract immortality of man is not taught in Scripture."⁴ In the camp of moderate liberalism, M. Reuss, whose circumspection is well known, has declared that the philosophical thesis of the immateriality and indestructibility of the human soul "is absolutely foreign to biblical religion."⁵ It may thus be easily understood that when Professor Aug. Sabatier combatted that same thesis before the Theological Society of Paris, not one of his colleagues attempted to defend it.⁶ It would, therefore, seem that the true biblical notion of immortality is a truth henceforth gained, or rather regained.

The Jews boasted of being children of Abraham; the disciples of Plato, more audacious, say that they are of the same essence as God, like him not subject to any contingency,

¹ *L'Antéchrist*, pp. 357, 364; *Marc Aurèle*, p. 505, sq.

² *La Morale de l'Eglise et la morale naturelle*; Paris, 1866.

³ See Chap. III., sect. iv.

⁴ See Chap. IV., sect. iv., § 5.

⁵ *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, vol. ii., p. 457; 1852. Compare other declarations of the same author, Chap. IV., sect. iv., § 2.

⁶ *La Renaissance*, 9 Nov., 1883, and *Journal du protestantisme français* of 3 Nov. The director of the seminary of the Protestant Faculty of Paris, Professor Ménégos, has decisively proved the Conditionalism of Paul, but he erroneously sets the teaching of Jesus Christ in opposition to that of his apostle. In our turn we will place, in opposition to M. Ménégos, the categorical statement of M. D. H. Meyer in his book entitled *Le Christianisme du Christ*, p. 307, sq.

irremovable sharers in his eternity. Mere dwellers in the dust declare themselves for ever indispensable as God himself.

And how will it be if these demi-gods, intoxicated with the titanic, but logical, conceptions of the philosopher Schelling, puffed up with pride, should rise in insurrection against their Father and cast in his face the immortality with which they are endowed? They will say: "As children come of age we claim the right of self-government, we break the yoke that weighs us down." If God chastise them, they will curse him; if he load them with favours, they will look upon all such benefits as nothing but the legitimate appanage of the children of the Most High. The wicked might thus mock God and defy him eternally, unless he should invent tortures of ever-increasing ferocity in order to repress them. Here again the traditional dogma leads to that which is odious and contradictory.

Man has been over-rated. To all such inflated arrogance the Scripture opposes words like these: "Return, ye children of men!" Return to the dust of which your bodies were formed, to the night from which the divine bounty brought you forth! Absolute immortality is an attribute of which the God of the Bible has never divested himself in favour of any one of his creatures. The existence of these depends upon conditions fixed by the Creator. Tenants at will in this universe that God has made, we are bound, under pain of expulsion, to observe the conditions of the lease under which we are allowed to sojourn in it. Faith in Jesus Christ is the fundamental clause of this lease, and the Gospel is intended to make it known to us; without a personal faith in Jesus Christ there is no imperishable life.

Exegesis recognizes, *à priori*, that essential immortality, and consequently Universalism which is dependent upon it, are doctrines opposed to the Bible. We will now examine the *à posteriori* evidence that is brought against us; that is to say, the texts that are supposed to *imply* a final immortalization of all men.

As we have seen, there are certain passages of Scripture which seem to announce a universal salvation; but let us not be misled: these passages relate to an epoch when, the conflict

being ended, peace will be made with all the survivors. As for the victims of the second death, they, alas! can have only the peace of the cemetery, of that refuse-heap of souls called in Scripture Gehenna. Among the texts quoted against us let us take those which seem to be most favourable to the universalist point of view :

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself. . . . As through one trespass the judgement came unto all men to condemnation, even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. . . . God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all. . . . who willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. . . .

s Christ the righteous . . . is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.¹

This is the bright and joyous side of the Gospel ; it is the plan of divine mercy embracing the whole world, all sinners without distinction ; but, as M. Reuss has well said, it relates to an " offered grace, not to a necessary effect."² Our thankful admiration will not cause us to forget that men may still " make void the plan of God as respects themselves,"³ according to the expression used by Jesus Christ concerning the Pharisees and doctors of the law. Jesus said again : " How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not " !⁴ Jesus embraces the world in his love, and would draw all men unto himself ; but how many there are who resist !

Jesus Christ draws souls, but does not force them. Human liberty has its privileges and its perils, but it is everywhere proclaimed and treated as a serious reality in the sacred Scriptures. The doctrine of

¹ John xii. 32 ; Rom. v. 18 ; xi. 32 ; 1 Tim. ii. 4 ; 1 John ii. 2.

² *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, edition of 1852, vol. ii., p. 258. The expression *hoi polloi*, which Paul uses, Rom. v. 19, designates, as we believe, in his vocabulary *humanity*, in the modern collective sense. An expression so general must admit many exceptions. For example, if we say that Jenner's discovery has delivered *humanity* from a terrible scourge, we do not mean thereby to deny that thousands of children still die of smallpox in countries where vaccination is not practised.

³ *Ethetésan*, Luke vii. 30.

⁴ Luke xiii. 34 ; cf. John xv. 22, 23.

universal and obligatory salvation seems to us to involve a misconception of the liberty of man. A free soul has always the right and the power to lose itself. We may wish to believe that none will ever exercise that power; but present experience and certain biblical declarations make it difficult to entertain such a hope.¹

All may be saved in Christ, that is clearly taught by the apostle; but are all actually saved? Certainly not; the gift of justification in Christ, as all Scripture testifies, is accorded to us only on certain conditions, and if the apostle Paul does not indicate those conditions in the verse under review, it is because he has done so in twenty other places in his Epistle to the Romans, particularly at the very beginning of this chapter, where he says: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."²

In Scripture the word *all* is frequently hyperbolic, as, for instance, when Paul declares that in his life-time the Gospel has been preached "in all creation under heaven."³ The apostle's declaration that "the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance" must not be abused; it signifies that God is faithful, but "if we deny him, he also will deny us."⁴ The parable of the unmerciful servant is on record to teach us that salvation is and remains conditional. The compact that unites us to God is bilateral. God draws, but he does not compel; he will not save us in spite of ourselves. His patience no doubt is eternal; but, contingent beings as we are, in perishing we withdraw ourselves from its operation. We are images of the divinity, but how many fugitive images are effaced!

What a contrast there is between Scripture and Universalism! Peter speaks of the salvation of the righteous as being accomplished "with difficulty." Paul says that we are to "work

¹ P. Vallotton. *La Bible, son autorité, son contenu, et sa valeur*, p. 343 : Lausanne-Paris, 1883.

² Rom. v. 1. De Felice, *Avertissement aux Eglises réformées de France contre l'universalisme*, p. 7; Toulouse, 1840.

³ Col. i. 23.

⁴ 2 Tim. ii. 12. Here, as almost everywhere, the New Testament has its roots in the Old. David had said to his son Solomon, "If thou seek the Lord, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever" (1 Chron. xxviii. 9; cf. 2 Chron. xv. 2; xxiv. 20). In the same chapter in which the irrevocability of the gifts and calling of God are spoken of, the apostle threatens us with the severity that cuts off the fruitless branches (Rom. xi. 22; cf. 29).

out our salvation with fear and trembling." In the universalist system salvation is inevitable; it cannot fail of accomplishment. That system would make it appear that the Bible was written in order to tranquillize the impenitent, and that God had given his Son to the world in order that whosoever believeth *not* on him should be saved! Paul weeps over those "whose God is their belly," who, as he says, will in the end be destroyed: "whose end is perdition." What can come after the end? Universalists would bid the apostle dry his tears, for even perverted disciples are not truly lost; their destruction will be the renewal of their being. Thus to destroy and to save become synonymous terms. The wrath of the Lamb, spoken of in the Apocalypse, will be only a supreme effusion of tenderness for the benefit of obstinate sinners. Jesus urges us to "strive to enter in at the strait gate"; he tells us that the broad way leadeth to destruction. The Universalists, however, say: No, that way also leads to life; longer but easier than the narrow way, it leads to the same end. Jesus threatens with a fire that can "destroy both soul and body in Gehenna"; but all may be reassured, the threat is impossible of execution, the soul is absolutely imperishable, and "doomed to salvation."¹ According to universalism, the tares cast into the fire become wheat, the withered vine-branch recovers its foliage in the flames. The sinner is not the blackened and half-consumed "brand" that is "plucked" from the burning; he is the incorruptible diamond which, having fallen into the mud, will certainly one day come forth thence with undiminished value.

It has never yet been explained how Jesus could have said of Judas that "it would have been good for that man if he had not been born."² If a blessed eternity was sure to follow his chastisement, however much that might be prolonged, it would have been an advantage for that man to have been called into existence.

It is impossible to eliminate from the Scriptures the irrevocable sentences, the irreparable ruins,³ a sin against the Holy Spirit, a sin that will not be forgiven, "neither in this

¹ Miss Cobbe.

² Matt. xxvi. 24.

³ Isa. v. 24; Mal. iv. 1; Matt. iii. 12; Luke xiii. 6-9.

world nor in that which is to come," a sin unto death for which it would be useless to pray, a severity of God which will cause him to cut off even the branches that had been grafted into the good olive-tree. "God is not to be mocked." The God of the Gospel is "a consuming fire" that will "devour the adversaries"; not their sins only, but their very persons.

When closely pressed, the Universalists abandon to us the letter, and invoke the spirit of the Scripture, which, they say, is against us; and they quote, although perverting its meaning, the apostle's saying: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." This saying has been treated as a rule of hermeneutics, according to which imagery and hyperboles are not to be understood in a literal sense. That is a rule that we are willing to accept; but, as a general principle, the meaning must be the outcome of the details of the letter, in the same way as in an account pounds are produced by the addition of shillings and pence. Of course "the letter must not kill the spirit, but neither is it permissible for the spirit to nullify the letter. High-flying exegesis loses sight of the firm ground of the biblical text to such an extent that it ceases to be its commentary."¹

In the Bible, the final death with which the obstinate sinner is threatened is death without qualification and without reserve; it is therefore a complete and definitive death. To save is to rescue from imminent destruction. The tree of life does not grow beside the "lake of fire and brimstone." There is a "second death," but nothing is said about a third life. To imagine such a life would surely be to set up for being wiser than Scripture and, as it has been well put, more Christian than Jesus Christ himself.

The pious Tholuck, while Universalist at heart, honestly acknowledged the exegetical weakness of his position. M. Reuss declares it to be absolutely anti-biblical; he says: "Final restitution, that is to say, the salvation of the reprobate, neither Paul nor any of the members of the primitive Church ever dreamed of."² Professor F. Godet on this point agrees

¹ *De la conciliation en théologie*, by E. de Pressensé. *Revue chrétienne*, October, 1883.

² *Les Épîtres pauliniennes*, vol. i., p. 262. "The hope related to the masses, the regrets were concerning individuals."—*Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 106.

with Reuss; he writes: "Nowhere does St. Paul teach a universal salvation. There are indeed in his writings passages which seem positively to exclude it."¹ According to Delitzsch: "There is no doctrine that contradicts the Scripture in a more unpardonable fashion."² Professor Ménégoz, too, has reached the same conclusion; he says: "Paul does not teach the final salvation of all men. . . . God would have mercy upon all, yet there are those who will be condemned."³

It will be difficult for our honoured opponents to resist the authority of this quadruple verdict.

VII.

Ill at ease on the ground of metaphysics, banished from the field of Scripture, Universalism entrenches itself in the domain of sentiment. It invokes in its favour the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

It is important to notice that these two notions have sprung, not from natural theology, but from the holy Scripture. With the false gods fatherly sentiments rise but little above zero, and human brotherhood scarcely exists among peoples who have not the Bible.⁴ It is therefore the Scripture that must determine the true scope of these notions.

It must be admitted that the traditional theology had suppressed that element of tenderness and compassion in the divine character which a good father introduces even into his chastisements.

While the old systems emphasize chiefly God's authority and his royal prerogatives, we see in him essentially a father, as Jesus Christ has

¹ Thus 2 Thess. i. 9; Philip. iii. 19. *Comment. sur l'Épître aux Rom.*, vol. i., p. 491.

² *System der bibl. Psychologie*, 2nd edition, p. 470. So, too, C. H. Weisse: "Every sincere and impartial theologian who will study the biblical teaching on this point must at last admit that universal salvation is contrary to that teaching."—*Stud. und Krit.*, vol. ix., p. 327.

³ *Le Péché et la rédemption d'après St. Paul*, pp. 133, 144; Paris, 1882.

⁴ Moloch devoured the children of his worshippers; Jupiter was not exactly a tender father. As for human brotherhood, it does not appear very clearly in these lines from Lucretius:

For one who watches others' danger from the shore
There is a subtle charm in angry ocean's roar.

—*De rerum naturâ*, lib. ii. 1, 2.

taught us. The old orthodoxy seems to have looked upon God mainly as an almighty ruler ; we now think of his omnipotence as employed to protect, to assist, to bless.¹

For all that, the divine fatherhood is far from being a lax indulgence. The living God requires, at all costs, the progress of his creature. The Spartan mother said to her son when he started for the war: "With it, or upon it!" bring back thy shield with victory ; or let it serve thee for a bier ! The divine law of moral progress cries to us: "Forward, or die !" As the apostle says: "He that soweth unto his own flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap eternal life. . . . If ye live after the flesh, ye must die ; but if by the spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."² There is no remaining stationary ; we must advance or recede, must be converted or be destroyed.

Such is the divine fatherhood, in nature and in grace. When it undertakes to chastise, it assumes a severe and even terrible aspect, as, for example, in certain diseases which are the direct consequences of sin. Let us consider the picture of a good father, as we find it in the parable of the prodigal son. Although that father had his elder son at home, and was surrounded by a numerous retinue of servants, it does not appear that he sent anyone to seek for the erring son. The heavenly Father, on his part, strains mercy to its utmost limit ; he plies us with messages of reconciliation ; he goes so far as to deliver up to death his beloved Son, who devotes himself for our salvation ; he will take care that the good news of pardon shall reach the worst of sinners. But if there are some of them who "trample under foot the Son of God, profane the blood of the New Covenant, and do despite unto the Spirit of grace," for them "there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgement, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries." The terrible fate of Jerusalem, the "beloved city," of which not one stone was left upon another, is an historical attesta-

¹ Orthodoxy in the United States. *Journal du protestantisme français*, 4 Jan., 1879.

² Gal. vi. 8 ; Rom. viii. 13.

tion of the severer side of the divine fatherhood: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Such a prospect is logical, and the Christian conscience is constrained to ratify the sentence pronounced in the Scripture. Is it possible to imagine anything that would avail to touch a man who remains utterly unaffected by the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit in his heart?

In absolutely refusing to admit that a human soul can perish, the Universalists remind us of those Jews who did not believe that God would ever permit the destruction of their sanctuary. The temple was indeed precious, souls are more precious, but the rights of eternal justice are most precious of all. The heavenly Father of the Gospel remains faithful to his threatenings as well as to his promises.

Universalism, however, would restrict the power of God to create responsible beings having liberty to destroy themselves. All will be saved, whatever they may do to prevent it. God owes to every man an unconditional and perpetual prolongation of existence. Universalism shows itself generous at the expense of justice and liberty. It is nearly connected with the levelling tendencies of our time, which would proscribe every superiority, even superiority of talent and of virtue. The demand is now made that good and bad workmen should be paid at the same rate. The demagogic instinct would "make believe in the equality of merits because of the similarity of pretensions."¹

The democratic idea, which would make out that all have the same rights, is thought to be incompatible with the doctrine of the final separation between the good and the wicked; equality requires universal salvation. Is such reasoning really serious? Does not M. Bouvier himself speak of a judgement? What is the meaning of judgement if it does not establish differences between men? And from the universalist point of view, what becomes of the liberty and the responsibility of individuals? One of two things: either they have not the power to resist the predestination that would lead them to goodness; or, having that power, if any one of them should refuse to be thus led, he will not be punished, for that would be contrary to equality. But is it not clear to you that, on the contrary, equality requires that there should be punishment?

¹ H. F. Amiel. *Fragments d'un journal intime*, p. 187; Paris, 1883.

That which ought to be claimed, from the democratic point of view, is equality in the adaptation and the chances of salvation, the possibility of attaining it offered to all ; and that is just what the Gospel assures to them. But, the individual merits being unequal, an equality of destiny would simply perpetuate inequality and injustice. Universal salvation, set forth as a certainty and not simply as a desirable but uncertain possibility, since its realization depends upon the moral attitude of millions of individuals, Universalism set up as a system is the very negation of liberty and of justice. With all my might I reject it, in the name of these two great principles, which are the foundation of moral order.¹

A great landowner finds a number of unemployed labourers and sets them to work ; he says to them : “ Here are five pounds for each of you as earnest-money, you will cultivate my vineyard ; when the vintage is over, you shall each receive a further and larger sum.” But among these labourers there are some idle fellows, who pass their days in their own pleasures, and do not fulfil their appointed task. Will it be harshness on the part of the landowner if he refuses to these the recompense that had been promised conditionally ? Ought we not, on the contrary, to admire the liberality of the advances originally made ? In this parable the earnest-money represents this life ; the promised recompense, life eternal ; the refusal to give it, the decline and second death of the impenitent sinner.

But Universalism does not like to hear of a difference of virtue among men. It says that we ought to learn not to believe ourselves better than others ; that men are of equal value, or very nearly so. Be it so, very nearly equal ; but two lines that are only very nearly parallel are divergent ; they will in the end be wide as the poles asunder. Wherever there is life, that is to say, continual progress or retrogression, the important thing is the direction. There is a moral equalization against which we need to be on our guard. “ Ye have wearied the Lord with your words,” says the prophet, “ yet ye say : Wherein have we wearied him ? In that ye say : Everyone that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them ; or, Where is the God of judgement ? ”²

¹ Geo. Godet. *Actes de la Société pastorale suisse*, p. 195, sq. Forty-third general assembly, at Geneva, 1885.

² Mal. ii. 17.

Universalists appeal further to the sentiment of natural affection, which, as they say, would be wounded by the theory that we are defending. M. Atger has formulated this objection in his thesis on personal survival, thus :

We are often told in the Gospels that after this life perfect happiness is reserved for souls without blemish. I cannot reconcile this sublime promise with the doctrine of annihilation. We have sons, brothers, parents, friends who are as dear to us as ourselves, and who, so to speak, live in our souls ; how is it possible for us to be perfectly happy if we are destined to see them no more ? In the midst of the perfect felicity of the abode of the elect, the father will be tortured by the mournful thought that the son whom he has so dearly loved is for ever separated from him, and that this being, the object of so much solicitude and affection, is condemned to hopeless and absolute non-entity.¹

On this our first remark is that the same difficulty exists, at least in part, in Universalism. M. Atger admits retribution, and consequently sufferings, beyond the tomb ; these sufferings, perhaps both long continued and intense, would not fail to interfere with the happiness of relatives and friends who might see them inflicted upon those dear to them.

Further, we will ask M. Atger what it is that we love in our fellow-creatures, their good or their bad qualities. Assuredly it is their good qualities ; and so long as these have not entirely disappeared we are permitted to hope. These constitute a soil in which the seed of a new life may yet germinate and grow : " Thus saith the Lord : If there is juice left in the grape [any sound portion in the cluster] the saying is : Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it ; so will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all."² Ten righteous men in Sodom would have saved the city. The same rule is doubtless applicable to individuals ; we are permitted to believe that so long as they remain corrigible God will not altogether reject them. But suppose them utterly perverted, all their natural sentiments distorted, and your compassionate affection will give

¹ *De la survivance personnelle*, par Elie Atger, bachelier ès lettres et ès sciences, thesis presented to the theological Faculty of Geneva. Nismes, 1877.

² Isa. lxx. 8.

place to horror. Thus, too, in the analogy of nature, which we cannot too frequently invoke, the most beautiful body, the most idolized while alive, when reduced to the condition of a corpse, becomes very soon nothing better than an object of repugnance and a painful reminder to be put out of sight. Doleful remembrances there will necessarily be in heaven, the recollection of our faults to begin with ; there will be weeping there, but “ God will wipe away every tear from our eyes.” Jesus said : “ Who is my mother, and who are my brethren ? . . . Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother.” When we become like Jesus Christ we shall no longer love according to the flesh ; the affections of Christ will be ours.¹

Now, therefore, without further hesitation, we shall bow to the verdict of Scripture and of conscience. We shall say : Yes, the righteous and the regenerated sinner alone have the right and the capacity to become immortal. Beings that are utterly corrupt neither deserve nor desire immortality ; nor will anyone desire or demand it for them. A wise and good God will not impose it upon them. As it has been said by M. Gretillat, whose view is in harmony with Vinet’s : “ The cause of irrevocable condemnation being a state of actual rebellion which is absolutely conscient and voluntary, that cause cannot be suppressed at any future moment except by the suppression of the very personal identity.”²

VIII.

Lastly, Universalism seems to us to have an immoral and dangerous tendency. If all men without exception are the predestined heirs of eternal life ; if final salvation, enforced, infallible, universal, has received the warrant of the divine government, that is surely all that is needed in order to lull into a sweet and perfect repose the many who desire to sleep. Why should we watch and hurry when we have eternity in which to act ? With eternity before him and the divine good-

¹ This shows that Conditionalism does not lead to the same barbarous consequences as the traditional dogma, which forbids to the elect all pity for the reprobate. See Chrysostom, *Hom. in 2 Ep. ad Cor.* A cruel dogma has an ill effect upon even the best of men.

² *Exposé de théol. systém.*, vol. iv., p. 608. See *Supplement No. III.*, § 6.

ness always to be relied upon, the sinner will imagine that he can drink with impunity of the cup of forbidden pleasures. It is true that Universalists speak of a sort of purgatory; but the sinner flatters himself that he will be able to shorten the duration of this purgatory, if it should ever come in his way, by an appeal, necessarily irresistible, to the mercy of the kind Father of whom such a reassuring portrait has been drawn for him, to that mercy which knows absolutely no bounds. He will say: Let us lead a joyous life, let us banish all anxiety; to-morrow God, ever indulgent, will forgive us; whatever we may do, or fail to do, an eternity of happiness awaits us.

The teachers of Universalism will no doubt respond that this sinner's reasoning is ignoble, that they appeal to more exalted sentiments. That is all very well, but where are these exalted sentiments to be found? Among the multitudes they exist only here and there. In proof of this we will invoke the testimony, not of a theologian, but of an illustrious nineteenth-century Voltairean, whose knowledge of men was exceptional, M. Thiers, who said: "Men are naturally cowards, liars, and sluggards."¹ As for those in whom these characteristics predominate, that is to say, the majority of mankind, Universalism abandons them to their increasing degradation, satisfied with predicting their final salvation; being disarmed, it has no hold upon them. The God of the Bible, on the contrary, takes pity on these poor people; he speaks to them, threatens them, and often alarms and saves them. Which of the two doctrines is, then, really the more tender: that which, itself lax, in its laxity leaves such people to their fate, or the biblical doctrine which seizes them with a strong hand and rescues them from their mortal carelessness? The fact is that these two theories have at their base two different notions of sin. Universalism treats sin as a matter not very serious; in its view, moral evil is not a tragic fact, but only a lack of taste or ignorance of the laws of æsthetics; it is the spot of dirt on the disobedient child's dress which a little water will efface. In our view, sin is a corrosive. Although restrained, even pardoned, it has certain absolutely irreparable effects. When unpardoned it "eateth as doth a canker," and totally destroys its victim.

¹ The *Fortnightly Review*, Nov., 1877, p. 650.

There are men who would be wiser than the Bible; they suppress the motive of fear as unsuited to the times. Many a preacher keeps silence upon the wrath to come, although its rumblings may be heard from one end to the other of the New Testament. It follows that such preaching is shorn of half its power; for, indeed, why should the pastor, the evangelist, the Christian publicist, the missionary, multiply their painful efforts?¹ There is no danger in prospect; there can be no question of the salvation of souls, as they are not liable to be lost! The nerve of apostleship is thus half paralyzed. In fact, the conversion of heathens by universalist missionaries has hardly ever been heard of. In short, as we said when adverting to one of the perils of evangelism, universal salvation is really self-contradictory; for, if the salvation of everyone is assured, there is no longer any danger, and, since there is no more occasion for it, salvation becomes an unmeaning word.

But if we keep silence the very stones will cry out. A writer quite unconnected with this discussion, a Darwinist, not so long ago acknowledged that fear is a great and precious motive in the case of the natural man.

A possible, probable, inevitable or imminent peril is the great motive that urges an indolent man to the exercise of all his faculties. In peace and safety our faculties are apt to slumber, while in peril they are stimulated and elevated to the highest degree; and progress is realized when our faculties are wide awake, not when they are asleep.²

Universalism may be without any great danger for pious hearts and souls of superior order, but it will exert a baneful influence over the majority of us. If our final salvation is inevitable, if all ways lead eventually to God, we shall no longer endeavour to resist the current of our alluring passions, and we shall speedily be carried away by the impetuous torrent towards the cataracts from which there is no return.

If, as we believe, Universalism is a false system, its fearful

¹ Mr. Moody, the celebrated American evangelist, recently declared that he would immediately renounce the fatigues of his life as an itinerant preacher if he could believe that in one way or another all men would inevitably be saved.

Pour et contre, by Ch. Pradez; Paris, 1878.

effect will be to lull to sleep souls that are threatened by a supreme danger. Have those who maintain this theory weighed the responsibility that they are assuming? We appeal to their conscience with this question.

Imprudent man, exclaims M. de Felice, what art thou doing? Where will be the sanction of the moral law, where the check upon vice, the terror of crime? Seest thou not that already in our natural affections visible things outweigh so much those which are invisible, and present those things which are future, that if by thy sophisms thou destroyest even the wholesome fear of God's judgements, nothing will remain but ardent and insatiable passions, clashing furiously against each other and overturning the whole earth? Wishing to get rid of hell in the life to come, thou wilt make for us a hell in this life; with this immense difference, that in it the good will be oppressed by the wicked. A doctrine is to be judged by its effects, as a tree is known by its fruit: therefore examine thy doctrine by this rule, and thou wilt not wait until to-morrow before repudiating it!¹

We know that there are glorious spirits who despise equally both punishments and rewards. These do good, as they say, for the love of good, disdaining other motives. Will they deign to cast a compassionate look upon the rest of mankind? We do not pretend to an equality with them. Jesus did not come for these righteous persons, but for us poor sinners, who find that all the goads and the restraints of the Gospel are none too many. Borne along by the torrent of passion, we seek a foothold, a helpful rope, a willow branch that can be reached by our convulsive hand. The promises and the threatenings of our Saviour are, for us, means of salvation. In pity leave them to us!

Universalism is crumbling at its foundation, for it starts by begging the question; it fails to recognize the seriousness of human liberty; it wrests or contradicts the Scriptures; it enervates the soul; in these several respects it is very weak, but we must admit that it is strong with all that force of inertia which at the bottom of our fallen nature pleads in favour of letting things alone, to be and to go as they may. Popular at little cost and wildly optimist, absolute Universalism

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

determines to see everything in a rosy light. It is breathed in the moral atmosphere of this age of laxity. A salvation assured and guaranteed, do what we will: what a fallacious ideal for the existence here below! Struggle is imposed upon all; humanity is marching towards immortality like Hannibal's army on the way to Italy. We encounter narrow defiles, lofty ridges, violent tempests, fatigues without number. How welcome the voice that would tell us that we might safely go to sleep on the soft carpet of snow spread out at our feet! Sweet were the accents of the siren inviting the mariner to quit his painful handling of sails and helm in order to follow her!

From the depth of our soul and conscience we protest against this doctrine; we are urgent in pointing out its error and its danger. We believe that it tends to lead the Churches and society towards abysses and catastrophes, wherein, however, the moral sense would be reinvigorated through the terrible reclamations of a divine justice too long treated with disdain.

There are circumstances in which it is good for the world that God's messengers should be armed with a forehead of adamant, like Ezekiel, when the object is to warn men as with the trump of God against approaching doom; when the sense of heaven's government has well-nigh died out under the soporifics and enchantments of so evil a time; and when men and women will say and do the utmost wickedness in assurance of being fortified at last in death by all the rites of the Catholic Church or by all the deadlier consolations of a Protestant scepticism!¹

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Hearken not unto the prophets who say still unto them that despise me: The Lord hath said ye shall have peace; and unto everyone that walketh in the stubbornness of his own heart: No evil shall come upon you. . . . Behold, the tempest of the Lord, his fury has gone forth, it shall burst upon the head of the wicked. . . . It is a rebellious people, lying children, that will not hear the law of the Lord, which say to the seers: See not; and to the prophets: Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us

¹ Edward White, *Life in Christ*, 3rd edition, p. 452, *sq.*

smooth things, prophesy deceits. . . . They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people lightly, saying: Peace, peace! when there is no peace. . . . Ye yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. When they are saying: Peace, and safety! then sudden destruction cometh upon them . . . and they shall in no wise escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief. . . . So, then, let us not sleep as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober.”¹

¹ Jer. xxiii. 16, 17, 19; Isa. xxx. 9, 10; Jer. vi. 14; 1 Thess. v. 2, *sq.*

CHAPTER XI.

EXAMINATION OF THE PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS ADDUCED AGAINST CONDITIONALISM AND IN SUPPORT OF THE TRADITIONAL DOGMA.

Introduction—I. *That the indefeasible immortality of individual souls is taught implicitly, if not explicitly, in the Bible*—II. *The threatenings of Jesus*—III. *That the purpose of the Tree of Life was only the maintenance of physical life*—IV. *Certain declarations of the apostle Paul*—V. *That there is no relation between the notion of moral good and that of existence*—VI. *The mystery*—VII. *Various objections*—VIII. *A text from the Apocalypse*—IX. Our principal opponent at last proposes an hypothesis approaching nearly to Conditionalism.

HAVING examined the arguments put forward in support of Universalism, it is fitting that we should now do as much for the traditional dogma. We have brought this dogma to the bar of a tribunal composed of philosophy, exegesis, history, the religious consciousness, and pastoral prudence. Our plaint is before the court ; we will now hear an advocate for the defendant. Professor F. Godet having come forward, we will proceed to consider his arguments. The widely acknowledged merit of Professor Godet as a theologian will be sufficient guarantee of our desire that judgement should be pronounced upon a full understanding of the case.

Professor Godet confines himself to the essential arguments ; for which our readers will be thankful. Their attention being concentrated upon a few decisive points, will not be so liable to be distracted, and in case there should be some who do not shrink from a more extended study, we will endeavour to satisfy them. They will find in the *Supplement* of this work a collection, as complete as it has been possible for us to make

it, of the objections that have been raised against the point of view that we are defending.¹

Professor F. Godet's plea appeared in the *Revue théologique* of Montauban, as an article in reply to one by Pastor Charles Babut.² We read this article with a mixture of regret and satisfaction: regret in seeing so distinguished a theologian combat that which we believe to be an important truth; satisfaction in finding that the arguments employed are not of a nature to shake our conviction. There is, moreover, a satisfaction in knowing at last the judgement of the eminent professor on the subject in question. His silent opposition was much more formidable than a frank discussion.

We have not forgotten the advice that we received from M. Godet himself thirty-seven years ago, when we had the privilege of attending his lectures. He told us that in questions of theological science the record should always be left open. It has been by following this advice that we have reached what is called Conditionalism, in which we see an element of the primitive Gospel; but the record remains open. If, therefore, our professor of former days should be able to remove the difficulties that we are about to submit to him, it might be for us the beginning of an evolution which, perhaps, would bring us back to our starting-point, to that point of view which a special study of the subject forced us to abandon more than a quarter of a century ago.³ We will now present the arguments as nearly as possible in the order adopted by our venerable antagonist.

¹ See the *Supplement* No. XVII., *Classified list and refutation of objections put forth against Conditional Immortality*.

² Number for Jan.—March, 1886: *Quelques réflexions sur l'enseignement de Saint Paul concernant la vie future*. M. Babut's article had appeared in the number for Jan.—March, 1885: *De l'enseignement de Saint Paul sur la vie future*, a report presented to the Evangelical Conference at Montpellier, 29 Oct., 1884. The author concluded thus: "We therefore hold it to be probable that the doctrine of Conditional Immortality expresses more nearly than any other St. Paul's views on the grave and painful subject under review." It will be seen that M. Godet, in his article, has considerably extended the debate.

³ At that time we stood at the point of view of eternal torments; we even preached them conscientiously, from a sentiment of loyalty towards that which passed for true biblical teaching. Will M. Godet, in his turn, deign to place himself for a short time at the Conditionalist point of view?

I.

The words *spirit* and *soul* occur more than sixteen hundred times in the Scriptures, but the expressions “immortal soul” and “immortal spirit” are never found there. God only, it is said, hath immortality. M. Godet acknowledges the correctness of this statement. Many writers have thereby been led to the conclusion that the immortality of the soul, in the common and traditional sense, is not a biblical doctrine. Men on every step in the scale of beliefs are agreed on this point.¹ M. Godet is of a different opinion; in his view, the “natural indestructibility of the soul” is “a tacit supposition of the biblical intuition.” In other terms, if the Bible never speaks of a native and inalienable immortality, it is because this doctrine is treated as self-evident. Here our difficulties begin.

1. It seems to us that if the immortality of the soul had been self-evident it would not have been contested, whereas it has always been very much contested. The Epicureans at Athens, the Sadducees at Jerusalem, denied the immortality of the soul, and even all life after the death of the body. These two were numerous and powerful sects. Even as early as the time of Isaiah there were some whose maxim was: “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.”² After death all is dead! The immortality of the soul could not, therefore, be taken for granted.

2. M. Godet says: “The biblical sphere is limited to the moral sphere.” Be it so; but he will surely admit that the immortality of the soul concerns morality, and even religion. Faith in a survival is indeed one of the bases of religious morality. The immortality of the soul belongs, therefore, to the “biblical sphere.” It would be strange that Scripture should teach nothing on that which so distinctly comes within its sphere. As Luther said: “We are not papists, but Christians; we know that there is nothing relating to faith and morals which is not amply and explicitly taught in the holy Scriptures.”³ The question is, therefore, why the scholastic

¹ See Chap. III., sect. iv.; Chap. IV., sect. iv.; and Chap. X., sect. vi.

² Isa. xxii. 13.

³ *Works*, Wittenberg, ed. 1549-1559, vol. ii., fol. 113, *verso*, § 2.

doctrine of the soul's immortality should be the sole exception to this general principle of evangelical Protestantism.

3. It may even be said that the Bible contains an abundance of declarations in support of doctrines which might better be taken for granted than that of the essential immortality of the soul. The existence, the spirituality, and the eternity of God, for example, are frequently and explicitly affirmed. "God is a spirit," says Jesus; "He that cometh to God must believe that he exists," writes the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Jewish code appoints the punishment of death for those who deny the existence, the unity, or the spirituality of God; but that code does not contain a single clause which condemns those who deny the spirituality or the immortality of the human soul. God is declared to be immortal, eternal, incorruptible.¹ If we are to believe in the native imperishability of man, we should like to find at least one passage in which one or other of these epithets is applied to the human soul; but it seems that we must forego that satisfaction.

4. Is it not generally understood that we ought to avoid imputing to a man opinions which he has never expressed, and are not gratuitous suppositions at the bottom of that which may be called a biased construction of any given text? What would be said of a judge who would send a prisoner to the scaffold simply because he had an "intuition" that the man was a murderer, and without invoking further proof or testimony? Yet something very like this is done, unintentionally, when the opinions of certain pagan philosophers are imputed to the biblical writers. The partizans of the traditional dogma, imbued with Platonic ideas, have too often ignored that essential principle of true exegetical science: *Sensum ne inferas sed efferas*; everything should be drawn from the text, and nothing brought to it.

5. In this case, however, there is more than an absence of proof: there is proof of the contrary. So far from leaving it to be supposed that the soul is absolutely imperishable, the Bible teaches categorically that it is mortal. A celebrated Hebrew scholar, to whose authority M. Godet will hardly take exception, Professor Franz Delitzsch, has acknowledged this;

¹ Heb. xi. 6; Rom. i. 23; xvi. 26; 1 Tim. i. 17; cf. Deut. xxxii. 40.

he says: "From the biblical point of view the soul can be put to death, it is mortal" (Num. xxiii. 10; xxxv. 11; Isa. xxvi. 19), it may be "lodged in the dust."¹

6. More than that: in a hundred passages the Scriptures, both the New Testament and the Old, teach that the wicked shall be totally destroyed. The sacred writers have exhausted the resources of the languages in which they wrote in order to declare it. In the New Testament the terms used are the very same that Plato employs to designate that annihilation or extinction of being of which he had the most definite conception.²

It is impossible to apply to the silence of the Scripture in relation to a pretended native immortality the familiar proverb: "Silence gives consent." Indeed, the explanation derived from such unexpressed evidence does not fully satisfy M. Godet. After having offered it for what it is worth, he proposes a second: This phenomenal silence is preserved because in applying to the soul the epithet *immortal* (which is conspicuous by its absence), Scripture "would have seemed to attribute to this element of our being an existence independent of the divine will."—"Would have seemed to attribute"! What? The use of this epithet would then have been objectionable, or, to speak plainly, dangerous; while, forsooth, in our time the danger would not exist! The Bible feared to pander to the pride of man; in our own epoch there is no longer reason for the same fear! Men are become so modest that to all of them may safely be accorded the immortality which the Bible reserves for genuine believers! One of the most majestic jewels of the diadem of Deity may be placed on the heads of all without peril! Is it not, on the contrary, more like the truth to affirm that never did human arrogance parade itself with greater audacity, that never did man-

¹ *Commentary on Psalm vii.* 5 [6]; cf. *Comment. on Genesis*, p. 190, 3rd edition; 1860.

² *Phædo*, §§ 14, 23, 29, 36, *sq.*, 41, 44, 50, 52, 55. Cebes is made to say: "Almost all men imagine that the soul, when parted from the body . . . is nothing, nowhere," *ouden, oudamou*, § 14.—"What! a soul created with such prerogatives would no sooner have quitted the body than it would be dissipated and annihilated, as most men believe."—*Diaprophusetai kai apolölen hös phasin hoi polloi anthröpoi*, § 29. [The higher numbers quoted on p. 105 are those of Bekker's edition.]

worship display itself with more grotesque shamelessness? No doubt God created man in his own image, but precisely because he bears the image he has not the reality. The sun is reflected in a pail of water, but this ray of light is not a sun; it may easily vanish. An image is not necessarily indelible. A tarnished mirror of the Divinity, the human soul has the fragility of the glass.

Indirectly and very reasonably, M. Godet blames the Churches which have overrated man by the lavish use of the phrase "immortal soul," which for excellent reasons the Bible has always carefully avoided.

M. Godet makes yet another important concession. He admits that "immortality belongs to God alone in a manner absolute and inalienable," and that God has always "the right to take back to himself this gift" of immortality. But if the immortality of man is not "absolute and inalienable," if it depends upon the good pleasure of the Creator, it is, in fact, *relative* and *conditional*. Apparently without suspecting it, M. Godet himself is, then, a Conditionalist, with this difference, that he does not accord to the soul the liberty of suicide; while to us it seems that a compulsory immortality would be a grave infringement of human liberty. Yet, in some of his writings M. Godet has seemed to recognize the truly destructive effects of sin. He says: "The soul of the vicious is dissolved (*se dissout*) by the deleterious action of his vice."¹ According to Littré, the verb *se dissoudre* means *to be destroyed*. Does M. Godet use it in any other sense? "Deleterious" comes through the medium of Latin from a Greek verb signifying to destroy, to kill. M. Godet elsewhere says: "The soul corrupts itself in its lusts."² According to Littré again, "to corrupt" is to break up the integer, and thence to spoil, destroy. The propriety of the images requires therefore that the corruption of the soul should issue in a similar result. If, then, we are to understand M. Godet's meaning by reference to the definition of his words in the standard dictionaries, we may claim that substantially he partakes our own mode of thinking.³

¹ *Commentaire sur l'épître aux Romains*, i., p. 256.

² *Ibid.*, p. 442.

³ Cf. p. 85.

II.

§I. MATTHEW X. 28.

Jesus here exhorts us to “fear him who is able to destroy [French: *faire périr*, cause to perish] both soul and body in Gehenna.” According to M. Godet, this expression, *cause to perish*, “may mean something quite different from annihilate.” What precisely in this something? Professor Godet does not say, but it must be the perpetual infliction of punishment on individuals whose life is indefinitely prolonged in a lake of fire and brimstone. That is the doctrine of which, so far as we know, M. Godet is a representative. Yet he recoils from the explicit mention of such a prospect. If we may be allowed to say so, it seems to us that our honoured opponent would find himself less hampered if he adhered to the historical and grammatical sense of the words, in accordance with the accepted law of Protestantism. Littré and the Academy agree in defining *périr* [to perish] as “to come to an end.” To “cause the soul to perish” must therefore mean to put an end to the soul’s existence. The historical and grammatical sense ought not to be set aside except when it involves contradiction. When, for example, Jesus, speaking of Mary, says to John: “Behold thy mother,” the words are used in a figurative sense, the natural sense would be contradictory; but is it contradictory to suppose that the body and the soul of a created being should come to an end? Not at all, for M. Godet himself has only just said that “God can always annihilate any being by an act of his will.” We find ourselves therefore forced to conclude that in this verse Jesus threatens the wicked with a complete abolition of existence.

If we leave the translations and go back to the verb in the original text, *apolesai*, the sense remains the same. It is clearly indicated and fixed in many passages of the New Testament; for example, in the comparison of the limb which, when amputated, perishes and putrefies, and again in the verse in the Epistle of James relating to bodily beauty, the sense of *ceasing to exist* is evident.¹ When therefore to the verb

¹ Matt. v. 29, 30; James i. 11. See also in the Greek Mark xiv. 4; Luke xxi. 18; John vi. 12, 27; Acts xxvii. 34; Rev. xviii. 14, etc. Accord-

apollumi, to perish, in relation to the soul, is attributed the sense of *being wicked and miserable*, a sense which it never bore in Greek antiquity (the lexicons settle that), an exceptional rule is created, the truth of the text is sacrificed out of deference to a philosophical hypothesis. Lexicology groans under this violence done to the sacred writers. Origen, although a thorough Platonist, remained a good Greek scholar, and he understood this passage in the sense that we maintain; he says: "God can annihilate (*exaphanisaí*) the body and the soul in Gehenna or in any other manner that it may please him to choose."¹

§2. MARK IX. 48.

There is, however, one threatening of Jesus Christ which at first sight seems to set aside the supposition of a future absolute destruction of the wicked. M. Godet says:

How is it possible to refer to such an intuition the terrible words (Mark ix. 43-48), to "be cast into the unquenchable fire . . . where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"? The answer is given that the fire remains and the worm does not die, but the victim is consumed; the punishment remains, but the prey escapes. Can it be believed that the true sense of the Lord's words is to be brought out by such expedients? And if the expression has been exactly preserved, Jesus said *their worm* (*autōn ho skolēx*), and not merely *the worm* dieth not.

"Expedients!" The word is somewhat hard, and we appeal against this judgement, the too brief preamble whereof misrepresents the argument of the Conditionalists.² The fire does not remain after having burnt out, and the prey does not escape, since it is destroyed. If we wished to retort, we might well complain of the convenient process which in respect of texts takes advantage of an optical illusion many times already dissipated. Is it needful now to recall to mind the last de-

ing to Cremer's *Biblico-theological Lexicon*, *apollumi* in Matt. x. 28 is a stronger expression than the verb to *kill*, which it replaces as a synonym. See also p. 27, note 2.

¹ Quoted by C. F. Hudson, *Christ our Life*; New York, 1863, p. 84.

² *The Struggle for Eternal Life*, by E. Petavel, D.D., 1875, chap. viii. and obj. 13; *Revue théologique*, 1876, p. 145; *Crit. relig.*, 1879, p. 264; *Chrétien evang.*, 1881, p. 561; *Life in Christ*, by Edward White, chap. xxv.; *Notre Durée*, by Charles Byse, 1885, p. 48, sq.

fenders of the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, holding their position on the ground of Joshua's, at first sight decisive, declaration: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon"?

M. Godet takes no account of the fact that the text which he advances is a simple quotation from the prophet Isaiah.¹ He sees a special intention of Jesus in the use of the pronoun *their*, as though Jesus had wished to modify the meaning of the original Hebrew. M. Geo. Godet (son of Professor F. Godet) had previously insisted upon this point; he says: "They forget the *autōn*, 'their,' which Jesus adds to the word 'worm,' and which accentuates the persistence of the individuality of the sinner by attributing to him a duration equal to that of the worm that is attached to him."² M. Geo. Godet here makes a slight mistake as to fact; in truth, Jesus "adds" absolutely nothing; on the contrary, he suppresses one of the two *theirs* of the prophet Isaiah: he says *the* fire, not *their* fire.

By a reference to the text of Isaiah the optical illusion is speedily dissipated. As M. Reuss says: "There is here no question of torments inflicted upon living beings, of the hell-fire and other mythological pictures of later Judaism."³ What, then, is the meaning? Professor Aug. Sabatier shall tell us:

The fire that burns the carcase and the worm that gnaws it are, for the Hebrew, the symbol of total destruction. Isaiah says: "From new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have rebelled against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." This is the double image taken up by Jesus (Mark ix. 48), which, far from expressing eternal torments, originally expressed nothing but the idea of a hopeless destruction.⁴

Let us study closely the symbolism of the *worm*, the *fire*, and the *carcases*.

1. The *worm* causes no suffering to the carcases, which are

¹ Ch. lxvi. 24.

² *Chrétien évangélique*, 1882, p. 558. Oltramare's translation, which Professor F. Godet reproduces, has "*the worm*," unlike the manuscripts.

³ *Les Prophètes* ii., p. 326.

⁴ *Mémoire sur la notion hébraïque de l'esprit*; Paris, 1879, p. 25.

rightly held to be types of insensibility. What, then, is the work of the worm? It hastens the disappearance of that which has ceased to live, to a certain extent it replaces the absent grave-digger; the cremation follows, which burns up the bones gnawed by the worm. This worm, which it is sought to immortalize, is nothing else than the larva of the meat-fly. Its name in Hebrew, according to a probable etymology, comes from a verb signifying to devour, to destroy.¹ The worm is essentially a gnawer, a carrion-eater, a destroyer.

But in order to comprehend the full force of the prophet's declaration, it is necessary to recall the capital importance attached to sepulture by the Israelites. The book of Ecclesiastes goes so far as to declare that the most fortunate of men would be deserving of pity if he should have no burial; an untimely birth would be better than he.² The Talmud, speaking of an impious man who has not made amends, says: "O most senseless of men! Thou hast been abominable . . . thou hast had no burial, the worm has made its bed under thee, and has devoured thee."³ The extraordinary concern of which the dead body was the object among the Hebrews, and even more among the Egyptians, was caused in great measure by a more or less vague hope of resurrection. To abandon the body of a detested enemy to the worms and the birds of prey, to burn his bones and thus to take from him, as far as possible, all chance of resurrection; this was the ideal of perfect vengeance.⁴ The worm and the perpetual fire symbolize the eternal impossibility of a resurrection to eternal life, the *eternal continuance* of a *state of death*. Cremation was regarded by the Hebrews as an aggravation of the punishment inflicted upon a criminal,⁵ no doubt because it accentuates the

¹ *Tola'*, from *tala'*, to gnaw. So also *skōlēx* in the LXX., and in Mark, from *skallō*, to scrape, to hollow out. Linnæus calculated that the larvæ-issuë of three meat-flies would devour the carcase of a horse as quickly as a lion could do it.

² vi. 3.

³ *Midrash Ruth*, fol. 44, 2; *Midrash Koheleth*, fol. 86, 4; cf. Isa. xiv. 11; Job xxiv. 20.

⁴ In Chap. VIII., sect. iii., p. 239, we have seen that the heathens burned the bodies of Christians with the same intention. Cf. Virgil, *Æneid*, x., 557, sq.

⁵ Lev. xx. 14; Josh. vii. 25.

idea of complete destruction. Such, also, is the thought of the prophet: the oppressors of Israel shall be overtaken by the fate which was held to be the *ne plus ultra* of calamity.¹

Following the rules which govern the use of images, the worms of which Isaiah speaks are, in the second place, symbols of *ignominy*, precisely because they attack only bodies deprived of burial.² The destruction of which these worms are the agents will be, moreover, as rapid as it can be made, the public health depending upon it, on account of the pestilential emanations from dead bodies, otherwise habitation in the holy city would become both disagreeable and unwholesome; but the destruction caused by the worm and the fire remains eternal in its effects. Thus it was with the fire which devoured the palaces of Jerusalem, and which also was to be “unquenchable,” although no one has therefore concluded that the palaces burnt were to endure for ever. Unless we admit that, at the present time, there are at Jerusalem buildings which have been burning ever since the days of Nebuchadnezzar, we are compelled to restrict the duration of the fire that “is not quenched.” Has M. Godet any other interpretation to propose? If not, he must allow us to transfer to the exactly analogous

¹ Among the Egyptians the burning of the body to ashes was the supreme punishment; inflicted upon parricides, it symbolized the annihilation of the criminal soul.

² There is no worm that gnaws the bodies which are decomposing underground. See Littré, *Dict. de la langue française*, at the word *ver*. Cf. Jer. xxv. 33: “The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the face of the ground.” The term chosen by Isaiah to designate these carcases is a depreciative word used specially of animals; it corresponds nearly with the English word *carriion*. The worm being a symbol of ignominy, the worm which dieth not is the emblem of an eternal ignominy. The remembrance of the rebels will provoke repulsion, disgust, it will be abhorrent: *deraon*. This term reappears in Dan. xii. 2, again applied to those who are condemned. Daniel says nothing about torments. He tells of the memory buried under contempt; the sentiment of the survivors is disgust, not pity. Nothing remains of the individual destroyed except a perpetual and repugnant recollection. Cf. Deut. xxviii. 26; 2 Kings ix. 37; Psa. lxxix. 2, 3; Isa. xiv. 19; Jer. vii. 33; xxii. 19; xxxvi. 30; Rev. xi. 9. A proof, moreover, that the worm does not designate remorse is found in the parallel passage of Isa. li. 8: “The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool,” etc. Evidently these metaphors tell us of destruction only.

text of Isaiah, the explanation which offers itself so naturally, and which he accepts in the prophecy of Jeremiah.¹

2. A merely elementary philology teaches us, then, to see, in the *eternal* or *unquenchable fire*, the irresistible agent of a complete and irremediable ruin. This proverbial and hyperbolic expression is not even exclusively a Hebraism; the French sometimes speak of an "eternal adieu"; Ovid tells of the "eternal sore" which consumed Telephus; Homer had already told of the "inextinguishable fire" which might have consumed the Grecian fleet, and sixteen centuries later Eusebius uses the same terms in describing the martyrdom of two Christians condemned to be burnt.² Can this imply that the Grecian fleet and the bodies of the martyrs have never ceased to exist? As we have said, the perpetuity of the fire, as well as that of the worm, is a symbol of complete destruction, which will always remain irremediable.

3. The *carcasses* of our text also are symbols. From the traditional point of view, the bodies of the lost will not in

¹ Jer. xvii. 27, "If ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden and enter in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day, then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." *Lo thikbeh*, exactly the words of our text, Isa. lxvi. 24. Cf. Ezek. xxi. 2-4; Amos v. 5, 6 Heb. Isa. xxxiv. 10 adds to the image of fire that shall not be quenched that of the *smoke* that shall go up for ever, the last vestige of that which was Bozrah. Cf. Rev. xiv. 11; xix. 3. This applies equally to Matt. iii. 12; Mark ix. 43; Luke iii. 17; and to Isa. xxxiii. 14, one of the four passages of the Old Testament in which it has been thought that eternal torments were indicated. The origin of these images is to be found in Gen. xix. 28. For the eternity, not of the act nor of the agent, but of the *effects* of the action, see also Mark iii. 29, an *eternal sin*; 2 Thess. ii. 16, *eternal comfort*; Heb. vi. 2, *eternal judgement*; ix. 12, *eternal redemption*; Jude 7, Sodom and Gomorrah set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire. We should also include in this list Matt. xxv. 46, *eternal punishment* (definitive destruction), a passage with which we are often opposed, but which M. Godet has not seen fit to invoke. In biblical language eternal often corresponds with our adjectives: irrevocable, irremediable, irremissible, etc. The notion of irreparability is found again in Matt. xxv. 41: *to pur to aiônion*, eternal fire, synonymous with unquenchable fire: *to pur to asbeston*, the fire which does not go out until it has consumed everything (Matt. iii. 12; Mark ix. 43). In thus repeating remarks already made (Chap. VII., sect. ii.), we trust that these new developments will serve to confirm those remarks in the minds of our readers. In addition to M. Arnaud, M. Gretillat has adopted this explanation, *op. cit.*, *ib.*, p. 617.

² *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. vi., 40, sq.; cf. *Iliad*, xvi. 123; cf. i. 599; xiii. 169, etc.

reality be carcases. What, then, is the symbolism? The carcase is first and foremost an emblem of *inactivity* and *insensibility*. Although the carcase were preserved, centuries would elapse without restoring sensation; it is and it remains a corpse. The corpse is not the man. Here, as frequently elsewhere, time does not alter the condition of things. In order to conceive of these inert bodies feeling the least pain, it would be necessary to suppose them possessed of a soul, and, what is more, an immortal soul; in other words, it would be needful to suppose just that which is in question. An eventual resurrection would be the very antipodes of the prophet's thought, and, besides, a resuscitated corpse would be no longer a corpse, still less a corpse in process of decomposition. The possessive pronoun *their*, in the phrase "their worm dieth not," is said to reveal "suffering inherent in the moral state of the reprobate"; but, once more, the carcases are not the reprobate themselves; inscient remainders as they are, carcases have no "moral state." The perpetuity of the decomposing carcase would thus become the symbol of an eternal death, which for ever does away with the notion of future life.

Secondly, carcases are emblems of pollution. King Josiah, desiring to pollute the valley of Hinnom, caused to be transported thither filth and human bones.¹ From that time the valley was called Tophet, a word that probably signified spitting, that which causes loathing and abhorrence.² Josephus narrates that, under the Procurator Coponius, some Samaritans, wishing to pollute the temple, strewed bones therein. The next day the priests could not enter to officiate. The disgust inspired by a corpse reaches its height when, deprived of sepulture, it becomes the prey of worms.

Further, as being relics, the carcases remaining on the ground may symbolize the *present remembrance* of beings that have lived, but live no more. It thus appears that the perpetuity of the carcase serves to symbolize the perpetuity of the remembrance left by the final destruction of God's enemies.

¹ 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

² See Kitto and W. L. Alexander's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature* at the word *Tophet*.

On the other hand, the hyperbolical perpetuity of the agents of destruction is a figure of the eternal impossibility of a return to life after a final death.

Will it be said that for the rebels who have been put to death there remains an existence in Sheol? That existence is a quantity of the smallest value in the eyes of the Israelite. It is a latent, and, so to speak, a potential state, in which the individual no more gives any real sign of life, unless under the evocation of his *manes*, which is a crime, and probably also a deception. Sheol is a frontier zone between existence and non-existence, "a land of silence, of darkness, and forgetfulness, a sojourn where there is no more thought nor activity." The faithful had a horror of Sheol, which they often likened to nothingness. On the other hand, they delighted to cherish the hope of a resurrection; but as we have just seen, the prophet puts aside the prospect of a resurrection of the reprobate; he says also: "They are dead, they shall not live, they are shades [R.V. margin], they shall not rise; therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish" . . . but "thy dead [O Israel] shall live, my dead bodies shall arise."¹

The punishment of the condemned will be irremediable, definitive, and in that sense eternal. On the other hand, the idea of torment without end is so foreign to the noble imagination of the prophet, that he elsewhere reduces the duration of the process to a minimum.²

The prediction of the passage under review appears to have been occasioned by Isaiah's vivid personal remembrance of the tragic fate of the army of Sennacherib. The allusion is evident in the phrase "they shall go forth and look." In the time of Hezekiah, the inhabitants of besieged Jerusalem did thus "go forth and look" upon the 185,000 carcasses of the Assyrians struck down with the pestilence. The prophet announces that the same scene will be reproduced at the end of the times on a

¹ Isa. xxvi. 14, 19.

² Chap. i. 31, "The strong shall be as tow, and his work as a spark." Nothing burns more quickly than tow, nor is anything more quickly extinguished than a spark. "None shall quench them," in the same verse, must therefore signify, not that the fire shall have an infinite duration, but that the destruction shall be irremediable, and that all shall be consumed.

vaster scale ; Jerusalem shall again be besieged, hence the expression “they shall go forth,” which otherwise would not be accounted for. It is the habit of the prophets to find in a past fact the type of a future event. Moreover, the mention of “new moons,” and the expression “all flesh,” show that the reference is to a temporal chastisement.¹

The prophet Ezekiel takes up and develops this theme ; he says : “They that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth (*veyatseu*, the identical word used by Isaiah), and shall make fires of the weapons and burn them, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, the hand-staves and the spears, and they shall make fires of them seven years.”² Ezekiel afterwards introduces a variation of the original theme : “Seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land.” The bleeding remains of the slain of the Lord are deposited by the grave-diggers in a valley called Hamonah. These variations in the details bring into prominence the principal idea. Both prophets tell of an immense number of carcasses which pollute the land, and of the removal of the pollution through the expenditure of much time and effort ; a terrible and magnificent image of the universal pacification and purification that are to follow the last judgement.³

The *Annotated Bible* of Neuchâtel has the following appropriate note :

This is a parallel passage with Isaiah lxvi. 24 ; the mysterious necropolis of Hamonah, with its enormous grave, would seem to be no other than that place of condemnation “where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,” the Ge-Hinnom of the land finally sanctified.

¹ Cf. xxxvii. 36 and 2 Kings xix. 35. The same depreciative word *pegarim* occurs in the narrative and in the prophecy. Many times Isaiah makes allusion to this event. See in Segond's volume upon Isaiah different notes on some of the following passages : x., 16 s., 28-34 ; xiv. 24 ; xvii. 12-19 ; xviii. 6 ; xxix. 8 ; xxx. 31-33 ; xxxi. 8 s. ; xxxiii. 12, 14, 33 ; xliii. 17. The notion of the righteous surviving and contemplating with satisfaction (*raah be*) the carcasses (not the sufferings) of the “slain of the Lord” occurs frequently in the Scriptures, and even in the New Testament—Ex. xiv. 30 ; Ps. lviii. 10 ; xlix. 14 ; Isa. xxvi. 14-19 ; Mal. iv. 1-3 ; Rev. xviii. 20, 21.

² xxxix. 9-20.

³ These same images recur in the *Sibylline Oracles*, iii. 633-697, and in the book of Enoch, xc. 16.

Thus may be understood this antithesis : not a single carcase forgotten (ver. 15), and not a single faithful soul left behind (ver. 28). The definitive judgement is completed : cf. Rev. xx. 11, 15. Thus the ground is at last cleared for the appearance of the perfect edifice, for the answer to the third petition of the Lord's prayer.

The *Annotated Bible*, prepared under M. Godet's direction, thus implicitly recognizes that the notion of interminable sufferings is absolutely foreign to all this extensive symbolism of the Hebrew prophets. A necropolis is not a place of torture.

Zechariah says : "This shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem : their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet . . . and every one that is left . . . shall go up from year to year [to Jerusalem] to worship the King, the Lord of hosts."¹ The gangrene devouring the enemies of Jerusalem is another emblem of the same fundamental thought, which Ezekiel again expresses under the image of a feast on human victims to which the "wild beasts and birds of prey" are invited.²

It has not been sufficiently noticed that the marvellous deliverance accorded to Hezekiah is the greatest in the history of Israel since the Exodus from Egypt and the destruction of Pharaoh's army.³ The Psalms, as well as the Prophets, make frequent allusions to it. M. Bruston says : "The disaster of Sennacherib, and the consequent deliverance of Jerusalem, appear to have inspired Psalms 46 and 48, 65 to 68, 75, 76, 87, and perhaps others."⁴

¹ Ch. xiv. 12-21 ; cf. xii. 9. See also Hosea ii. 20 ; Nahum i. 6, etc.

² Ch. xxxix. 17-20 ; cf. Jer. vii. 32, 33 ; Rev. xix. 17-21.

³ The Assyrian annals are silent as to the terrible disaster of Sennacherib's army. It is well known that it was the rule among Oriental historians to commemorate the glories of their heroes, while they seem to have ignored their defeats and reverses. The biblical narratives are the only exception to this custom. Nevertheless, recent discoveries have confirmed the historical truth of the episode with which we are now occupied. In a cuneiform inscription Sennacherib himself implicitly admits the check suffered by his army under the walls of Jerusalem. See the article by Frederick Delitzsch on *Sennacherib* in Herzog's *Encyclopædia*, 2nd edition, vol. xiii., p. 385 ; Vigouroux, *La Bible et les découvertes modernes*, Paris, 1881, vol. iv. ; E. Archinard, *Israel et ses voisins asiatiques*, 1890, etc.

⁴ *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, vol. xi., p. 22. See in *Supplement*

Not one of these biblical commentaries on the passage with which we are dealing contains a syllable respecting eternal torments. The notion of suffering is, in fact, entirely absent ; it is not suffering that is contemplated ; that has gone before, and does not accompany this second phase of the chastisement. As M. Reuss has said, the redundance dates from later Judaism, from an epoch in which Greek influence and the infiltrations of Platonism begin to take effect. About 134 years before Jesus Christ, the apocryphal book of Judith introduces a gratuitous addition to Isaiah's picture. The author makes his heroine say :

Woe to the heathen who rise up against my people ! The almighty Lord will punish them in the day of judgement by delivering their flesh to the fire and to the worms ; they shall suffer and lament eternally.¹

Unheard-of monsters, these carcases live ; these infectious masses, these formless remains, feel their position ; these scraps of rotten flesh have consciousness of themselves ! Unhappily, this addition, in spite of its bad taste, has had great success ; it has made the rut in which traditional exegesis drags itself painfully along. M. Reuss himself sees "mythological pictures" in the text of Mark, in which the last verse of Isaiah is quoted ; yet the text and the context may be read over and over, and nothing will be found that adds the least idea of suffering to the prophet's words.² Nothing is indicated but the eternal infamy attaching to the remembrance of beings which have utterly perished, and which consequently cannot possibly have any feeling. Gehenna, which Jesus on this occasion mentions, is well known to have been a receptacle of filth near

No. XVIII. an analysis which shows that the notion of endless sufferings was completely foreign to the eschatology of the psalmists.

¹ xvi. 17. A sentiment of justice towards the anonymous author has originated the supposition that he may have written *kausontai* instead of *klausontai*, the Vulgate having translated *urantur* in accordance with the Syriac version. A copyist, by the addition of one letter, would thus have changed *cremation* into *lamentation*. The *en aisthesei*, however, still remains ; but the canonical text of Isaiah does not contain anything of the sort. It is only a redundance introduced by a Platonic writer.

² Mark ix. 48. Let us note in passing that the triple repetition of this quotation is an error of copyists. Verses 44 and 46 ought to be omitted, as they are in the R.V. and in Oltramare's translation, while in Segond's they are placed between brackets.

to Jerusalem, where the carcases of animals and criminals were cast and burnt.¹ The name Gehenna is met with in the New Testament a dozen times without the notion of torments being ever attached to it. It is as though Jesus had said: "You all who love life ought to fear sin, which leads to the destruction of the soul as well as the body, to the definitive and ignominious death from which there is no return." It is elsewhere, in other Gospels, that Jesus speaks of the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" which will *precede* the unconscious state of the soul and the body; and it is worth notice, too, that Jesus does not say that the "weeping and gnashing of teeth" will be without end. The identification of the worm with remorse was an ingenious and tardy discovery of some unknown disciple of Pherecydes.² Preachers have eagerly seized upon it; Jesus and his disciples never dreamed of it; it is simply a mistake.

M. Reuss, in commenting upon the last verse of Isaiah, has seen in the "worm that dieth not" the larva of the meat-fly, the worm of an insensible carcase; how, then, can he subsequently compare this same worm to the remorse of a living, moral, and conscient being?³ That is an evident inconsistency. It is true that Jesus does go beyond the horizon of Isaiah when, in other passages, he supposes a survival of the soul; but even that provisional survival is not indestructibility, *aphtharsia*. Survival is no protection against the *second death*. There are some plants which are biennial; in harmony with Scripture, the human soul may be compared to them. It has a natural prospect of a life beyond the tomb, but except in

¹ In this passage Jesus recommends that a hand, a foot, an eye should, in case of need, be sacrificed. This sacrifice implies the *destruction*, the *suppression*, of the member or the organ sacrificed, which perishes. Jesus likens the fate of the sinner in Gehenna to that of an arm that is cut off or an eye that is plucked out; the fire of Gehenna, which will cause the impenitent to perish, is therefore understood to cause the *destruction*, the total and complete *suppression*, of the sinner. Cf. Matt. v. 29, and x. 28. The simile thus introduced by Jesus puts the notion of a perpetuity of suffering out of the question. The hand, once cut off, suffers no more, but the process of decomposition begins which at last reduces it to dust.

² *Pherecydes Syrius primum dixit animos hominum esse sempiternos*. Cicero, *Tuscul. quest.*, i. 16. The identification of the worm with remorse can be traced back as far as to Origen. See Kitto's *Cyclop.*, s.v. *worm*.

³ *Hist. évang.*, p. 428.

communion with Jesus Christ, that life, like the life here, will necessarily be perishable.

The revolting idea of interminable sufferings never haunted the imagination of the Saviour. When, in this same chapter of Mark, Jesus speaks of the impending fate of a great criminal, he says: "It were better for him if a great millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea." The mention of a punishment much longer and more grievous, that of the cross, for example, might have been expected. On the other hand, the stone attached to the neck keeping the corpse at the bottom of the sea, the culprit would be thereby deprived of a proper burial, and, as we have seen, that privation was considered a supreme misfortune. It would seem therefore that Jesus looked upon the eternal infamy attaching to their memory as the chief punishment of the greatest criminals.

In concluding this section we will invite the venerable Archbishop Whately to speak. He says:

The expressions of "eternal punishment," "unquenchable fire," etc., may mean merely that there is to be no deliverance—no revival, no restoration—of the condemned. "Death," simply, does not shut out the hope of being brought to life again—"eternal death" does. "Fire" may be quenched before it has entirely consumed what it is burning; "unquenchable fire" would seem most naturally to mean that which destroys it utterly. . . . The "fire" and the "worm" that are spoken of must be something that is to the soul what worms and fire are to a body. And as the effect of worms or fire is not to preserve the body they prey upon, but to consume, destroy, and put an end to it, it would follow, if the correspondence hold good, that the fire, figuratively so called, which is prepared for the condemned, is something that is really to destroy and put an end to them.¹

Archbishop Whately is the author of a treatise on logic which is used in the English Universities. Simple, true, perfectly straightforward, this prelate remains the very type of

¹ *Scripture Revelations concerning a Future State*, 10th edition, Lect. VIII., pp. 189, 190. Let us also note that the phrase *the worm that dieth not* is admitted by our opponents to be synonymous with *the worm that ceaseth not to exist*, thus confirming the ontological meaning that we have assigned to the verb to *die*. An *undying* soul is admitted to be a soul that will never cease to exist. How a soul that *never dies* can *die unceasingly* is the secret of the traditionalists.

an impartial and equitable writer. Will his reasoning also be called an "expedient"?¹

III.

According to the book of Genesis, God drove out the man from paradise "lest he should put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." The fruit of this tree would have rendered the man immortal; the divine mercy desired to spare the transgressor the frightful punishment of an eternal existence in sin. Thus there remains to the man only a dying life, during which he may still repent and obtain the divine forgiveness.

Professor Godet thinks that the purpose of the tree of life was simply to confer physical immortality. God wished to prevent "the infinite prolongation of earthly life," which for fallen man would have been "the direst of calamities." We would ask upon what grounds can such a restriction of the efficacy of the tree of life be based? The text does not make this distinction, which seems to be the result of a preconceived opinion; the death relates to the whole man without any restriction or reserve.

The reappearance of the tree of life in the future paradise confirms our interpretation.² The identity of the tree is proved by the use of the definite article in the text of the Apocalypse. But there it appears that the fruit of this tree is the portion of the elect exclusively; those only "have the

¹ Professor Gretillat, another thoroughly qualified judge, has also taken the same view :

"It seems to us now to be dangerous to establish a dogma upon an image, upon a borrowed image, and, what is more, to attribute to a quotation a signification different from that of the original text. As in Isa. lxvi. 24 the prey of the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched consists of corpses by their very nature condemned to disappear, we have no right to affirm that the persons threatened by the same agents of destruction in the words of Jesus Christ are necessarily condemned to indestructibility.

"The possessive pronoun in the expression *their* worm, on which M. F. Godet lays stress, is also borrowed from the Hebrew text. M. Geo. Godet observes that corpses were supposed to retain their sensibility. Is it not wiser to acknowledge that in the passage of Isaiah there is no question of eternity, than to attribute to the prophet a mere popular prejudice?"—*Op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 618.

² Rev. ii. 7 ; xxii. 2, 14, 19.

right" to it who have "washed their robes." The tree of life does not grow on the desolate shores of the lake of fire and brimstone. Yet, according to the orthodox system, the inhabitants of that lake will have bodies, and since the purpose of the tree of life is, as stated by M. Godet, the perpetuation of the bodily life, the question naturally arises how the bodily life of the wicked is to be maintained. Is it to be supposed that at the last judgement God will by a stroke of omnipotence immortalize the bodies of the wicked? If so, how can it be explained that he does not do as much for the righteous? And then, what would be the value of the tree of life planted in the midst of the reconquered paradise? Has it no value? Ought it to be said of this tree, as of the barren fig-tree in the parable, that it deserves to be cut down because it cumbered the ground? Indeed, it would be dangerous, for it might lead astray by giving rise to the supposition that the wicked, deprived of its fruits, would not have immortal bodies, a supposition which would not be in conformity with the dogma that passes for orthodox.

It has been said: "It is not to prevent them from dying that the raised saints eat of the fruit of the tree of life, since, according to the words of Jesus, 'they cannot die any more.'"¹ But again we have to ask what purpose, then, is served by this tree? The elect would not eat of its fruit for the mere pleasure of eating; and, besides, there does not seem to be anything remarkable in either the beauty or the flavour of this fruit; it was the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil that specially flattered the senses. We are therefore obliged to conclude that the "sons of the resurrection" eat of the tree of life because they have need of it. Usually men eat for the sake of nourishment; these also eat to live, the converse proposition would be insupportable. Although Jesus said that the "sons of the resurrection" will not die any more, that does not prove the uselessness of the tree of life; it intervenes as the means which God employs to prevent the elect from dying the second death. If a father promises his son a pleasure-trip, it will not be superfluous to let him have the sum needed for its cost. The objection now under review

¹ M. Geo. Godet, *Chrétien évangélique*, 1882, p. 505; Luke xx. 36.

arbitrarily suppresses from biblical symbolism the very reason of its existence. It depreciates the value of an emblem to which the author of the Apocalypse attaches great importance, since in his view to be deprived of the tree of life is the supreme malediction.¹ If the righteous die no more, it is because they have access to this tree. There is here something more than the frivolous play of an Oriental imagination. A profound truth underlies these figures, these images correspond to realities, they enable us to understand that God does not immortalize the righteous, so to speak, once for all. The immortalization is accomplished by successive stages.² The tree of life is a figure of communion with God in Jesus Christ, who elsewhere calls himself the "bread of life." This communion needs to be continually renewed. Jesus Christ will always be necessary for the immortalization of the soul as well as the body of man. The apocalyptic text rests upon the necessity of a regular and constant assimilation of the divine life, adding that the tree yields its fruit every month; "it can thus sustain the strength of the risen saints without interruption."³

This fruit is the unique, perpetual, and indispensable aliment of the dwellers in paradise. The tree is planted on the borders of a river, the water of which is the only beverage that can quench the constantly recurring thirst of the elect. This river is a second symbol taken from the paradise of Genesis.⁴ In the paradise of the Apocalypse the river of life is again Jesus Christ,⁵ and this "living water," with its unceasing flow, is at

¹ Rev. xxii. 19, R.V.

² This immortalization by successive stages solves a difficulty that exists with respect to the first man. It is sometimes asked, Why did he not take of the fruit of the tree of life before his disobedience, the fruit of this tree being at his disposal as well as that of all the rest, with a single exception? We are in a position to answer that he might have taken of the fruit of the tree of life, for it was the habitual use of the fruit which immortalized, and not an exceptional eating of it. If it be still objected that all kinds of fruit served for the sustenance of Adam's life, we reply that the special virtue of the tree of life was that it prevented both body and soul from growing old, the privilege attributed to the fabulous fountain of perpetual youth.

³ *La Révélation de Saint Jean*, par F. de Rougemont, p. 373.

⁴ Gen. ii. 10.

⁵ In the Apocalypse the tree of life is placed "in the midst" of the paradise, in order to indicate its supreme importance. The "midst" of a

the same time the image of a perpetual life. It is added, "He that will, let him take" of it. An optional immortality is thus distinctly formulated. A life indefinitely prolonged is a gift offered to all who desire to take possession of it. It appears in three words¹ on the last page of the Bible, as a summary of the whole Bible so far as it relates to immortality.

Both the tree and the river in paradise represent that which here below is represented by the elements of bread and wine; the body, the blood, the life of the only Mediator between God and man. For ever the members will depend on the Head, for ever the branches will derive their sap from the Vine, for ever the redeemed will say: "If I live, it is not I, but Christ who liveth in me."

If our brethren of the contrary opinion will allow us to say so, in heaven itself immortality will remain conditional; this is demanded in the interest of human freedom, and it is also required by the majesty of him who alone possesses ontological independence.²

As for the wicked, the Apocalypse deprives them of the symbol of immortality because in reality they will not become immortal. Since the tree of life, according to M. Godet, symbolizes the immortalization of the bodily life, the bodies of the wicked, being deprived of this sustenance, cannot be immortalized. Moreover, the eating of the fruit of the tree of

thing serves as a symbol of that which is most essential in it, the very condition of its existence, as, for example, the heart in the human body. In the prophecy of Ezekiel the sanctuary is placed in the centre of the future Jerusalem. In the wilderness the tabernacle was in the midst of the camp. In Genesis the tree of knowledge of good and evil is in the midst of the garden of Eden, a *test* being the purpose of that primitive abode. In the apocalyptic paradise this tree no longer exists, the test being over and temptation at an end.

¹ *Ho thelōn labeto.*

² "Jesus alone has direct access to the supreme source. The life which he draws therefrom, humanly elaborated and reproduced in his person, becomes in him accessible to men. It is thus that he becomes for all the *bread of life*. Only, if this is to give life, it is necessary that it should be *eaten*. . . . The true God, the living Father, gives himself to one alone, but *in him* to all who will partake. . . . The life that he communicates to the believer is not, then, of an exclusively moral nature; it is his complete life, corporeal as well as spiritual, his entire personality."—Professor F. Godet, *Commentaire sur l'Évangile de Jean*, 1865, ii., pp. 131, 134.

life is, as we have just seen, a symbol of the *soul's* communion with God; it is therefore the perpetuation of the soul's existence that is in question. Not having this sustenance, the existence of the souls of the wicked will be suppressed; succumbing to starvation, body and soul, they will utterly die.

Returning now to our starting-point, going back from the end of the Apocalypse to the beginning of Genesis, leaving the paradise regained to re-enter the paradise lost, we can better understand the teaching of the narrative of Moses: God banishes Adam from the tree of life to make him understand that sin tends to bring the whole man under the dominion of death. Such, too, we believe, is the sense which will suggest itself naturally to all unprejudiced minds.

Besides, if the soul were immortal, would it have been really merciful to put an end to the life of the body? The soul in man is that which feels and suffers the most. According to the traditional dogma, when once separated from the body, it continues to be tormented; it will suffer all the more because, left alone to its sorrow and remorse, it will no longer have the diversion of the smaller consolations furnished by physical enjoyments. It would be astonishing that God, who puts an end to the sufferings of the body by causing it to die, should manifest no compassion towards the soul when separated from the body. Nor is this all, for, according to the traditional teaching, on the day of resurrection the body which has been taken from the suffering soul will be restored to it, and both together will be forthwith plunged into a perpetual bath of fire and brimstone; and the executioner is the God who, we are told, desired to diminish the suffering of the man by a brief separation of soul and body! He would begin by sparing his sinful creature the obligation of living for ever here below; after which he would impose upon him the obligation of living for ever, body and soul, in hell-fire! His ferocity would recoil for a moment, only in order to act with the greater vigour! No! this God is an idol of the imagination, cast in the mould of a pagan philosophy. The pretended mercy of such a God makes us think involuntarily of the refined cruelty of the beast of prey, which, after having seized its victim, lets it go for a moment only in order to seize it

again when it tries to escape, and then tear it to pieces. But then the victims of the feline races are not imperishable, and it is even said that by a kind of fascination they are brought into a state of unconscious catalepsy under the paw that pounces on and plays with them; unhappily, however, the unconscious catalepsy forms no part of the traditional dogma. Better the mediæval executioners! After having for a long time tortured their victim, they had a sufficient remainder of humanity left to give him the finishing stroke.

To the partizans of the traditional dogma there still remain three resources:

1st. They may assert that deprivation of the tree of life and physical death were for man not an alleviation of his misery, but a chastisement. Under this hypothesis what would be the purpose of the final resurrection of the bodies of the wicked? Would it have for its object the diminution of the punishment at first aggravated?

2nd. Or perhaps the traditionalists will give here to the word *life* the sense which they attribute to it in so many passages; they will make it synonymous with holiness and consequent bliss. Then, God would have banished Adam from the tree of life lest he should become holy and eternally happy! There is no need to refute such an absurdity.

3rd. Or, lastly, will it be said that the tree of life was a symbol of enjoyment? We have already remarked that this tree did not exert any sensuous attraction, it had only a single property: namely, to perpetuate existence. This characteristic is brought into bold relief by the fact that the tree is described as being able eventually to immortalize even impenitent sinners.¹

Resist as we may, we are brought back to the Conditionalist interpretation. While reconciling the texts, it equally reconciles the divine goodness with human freedom. God offers his benefits, immortality included, without imposing them. The wicked, after the final judgement, will die body and soul; such is the biblical teaching. We rejoice that it is so, because the compulsory immortalization of the wicked would be unworthy of the goodness and of the power of God.

¹ Gen. iii. 22.

IV.

We now approach the subject which gave occasion for Professor Godet's article. Was the apostle Paul a Conditionalist? Professors A. Sabatier and Ménégoz, Pastor Causse and M. Charles Babut, had answered this question in the affirmative.¹ M. Godet gives a negative reply; he brings forward in support of his negation certain arguments which we now proceed to examine.

§I. I CORINTHIANS. XV.

At the outset M. Godet contests the interpretation given by M. Babut to the apostle's declaration: "If Christ hath not been raised . . . they which are fallen asleep in Christ have perished (*apōlonto*)."²

According to M. Babut, "there cannot be any doubt as to the meaning of this passage . . . the apostle certainly does not mean that the dead believers suffer in hell through eternity, but that they will never live again, that they have disappeared, that they are annihilated." The apostle's reasoning would be as follows: Man can perish, body and soul. Being a sinner, he is on the way towards complete destruction, he is about to return to the nothingness whence the Creator had called him; but the divine mercy intervenes. Jesus has promised and

¹ A. Sabatier, *Mémoire sur la notion hébraïque de l'esprit*; Paris, 1879. E. Ménégoz, *Le péché et la rédemption d'après St. Paul*; Paris, 1882. Ad. Causse, same subject, *Revue théol.*, 1883, p. 624. C. E. Babut, *De l'enseignement de St. Paul sur la vie future*, *Rev. théol.*, 1885, p. 419. According to M. Ménégoz: "The whole theological system of Paul falls to pieces" if we understand *death* to mean "anything else than the annihilation of existence." —*Op. cit.*, p. 84. Pastor Causse says: "For us, too, the complete destruction of the sinner appears to be within the logic of the Pauline system." M. Babut is of the same opinion. He says: "We consider it probable that the doctrine of Conditional Immortality expresses Paul's view better than any other. . . . There is here a fact which dominates the discussion, namely, that in the numerous passages in which Paul speaks of the fate of the wicked (twenty-five of these have been counted) he constantly uses terms that express the idea of destruction. Once or twice he speaks of tribulation and suffering, but he does not add that the suffering will be endless. . . . Assuredly the annihilation of the wicked will not be immediate nor free from pain; they will suffer before their death and in their death; but this is just what is understood by the partizans of Conditional Immortality."

² 1 Cor. xv, 18.

reconquered for us an eternal life, and the Almighty has set his own inimitable seal to the Gospel by raising Jesus from among the dead. This resurrection has become the pledge of our own; but if Christ was not raised, the divine seal to the work of Jesus would be lacking, his promises would be illusory, and there would be nothing to guarantee a life beyond the grave. The faithful dead would be utterly lost. Buried in the profound lethargy of Sheol, they would never awake from that heavy sleep. They would be for ever dead.

M. Godet, on the contrary, thinks "that it is of the moral condemnation of the unpardoned sinners that Paul means to speak when he says: *apōlonto*, they have perished." We know that from the traditional point of view, for which M. Godet appears as the advocate, "moral condemnation" is the same thing as "eternal torments," so that in this passage Paul would have taught that if Christ hath not been raised, his disciples have no other prospect than eternal torments in hell, "the tortures of perdition."¹

Here our difficulties again begin. We submit to M. Godet :

I. A philosophical difficulty. M. Godet sees in the words "they have perished" the notion of eternal torments. This notion supposes a native and inalienable immortality; but with that hypothesis at its base the apostle's reasoning would not bear examination. If Paul had allowed that the soul is naturally imperishable, those Corinthians who were disbelievers in the resurrection would have had a triumphant argument against him. They would have said: "If Christ hath not been raised, we know what we can fall back upon: there remains to us the immortality of the soul. Indeed, we much prefer this alternative to the promise of a body which would be a new encumbrance, a prison, and a chain. With Platonism, we can do better without a resurrection. Christ hath not been raised, for the dead do not rise, but those who have died in moral communion with the Christ will certainly not therefore be the more miserable; on the contrary, they will taste the ineffable joys of pure spirits, and such joys are the worthiest and the best. With an immortal soul, the idea of again

¹ F. Godet, *Commentaire sur la 1re Épître aux Corinthiens*, in loco.

entering into the bonds of a material organization may well be despised and discarded.”¹

If Paul had admitted the immortality of the soul, how, we ask, could he have replied to these opponents of the resurrection? The bold confidence of his dialectics evidently proves that he ignored, and meant to ignore, the Platonic hypothesis. He treats it with supreme contempt. He leaves it to Kant to demonstrate its weakness. He will not even listen to it, as witness his categorical declaration that if Christ hath not been raised, he will himself seek no consolation in the pretended privileges of pure spirits, but will renounce his apostolic career and become a materialist, an Epicurean rather than a Platonist. It is clear enough: “If Christ hath not been raised, those who have believed in him will never rise again, and if the dead do not rise again, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.” Yes, we shall *die*! In other words, we shall no longer exist, for here it is evident that the word *die* must mean *cease to exist*, and cannot mean anything else. Well! the apostle distinctly declares that if Christ hath not been raised, all revelation would be nothing but imposture, and that he, Paul himself, would think it wise to adopt the materialist standpoint of the Epicureans. He would no longer look for either pleasure or pain beyond the tomb, and would think only of enjoying the present. This categorical declaration implies incontestably that Paul had no belief in a separate and independent immortality of the human soul. It was therefore impossible for him to believe in eternal torments, in the supposed case that Jesus had not been raised. According to him, in that case there is no other prospect than nothingness.²

¹ These opponents of the doctrine of resurrection may be considered the precursors of modern rationalists. They, indeed, wished to be Christians, but without admitting any miracle. It is by resting upon a native and absolute immortality of the human soul that the Protestant rationalists reject the miracle of bodily resurrection, both of Jesus and of his followers. A resurrection of the body seems useless to one who follows the logic of the Platonic dogma, as the most beautiful body is in that view only a brilliant prison for the soul.

² Here, again, M. Gretillat, a colleague of M. Godet, does not fail to support our interpretation. He says: “Paul, according to the Master’s own example, intentionally ignores any middle term between the certitude of

Evidently the opponents of the resurrection, against whom Paul was arguing, were Platonists. M. Godet himself recognizes the fact.¹ It therefore necessarily follows that the apostle was an anti-Platonist. It seems indeed as though it were his intention to make a clean sweep of Greco-Roman spiritualism when he adds: "If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable." Considering the context, this declaration implies that if Christ had not been raised there would be no hope of immortality; for if there were a separate immortality for the soul, the believer might and ought to hope for a better life beyond the tomb, even though Jesus had not been raised from the dead; and the apostle could not truly say that apart from the resurrection the Christian is "of all men most pitiable."

At the close of this chapter, again, the apostle says: "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord." What is the basis of this argument? Why will the labour not be vain? Because the soul is immortal? Not at all; but because there is to be a resurrection, as the apostle has just demonstrated. The whole of this chapter, all Paul's epistles, all that is recorded in the book of the Acts of his teaching, in fact the whole Pauline system, is arranged and directed in the sense of Conditional Immortality.

As a good Israelite, everywhere and always, the apostle

bodily resurrection at the last day and the absolute negation of all reality in the future and of all morality in the present. The philosophic and Platonic solution of an indefinite survival of the soul might appear, and in fact be, sufficient for the education of man to a rudimentary degree of religious knowledge and development, but it did not for a single moment arrest the apostle's thought. The Pauline and biblical point of view admits only two alternatives: either the future reunion of the soul with the body or its total disappearance: *ara kai koimēthentes en Christō apōlonto*" (1 Cor. xv. 18; cf. 32).—*Op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 569.

¹ *Commentaire*, 1 Cor. xv. 1, 34, 44; Rom. viii. 24, *sq.* Some commentators have thought that Paul was opposing the Epicureans by reducing their materialism to an absurdity. But the apostle simply states the principles in which the Epicureans gloried as being the highest wisdom; they would have subscribed to his statement. So far from ridiculing them, the apostle declares that he would share these principles if he had not faith in a resurrection. It seems therefore evident that his argument was not directed against the Epicureans.

tramples under foot the pretensions of those Greeks who, insolent worms of the earth, arrogate to themselves the immortality which is the prerogative of the Almighty. It has been observed that Paul had but little success in the city of Socrates and Plato. Perhaps he would have succeeded better if he had believed in the immortality of the soul. What an admirable exordium *ad homines* this doctrine might have furnished for his great discourse on the Areopagus! He might have said: "Men of Athens, you are heirs of the sages who have had the glory of proclaiming the immortality of the soul. Their belief was far from certitude; Socrates sometimes doubted the value of his hope, and talked of it as a splendid peradventure. I bring to you, Athenians, the certitude which he failed to attain. I announce to you a fact fitted to confirm the faith of your ancestors." Introduced in such a fashion, the doctrine of the resurrection might have met with a better reception. Presented by itself, this doctrine only provoked mockery; the audience dispersed, and the great apostle could not finish his discourse. Will it be said that this was his own fault, and that he ought not to have deprived himself of a powerful means of gaining sympathy? The same must then be said of Peter and John, who, living in the midst of Greeks and Romans, never sought any support for the Gospel in the heathen idea of immortality. But no! if the apostles never spoke of native immortality, it was not a mistake on their part, but simply because they did not believe in it.

II. Our second difficulty is lexicological. Already, in treating of the threatenings of Jesus, we have shown that the true sense of the verb *apollusthai* is to come to an end. The interpretation that is offered in opposition misreads this historical and grammatical meaning, and gratuitously substitutes that of being eternally alive, guilty and miserable.

III. This raises also a grammatical difficulty. The aorist *apôlonto*, which seems to be quoted against us, recoils against the traditional interpretation. The Greek aorist is used to designate an action done at a precise time which can only be fixed by the context, an act accomplished once for all, "already consummated," according to the expression used by M. Godet himself. How can he fail to see that the aorist of verse 18

excludes the traditional interpretation? From the traditional point of view, perdition is not an *act*, but a *state*; it is never consummated, the process is never ended, the torment once begun continues without intermission and without end; the condemned remain perpetually in a *state* of perdition. To be correct from the dogmatic point of view, which is that of M. Godet, instead of the aorist, the tense employed should have been the present: *apolluntai*, "are in the way of perdition"; or the perfect: *apolōlasi*, "are in a state of perdition," the dead "remain lost"; or even the future: *apolountai*, "they shall perish,"¹ their sentence at the day of judgement shall be perdition, they will incur at the last the moral condemnation which is perdition; but as Winer says: "the aorist never has the sense of future time." By a curious coincidence, this same form *apolonto* occurs twice in the same epistle, where it is used of those who "perished" by the serpents and under the strokes of the destroyer.² These passages relate to facts occurring and completed at a precise time indicated, and not to a permanent state. In our text, then, it is necessary to translate as in the English revised version, "have perished," and not "are perished."³ Those who fell asleep perished, ceased to exist at the very moment when they went to sleep. The verbs are both in the aorist.

In the face of these three difficulties M. Godet's single argument breaks down. He brings forward verse 17: "If Christ hath not been raised . . . ye are yet in your sins," and from this he concludes that the faithful dead also would be in their sins, and consequently eternally guilty and miserable. But that is not so. According to the apostle's reasoning, if

¹ As, for instance, in Rom. ii. 12. For the correlation of the four tenses, cf. 1 Cor. xv. 18, 20; xi. 30; 1 Thess. iv. 13-15.

² 1 Cor. x. 9, 10. Cf. Eccles. xlv. 9: "There are some who perished, as though they had never existed."

³ The versions of Rilliet, of Darby, and of Stapfer deserve honourable mention in this respect, as well as the English R.V. M. Godet also translates faithfully, but a *petitio principii* vitiates his interpretation. He may retort that we, too, have a preconceived notion, namely, the negation of a native and inalienable immortality; but he will not deny that in strict logic it is for him who affirms to prove his affirmation. M. Godet has not told us upon what grounds he bases his *implicit* affirmation of a native and indefectible immortality. Upon him, then, lies the *onus probandi*.

Christ hath not been raised there is neither resurrection nor immortality, the Gospel is only an immense deception, the apostles are false witnesses, the believers are dupes, their faith is a chimæra, they are yet in their sins. Consequently there is no future life, death is about to swallow them up, the death which has already stricken their brethren defunct, the death which is the wages of sin, death absolute, which is the end of life, and of all life. Moral condemnation will neither immortalize the living nor resuscitate the dead. Far from it, this executioner whom we call death will destroy the soul as well as the body. The fate of the dead is fixed; they, too, were yet in their sins, and therefore when they died they "perished." As we have seen, Sheol has only an infinitesimal value, which becomes practically equal to zero when all hope of resurrection has vanished.

Is not this prospect sufficiently dismal? To imagine in addition an enforced immortality, to suppose that these poor deluded believers would have to undergo eternal suffering, is a baseless hypothesis which is as revolting as it is chimerical. But especially it is anti-exegetic, for, as we have just seen, it is at the very antipodes of the apostle's thought. Even when denouncing the greatest sinners, he goes no farther than to declare, even weeping, that "their end is destruction" (Phil. iii. 19). The Church had not as yet formulated the doctrine of perpetual tortures, doubtless so much more efficacious!

But to return to 1 Cor. xv. 18, the anti-Platonist interpretation has prevailed even with some commentators who were not Conditionalists; as, for instance, Cruden, in his Concordance,¹ Wesley, Adam Clarke, Webster and Wilkinson, Bloomfield and Bengel. Bengel says: "The dead believers would be as though they had never been;"² Bloomfield's words are: "There is an end of them and all their hopes;" and the learned and pious Olshausen says:

The fact should be borne in mind that the apostle does not admit the possibility of a survival of the soul apart from a bodily organism.

¹ Under the word "perish" Cruden gives six meanings, the sixth of which is "to be deprived of being," 1 Cor. xv. 18 being quoted as an instance.

² *Gnomon, in loco*: "*Nulli sunt . . . ac si nunquam fuissent.*"

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is totally foreign to the teaching of the Bible; neither the name nor the thing can be found there. Corporal limits have been assigned to all created spirits.¹

Professor Godet's last resort is to an *à priori*; he argues that, even in the supposed case that Christ had not been raised, the eventuality of an annihilation of the believers who had died in the Christian faith could not have been present to the mind of the apostle, seeing that in other passages he speaks of a judgement to come for all men. But M. Godet can hardly fail to see that in the apostle's thought this prospect of a universal judgement is always based upon the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This he expressly declares in his discourse on the Areopagus, saying that God "will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead."² If therefore Christ had not been raised, the assurance of a universal resurrection would be wanting, and there would be nothing to prevent the admission into Paul's mind of the idea of an annihilation even of the believers who had died in the Christian faith.

Starting from the Platonic *à priori*, M. Godet at last goes so far as to endow "all men," including the reprobate, with "a body unassailable by death." We are disposed to ask whether these last three words might not be reduced to one: immortal, imperishable, or indestructible, in Greek *athanatos* or *aphthartos*, and whether the apostle would not have been startled at hearing such epithets applied to the wicked.³ So far from obtaining incorruptibility, *aphtharsia*, the wicked "sow to the flesh and of the flesh reap corruption," *phthora*.⁴

¹ *Biblischer Comment., in loco.* Cf. Olshausen on Luke xvi. 24, "*Die Bibel kennt weder den Ausdruck Unsterblichkeit der Seele noch die moderne Unsterblichkeitslehre.*"

² Acts xvii. 31.

³ "Incorruptibility, the quality of being exempt from all decay, from all chance of death (*aphthartos*), belongs really to God alone (Rom. i. 23; 1 Tim. i. 17). None, therefore, but Christ, the image of God, could communicate such a gift to the world (2 Tim. i. 10)."—Reuss, *Hist. de la théologie apostolique*, vol. ii., p. 238; edition of 1852.

⁴ The word *phthora* implies the destruction of the individual being. It cannot here apply to the decomposition of the body, since that is the fate of

In this chapter the apostle declares that "corruption, *phthora*, doth not inherit incorruption, *aphtharsia*." Incorruptibility, an endless life,¹ is a glorious state of existence, the exclusive privilege of God, of Christ, and of believers, the supreme object of the saints' ambition, synonymous with eternal glory. The parallelism of verses 42 and 43 assimilates the two nouns *glory* and *incorruption*. Will it be maintained that the wicked will be raised again to glory?

If M. Godet remains faithful to his point of departure, he will find himself compelled to see in Paul a Universalist.² The "all," *pantes*, of verse 22, according to M. Godet, includes all men without exception; but only a few lines lower down, in verse 28, we find this very same word in the declaration "that God may be all in *all*." This would, then, clearly be universal salvation. Conditionalism avoids this danger at the outset by limiting the "all" to the total number of those who will live again in Christ.³ This interpretation is supported by the great authority of Reuss, who says: "All those who are in Christ will have life precisely because they are in Christ, who is the author or cause of this *henceforth indestructible* life. . . . From the Gospel point of view there is no life but in God and in Christ; apart from that there is only death. The believers,

the bodies of believers also. In the *Phædo*, sect. 55, *phthora* specifies the destruction of the soul, its eventual annihilation.

¹ *Akatalutos*, Heb. vii. 16.

² M. Godet is opposed to Universalism. In the article with which we are now dealing he expresses himself thus: "M. Babut rejects Universalism, or the doctrine of the final salvation of all, and that for reasons which appear to us to be unanswerable."

³ Verse 22 might be paraphrased thus: Just as all men who die are branches of a tree whereof Adam is the trunk, so all men who are spiritually united to Christ are branches, which in the spring of the resurrection will receive a new life from the one sole vinestock. Adam represents *all* those who have inherited from him their physical life; Jesus, on the other hand, represents *all* those who in him have received the divine and imperishable life. As Adam is the father of the whole human family from the terrestrial point of view, so Jesus is the father of that select portion which, being animated by a superior life, will alone in the end represent the human race. "The two *pantes* include only those over whom the two powers extend."—Hofmann. "It should be observed that Christ can hardly be looked upon as the firstfruits of the risen reprobate; and verse 23, which carries on the argument begun in verse 20, clearly deals only with believers."—F. Godet, *in loco*.

the regenerate, alone will live ; the rest pass through temporal death to death eternal . . . there is here no question of the resurrection of the unbelievers.”¹

On this point M. Godet appeals to the Apocalypse, which, however, seems to us to support Reuss, making “the second death” complete and final destruction, the fate of the reprobate.² According to M. Godet, these very reprobate would on the contrary become “unassailable by death.” But is it possible to be at the same time the victim of the second death and unassailable by death ?

A day will come, according to Paul’s assertion, when death shall be destroyed. The Apocalypse teaches the same thing in symbol, saying that death shall be “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.”³ The meaning evidently is that thenceforth none will die ; but before that consummation there will have been some dead, who will one day be “as though they had never been.”⁴

We must not omit to notice the fact that in this chapter M. Godet several times translates the Greek verb *katargein* by *overthrow* (Fr., *abattre*).⁵ This is not quite correct. For *overthrow* the New Testament employs the verbs *kataballein* or *kathairein*. As we have had occasion to remark, death is not merely overthrown, it is abolished.⁶ This expression is applied

¹ *Épîtres pauliniennes*, i. 260 ; *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne*, 1852, ii. 234, 241. We have put in italics the two words *henceforth indestructible* as being decisive in the sense of our argument. “It would be to pervert Paul’s thought even to contradiction if we were to apply to the resurrection of the unjust that which is said in 1 Cor. xv. 42-47 of the nature of the resurrection body.”—C. Babut, *Rev. théol.*, 1885, p. 397. In verse 52 “the dead” must mean the dead believers only, since their resurrection precedes the change of the living believers, as this also precedes the universal resurrection, which M. Godet places in verse 24.

² xxi. 8.

³ xx. 14.

⁴ Obad. 16. Cf. Ezek. xlvii. 11. The traditional dogma does not suffice to explain Rev. xx. 14. “Hades” in this verse cannot mean those who are therein, since the previous verse states that “Death and Hades” have already delivered up their captives. On the other hand, universalist optimism contradicts the Scripture, which speaks of the persistently wicked as being the stillborn children of humanity. The prophecy of Ezek. xlvii. 11 seems to allude to the remembrance which will be left behind by these victims of sin. How numerous are the green and worm-eaten fruits that fall to the ground before even the most abundant gathering !

⁵ *Comment. sur la 1re ép. aux Cor.*, vol. ii., p. 35.

⁶ 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54 ; 2 Tim. i. 10 ; Rev. xx. 14 ; xxi. 4.

to Satan,¹ and we have an interest in the final suppression of that terrible enemy. Cremer, whose authority in the domain of New Testament lexicology is of the highest rank, says: "*Katargein* is a favourite term with Paul, who gives to it the emphatic meaning of to annihilate, to put an end to, to bring to nought." And this meaning is quite evident in such a passage as Rom. vi. 6: "Our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away;" on which Reuss observes: "This relates to the annihilation of the evil element in man, of sin, and of the flesh."² Thus also in Ephes. ii. 15 we read that Christ has "abolished (*katargēsas*) in his flesh the enmity, the law of ordinances."³

Our conclusion with regard to this chap. xv. of 1st Corinthians must therefore be that of M. L. Bonnet, who says:

It is perfectly clear that in the whole of this chapter St. Paul does not speak at all of the fate of unbelievers, for there is no occasion for him to do so. He is dealing only with those who "are fallen asleep in Christ"; and by the resurrection of the Saviour he proves that they will not remain the prey of death, but will be delivered from it completely, body and soul, by the fulness of life. This enabled him to answer triumphantly the negations which he knew were current in the Corinthian Church. If he is here silent as to the fate of the condemned, it is because their resurrection is not a manifestation of the life of Christ in them, but a judgement. Elsewhere the apostle plainly teaches their fate.⁴

¹ Heb. ii. 14.

² Reuss, *Histoire de la théologie apostolique*, vol. ii., p. 163; edition of 1852. Against this meaning of the verb *katargein* M. Godet quotes Luke xiii. 7, the barren fig-tree that *cumbers* (*katargei*) the ground. But, in the first place, this is an exceptional use of the verb, which everywhere else in the N.T. might be translated *cause to cease* or *abolish*, representing the Chaldee *battel*. Further, even here this notion is not absent, for the value of the ground is for the time being *abolished* by the presence of a barren tree, and, in the view of an owner impatient to obtain his revenue, to abolish the revenue of the land is much the same as to abolish the land. In his commentary on Rom. vi. 6, M. Godet himself adopts the word *destroy*, and Grimm's *Clavis* translates *ut aboleatur corpus*; elsewhere M. Godet translates *cease to be*. We may also quote Rom. vii. 6: "We have been discharged from the law," *katargēthēmen*, the law is *abolished* so far as we are concerned. M. Stapfer translates: "The legal bond has been broken, *we are dead* to that law which held us captives."

³ Segond gives: "Having annihilated" (*anéanti*); M. Stapfer translates: "Annihilating (*anéantissant*) by his death."

⁴ *The New Testament with comments, in loco*. Professor Beet, in the *Expositor* for Feb., 1890, says as much.

In vain does M. Godet labour to make the apostle's text accord with the ecclesiastical dogma on the point in question; it is a hopeless task. In reading his commentary we seem to be spectators of a struggle of the intensest interest between the old Platonist dogmatics and an impartial exegesis. The masterly talent of the interpreter does not succeed in harmonizing them; they are irreconcilable enemies, and in the end exegesis must prevail.

§2. EPHESIANS II. I.

We now pass with our Professor from the Corinthians to the Ephesians. Ye were "dead through your trespasses and sins," says the apostle to the Ephesians. M. Godet speaks of this assertion as if the Conditionalists had used it as an argument in favour of their doctrine. In fact, as a reference to the beginning of this controversy would show, they have simply maintained that this passage proves nothing against them.¹ It was invoked as a proof by the traditionalists. We think we have shown that they have no right to claim it as a proof.² M. Godet does not here introduce any new element. His position is fundamentally the same as that of Professors Oehler and Beck.³ Like them, he thinks that eternal death, the second death, results from "the consummation of . . . the separation of the soul from the spirit."⁴ No doubt the con-

¹ See, for example, *Pauline Theology*, by H. L. Hastings. This work, of which the special object is to bring together all the apostle's declarations on the subject, does not even mention Eph. ii. 1. The Conditionalists have never quoted Rom. ii. 9 in support of their opinion; they do not therefore claim that "all the expressions which Paul uses to designate the state of condemnation resulting from sin imply the suppression of existence;" they only maintain that the precedent suffering *does not exclude* the final suppression of the obstinate sinner.

² See Chap. VII., sect. vi., p. 206. Here, and elsewhere, our readers will no doubt excuse some repetitions. In dealing with age-lasting errors which are still supported by eminent men, it is not the first stroke that kills. It may be useful to return to the charge.

³ See p. 86, note 4, and p. 202.

⁴ *Commentaire sur l'Épître aux Romains*, vol. i., p. 442; vol. ii., p. 164. M. Godet defines life, in the sense of life eternal, as "a fully satisfied existence in which all the faculties find their full scope and their true employment." Death would then be the suppression of *all* scope for the faculties; much the same thing as the suppression of the faculties themselves and the end of the individual. Is it possible to conceive of a life without faculties?

science, or at least the moral consciousness, forms a part of the spirit as understood by M. Godet. Would it be indiscreet to inquire of our venerable antagonist what are the probable destinies of the human soul after this definitive divorce, how it could be anything else than an irresponsible machine, what would be the use of such machines in the universe, and how the indestructibility of such machines can be consistent with the conception of a God who is to be "all in all"? Would the survival of a soul without consciousness of itself deserve to be honoured with the name of immortality? It seems to us that, notwithstanding such a survival of vital functions, there would no longer be a human person, and that M. Godet has implicitly conceded to us the very point of our discussion.

The passage relating to the death of the Ephesians is, as we have said, susceptible of another explanation. It may contain a prolepsis, the anticipation of the final and total death which threatens the obstinate sinner. We have devoted several pages to the support of this interpretation. It has been maintained in principle by eminent commentators.¹

We will now simply mention a passage which seems decidedly to turn the scale in favour of that view; it is the verse in which Paul applies to the unconverted the epithet "weak" or "sickly."² If the apostle sometimes calls the same individuals at the same moment of their existence "dead" and sometimes "sickly," it follows that the death of which he speaks is decidedly proleptic. Jesus, too, calls those "sick" whom on other occasions he calls "dead."³

Let us for a moment leave the texts and go to the heart of the matter. Were the unconverted Ephesians absolutely dead in a moral and religious sense? No, for Paul himself declares

¹ See Chap. VII. H. Cremer, also, in more than one passage combats the notion of "spiritual death." He says: "*Thanatos* in biblical Greek has not the commonly admitted sense of moral and spiritual insensibility. . . . This sense, profound as it looks, would blunt the point of the expression in question. . . . *Nekros* in Eph. ii. 1, 5 and Col. ii. 13 does not signify what has been called 'spiritual death.' It signifies devoted to death, condemned to death."

² Rom. v. 6; cf. 1 Cor. viii. 11. The apostle says also that they are perishing (*apollumenoî*), on the way to perish, not yet altogether perished (1 Cor. i. 18; 2 Cor. ii. 15; iv. 3; 2 Thess. ii. 10).

³ Matt. viii. 23; ix. 12, etc.

of the heathen that “their conscience beareth witness”; in a conscience that speaks, is there not a principle of moral life? The unconverted Jews had “a zeal without knowledge”; in religious zeal, though blind, is there not a symptom of religious life? When heathens or Jews are converted, the identity of the moral personality is maintained. In a graft the sap of the wild stock does not perish; it is modified, transformed, not replaced. If the moral personality has survived, that is a proof that it was not altogether dead.

Moreover, even if the notion of *spiritual death* be preferred, it proves nothing against Conditionalism, which might adopt it without inconvenience; but the proleptic meaning is preferable, and is supported by competent authorities.¹ M. Godet’s accusation of “wresting” the apostle’s words in this instance seems to be out of place. With such names as those of Messrs. Meyer, Cremer, and Babut as a shield to break its force, his stroke will not hurt us.

Embarrassed by a preconceived idea, M. Godet has said that spiritual death is “a state of interior death.” But tautology is not definition. On the same page that same death appears as “a spiritual impoverishment, a miserable condition.”² This is surely an impoverishment of the notion of death; and with this impoverished sense how are all those passages to be explained in which the apostle exhorts us to “put to death” the old man? Is not the object in view the complete and final extirpation of sin? Is Reuss mistaken in saying that it is “the annihilation of the evil element in man, of sin, and of the flesh”? In the matter of good lexicology, Conditionalism must carry the palm, as being the only theory which leaves to the same word everywhere the same fundamental meaning. Once more we challenge our opponents to quote a single text in which *death* and *die* do not designate the breaking up of an organic connection, the cessation of a life or lives.

¹ M. Babut also has clearly indicated the incontestable use of prolepsis in Paul’s writings. Article quoted, p. 399.

² *Rev. théol.*, 1886, p. 8.

§3. 2 THESSALONIANS I. 9.¹

In the numerous passages in which Paul tells of the fate of the wicked (twenty-five have been counted) he constantly uses terms which suggest the idea of destruction. Once or twice he speaks of tribulations or of suffering, but he does not add that the suffering will be endless.²

M. Godet, nevertheless, persists in considering the apostle as a believer in eternal torments; yet he can only adduce two texts from the Pauline epistles in support of his opinion: 1 Cor. xv. 17, which we have already studied, and the one we have now to consider, which, according to M. Reuss, is the only one that seems to support the traditional dogma.

We translate this passage thus: "They shall suffer their punishment, an eternal destruction, by means of the presence of the Lord and by his glorious power." The reference is not to a life spent apart from the presence of the Lord, but to a life destroyed by the brightness of his coming.³

According to M. Godet:

An eternal destruction produced by the face of the Lord and by the glory of his might would more naturally designate a state of misery, resulting from the permanent removal of that face and that glory, than an instantaneous and crushing stroke caused by his look and followed by an eternal abolition of being.

The question that here arises is whether the Greek words *apo prosōpou* are to be translated "away from the face," or "by means of the presence." Here again the Old Testament will explain the New. The quotation of a few passages may, perhaps, suffice to warrant the rejection of the proposed interpretation: "Fire goeth before the face of the Lord, and burneth up his adversaries round about." "Thou shalt make them as a fiery furnace in the time of thy presence (lit. thy

¹ See also as to this passage *Supplement* No. XIX.

² C. Babut, article quoted, p. 416.—Mr. Hastings, from whom M. Babut takes this number of twenty-five passages, treats the Epistle to the Hebrews as one of the Pauline letters.

³ This is the meaning adopted in the revised Ostervald. Our interpretation is also in harmony with that of M. Renan, whose impartiality in relation to this point is beyond question. See the quotations on pages 295, 296, and Gretillat, *op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 614.

face), the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath.”¹ In the passage before us, Paul says of the wicked that which he says a little later of their chief, the Antichrist: “Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his presence.”²

The recently discovered Moabite stone also comes to the support of our exegesis. The Moabite king, Mesha, puts into the mouth of his god Kemosh words which threaten Israel with an “eternal destruction.”³ It is incontestable that these words must relate to an eternity, not of the act of destruction, but of the effects of that act.

M. Godet further asks: “How can the word *eternal* be applied in the Scripture, which has nothing to do with ontology, to a state which would be no more felt nor perceived?” In reply to this question, we need only quote a single text: “They have made their land an astonishment, and an eternal hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and shake his head.”⁴ Is not that an eternal reproach which will be at last neither felt nor perceived, the land being reduced to the condition of a desert?

Paul slips away from traditional orthodoxy. In order to keep him in it, M. Godet finds himself obliged to appeal to the apostle’s subordination to the Master. He says: “If the Lord has decided the point before us, the opinion of the disciple is no longer in question.” This mode of argument seems to us open to three objections. First, it is an intrusion of the dogmatic element in a question of exegesis. Secondly, the converse might equally well be maintained, thus: the apostle knew the Lord’s thoughts; as the apostle was a Conditionalist, therefore the Lord was too. Lastly and especially, this

¹ Ps. ix. 3 [4]; xxi. 9 [10]; xxxiv. 16 [17]; xcvi. 3, 5; Lev. xx. 6; Lam. iv. 16; and Isa. xxx. 27, a passage which M. Renan translates thus: “Behold, Jehovah cometh from afar, his face burneth, the fire is kindled, his lips are full of wrath, his tongue is like a devouring fire, his breath as an overflowing torrent.”

² 2 Thess. ii. 8; cf. Rev. xx. 9. In 2 Thess. i. 9 the apostle uses the term *olethros*, which in Plato’s *Phædo* is employed to indicate the suppression of the existence of the soul; *olethros psychēs*, the destruction of the soul. § 41.

³ Verse 7 of the inscription on the stone.

⁴ Jer. xviii. 16; cf. xx. 11; xxiii. 40; xlv. 12; xlix. 13; Dan. xii. 2. See also M. Byse’s note on p. 30 of *Notre Durée*.

suggested proof starts from a premiss which is a gratuitous supposition; Jesus has not "decided" in favour of unconditional immortality. In complete accordance with our foregoing study, M. D. H. Meyer has shown that the teaching of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew is Conditionalist.¹ The same character is even more evident in the other Gospels, particularly in that of John.²

V.

Does there exist any necessary correlation between moral goodness and the immortality of believers, between moral evil and the final destruction of the reprobate?

M. Godet answers this question in the negative. He says: "From the biblical point of view, the notion of moral goodness is absolutely distinct from and independent of the notion of existence or metaphysical being." If that were so, there would be no reason in the nature of things why the sinner should not continue for ever to exist. This opinion seems to us contrary both to the Bible and to reason. A universal analogy teaches us that every created being is subject to certain conditions of existence; it can only continue to exist by virtue of a double series of relations: interior relations between its several constituent elements and exterior relations with other beings; these relations are founded on the very nature of things, and to suppress the natural and normal relations of a being would be to destroy the being itself. Now, the tendency of sin is to

¹ *Le Christianisme du Christ*, pp. 307, sq., 486, 491, sq. In Matt. xxv. 46 Jesus speaks of an *eternal punishment*, while Paul in 2 Thess. i. 9 specifies the nature of that punishment by calling it an *eternal* or *definitive destruction*.

² As to the Conditionalism of the Master as well as of the apostles, see our Chap. IV., sects. iv. to vii. According to M. Ménégoz, the essential thesis of Conditionalism is the keystone of the arch of Paul's theological system, a system which "falls to pieces if by *death* anything else be understood than the destruction of existence."

In *Supplement* No. IX., § 1, will be found a note relating to the apostle's willingness to be "anathema" for his brethren, which cannot well be understood except from our point of view. According to the traditional doctrine, Paul would have been willing to become one of those reprobate who fill eternity with their blasphemies; while, according to the Conditionalist theory, the apostle, even in the very moment of perishing as anathema, might have exclaimed: "Glory to God and good will towards men!" A sublime self-devotion thus ceases to appear revolting and even inconceivable.

suppress these normal relations and to establish others which, being against nature, become more and more difficult, and at last become impossible, the ultimate result being the cessation of every function. A railway locomotive which runs off the rails soon comes to a stand. Every disorder tends towards the destruction of the individual being. Gross passions brutalize a man and cause his death. The egoist ends by perishing in a sort of moral suffocation; excessive pride produces insanity.

Moses said: "I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil."¹ In other words, moral good perpetuates life, moral evil produces death. Nor is it of a mystic life that Moses speaks, for he also says: "This law . . . is your life, and through this thing ye shall *prolong your days*. . . . But if thine heart turn away . . . ye shall surely perish, ye shall *not prolong your days*."² In the book of Proverbs, too, it is said: "The fear of the Lord *prolongeth days*, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened."³

In the Hebrew language, moral evil is designated by words of which the etymology usually recalls notions of destruction or non-existence.⁴

The suppression of the sinner is spoken of as the supreme chastisement. The psalmist exclaims: "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"⁵ No one would stand, *i.e.*, no one would remain in existence; the answer is understood as being self-evident. God's blessing is upon "a

¹ Deut. xxx. 15.

² Deut. xxxii. 47; xxx. 18. See also iv. 40; v. 33; vi. 2, 24; cf. Ps. xxi. 4; xciv. 23; Prov. iii. 2, 16; ix. 11.

³ Prov. x. 27, etc.

⁴ *Ra'*, bad, wicked, from *raa'*, to break noisily; *shaah*, to devastate, whence *shav*, iniquity. *Hebel*, *rig*, *'avon*, *aven*, *tohu*, vacuity, vanity, inanity, lack of reality, nothingness, are also often used as synonyms for sin (2 Kings xvii. 15; Ps. xxxi. 6; Jer. ii. 5; Jonah ii. 8); the expression *habele shav*, lying vanities, refers to the idols used in the worship of false gods. *Nebalah*, crime, comes from *nabel*, to fade away, to waste; the godless, *nabal*, has the brain diseased. Gesenius connects this root with *nafal*, to fall. The "son of Belial" is a man of nought, worthless; later on Belial became one of the names of Satan (2 Cor. vi. 15). So also in Greek *phaulos*, worthless, then bad, whence the German *faul*, rotten. In French, too, the word *mal* is derived from the Sanskrit root *mar* or *mal*, to crush, grind. *Virtue* is the supreme force of man, *vice* designates primarily a deficiency, a lack, a feebleness bordering upon non-existence. See, too, *Supplement* No. V., § v., note.

⁵ Ps. cxxx. 3; cf. Ezra ix. 15.

thousand generations" of those who love him and keep his commandments, while he punishes "to the third and fourth generation" those who hate him.¹ If the punishments of the future life were to go on for ever, it would logically be required that God should punish here below to the thousandth generation; but it appears from the biblical teaching that the rebel families are devoted to extinction, their chastisement ceases at the fourth generation because in the fifth the guilty family no longer exists. Idolatry and immorality bring about the ruin successively of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, yet the fall of the latter is delayed on account of a longer prevalence there of faithfulness to the divine commandments.

The immortality of the good alone is not merely a "Jehovistic" doctrine, it forms part of the Gospel. It is found in the saying of John: "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."² It is the idea of permanence that is here made prominent. Paul quotes the ontological promise of the fifth commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land." Elsewhere it is said that sin leads to decomposition and corruption,³ and that the barren tree shall be cut down, cast into the fire and burnt.⁴

M. Godet supposes that this correlation between good and immortality and between moral evil and the cessation of existence is of Platonic origin. Some traces of it are indeed found in the writings of the founder of the Academy;⁵ it is,

¹ Ex. xx. 5, 6.

² 1 John ii. 17.

³ Gal. vi. 8.

⁴ Luke iii. 9; xiii. 9; John xv. 6. As to the fundamental meaning of *life* and *death* in the Bible, see *ante*, Chap. III., sect. ii.; Chap. IV., sect. iii.; Chap. VII., sect. vi.

⁵ *Republic*, Bk. X., 608 c.—"Dost thou acknowledge that there are good and evil?—Yes. Hast thou the same idea of them both as I have?—What idea? That evil is all that which destroys and corrupts, good that which preserves and improves.—Yes. Hath not every being its evil and its good? Ophthalmia, for example, is the evil of the eye, fever is that of the whole body, blight that of wheat, rottenness that of wood, and rust that of iron.—That is true. Doth not evil spoil the thing to which it attaches itself? Doth it not end by dissolving and totally destroying it?—Yes."

Being misled by a preconceived opinion, Plato does not apply the same reasoning to the human soul. Because there are wicked men who prosper and display great skill to the end of their days, Plato concludes that the soul is indestructible. We believe, on the contrary, that sin interferes with the exercise of the soul's faculties, and that, in accordance with the law of retro-

however, regrettable that he was not consistent on this point ; but it is evident that Plato was not sufficiently Conditionalist, since he held that hell was eternal, and so he immortalized even great criminals. If he had identified good with being and evil with non-being, Plato would logically have concluded that the wicked will be finally destroyed. He has not done so ; and that proves that he did not entirely confound the moral with the ontological notion.

Neither do we confound these notions ; we do not identify them, as M. Godet erroneously accuses us of doing. We simply assert that sooner or later they must enter into close correlation one with the other, and that immortality is to moral virtue that which physical longevity is to healthiness of body.

The inconsistency that we have pointed out in Plato is also chargeable against some of the Church Fathers. They retained something of the biblical principle, but unhappily their Platonism made them inconsistent like Plato himself. Augustine said : “ If we only think it out, evil diminishes existence, and tends towards non-existence.”¹

In a study of facts we find further confirmation of these principles. For instance, it is evident that drunkenness and impurity debilitate and often kill their victims. It has been objected that the ambitious have achieved wonderful success. We would ask in reply whether such success is the same thing as the absolute immortality of which we are speaking. “ The triumphing of the wicked is short,” as it is said in the book of Job.² “ Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit

gression, this interference must end in the cessation of the soul's functions, although the shortness of man's life upon earth does not always permit us to perceive this final result. But the Bible reveals to us that which, thus enlightened, reason confirms. The analogy of the laws of nature lends its support to the same teaching. This accord constitutes a Christian positivism, which permits morality to take its stand upon what we may call concrete and objective ground.

¹ *De moribus Manich.*, Bk. II., § 2, *sq.*; cf. *Conf.*, Bk. VII., c. 12. The most catholic philosopher of our time, Auguste Nicolas, professes the same doctrine. He says : “ Evil has not a substantial existence ; it is an accident, not an essence. It is the not-good, *non æquitas iniquitas*. Most of the expressions used to designate evil are privatives : *failure, defect, injustice, iniquity, disorder*, etc.”—*L'Etat sans Dieu*, p. 40 ; 1873.

² Job xx. 5.

before a fall," adds the book of Proverbs.¹ We give their full value to these texts. Recent works have proved that the unmeasured ambition of Napoleon I. led him to acts of folly. The faculties of the great captain were enfeebled as an effect of imprudences which shortened his days. King Nebuchadnezzar lapsed into insanity at the very moment when he exclaimed: "Is not this great Babylon which I have built!" Alexander died at the age of thirty-three, a victim of the orgie in which he was celebrating his triumphs. Ambition is thus seen to be a pernicious fever, and physicians are well aware that an inordinate desire of greatness is one symptom of a mortal disease.

In practical life men of business have an instinctive sense of the intimate relationship which unites the notions of probity, stability, and prosperity. The fact that a commercial firm has had a long existence is an honour and a recommendation in their eyes.

M. Godet brings against us those recrudescences of energy which may occasionally be observed in evil-doers; but these can be explained by the sinner's prodigal expenditure of the treasures of life with which he is entrusted. How many madmen there are who senselessly risk their remaining all. We are told of the ever-powerful personality of Satan, but he is of all others the great prodigal. To us his resources seem inexhaustible, and his existence interminable, because we ourselves are but creatures of a day; the prophetic eye of Jesus saw Satan "as lightning fall from heaven." So also science predicts the end of the sun, although ten thousand years may elapse without the ignorant being able to perceive any evidence to support the assertion of the astronomers. Satan and his companions will in the end be destroyed; the Scripture declarations are clear on that point. The Son of God became man "that he might bring to nought . . . the devil," says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.² The apostle says that the devil is the serpent whom God "will crush under our feet."³ This striking metaphor puts aside the notion of an interminable life. Satan is a being already diseased. The eternal fire will

¹ Prov. xvi. 18; cf. xi. 2; xviii. 12; xxix. 23; Esther vi. 6; Dan. iv. 30, etc.

² Heb. ii. 14.

³ Gen. iii. 15; Rom. xvi. 20.

eventually dispose of this contingent and incorrigible created being. The fallen archangel will not lift his hand to heaven and say, as says the Eternal: "I live for ever!" There is nothing to guarantee to him an immunity which would put his existence out of all danger. The righteous and the regenerated sinners alone have the right and the prospect of becoming immortal. Perverted, degenerate, unnatural beings will not indefinitely pollute by their presence the temple of the universe. The memory of their terrible end will remain for the survivors as a wall built across the way to the abyss. In the end God will be all in all. The episode of evil in the history of the world is a dismal parenthesis, which God has permitted in order to provide scope for the exercise of liberty.¹

VI.

At the close of his article Professor Godet undertakes a defence of mystery, that last refuge for untenable dogmas. He says: "What we have to do is to listen, to watch, and to wait." To listen, yes; still, it is needful to understand that which is listened to. "The refusal to interpret and to comment upon the texts is a symptom of the approaching disappearance of a doctrine that is dying."² Eschatology has its place in a system of dogmatics, in the same way as dogmatics have their place in theology. Like every science, theology no doubt has its mysteries; but while humbly accepting the

¹ We are glad to note that M. Gretillat, in spite of his wish to remain agnostic on this point, inclines towards the same hope: "A biblical argument against the perpetual dualism of the existence of the good and of the wicked is that which I will call the optimism of New Testament prophecy, particularly that of St. Paul (Rom. v. 20, 21; 1 Cor. xv. 27 and 28)—an optimism which would apparently not be justified if God's right were to remain contested and his glory outraged by a considerable fraction of his creatures."—*Op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 619.

² Goblet d'Alviella, *Le rationalisme religieux aux Etats Unis; Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1 April, 1883. M. Goblet adds: "Thus it was that in the United States, at the end of last century, the ultra-Calvinists still repudiated the name of Unitarians, maintaining the necessity of allowing to remain indefinite certain points of doctrine, such as predestination, the eternity of sufferings, or the divinity of Christ. 'The biblical expressions only are suitable for the formulation of biblical mysteries;' such was the answer invariably given to their opponents when these challenged them to define their beliefs. But that position was untenable."

Gospel facts, it endeavours to systematize them ; its aim is to solve the difficulties, to harmonize the texts, to explain the apparent contradictions, to define the indefinite. In a word, theology seeks to reduce to its smallest limits the domain of the incomprehensible.

The synthesis, a synthesis in conformity with the nature of the Christian fact which is the subject of theology, can and ought to be sought for in the Christian datum itself, among the elements of which that is composed, and which it furnishes.¹

Christian wisdom does not consist in the mechanical repetition of unintelligible phrases, which will speedily degenerate into *shibboleths*, mere passwords. The Bible excludes neither reason, nor experience, nor the study of nature. On the contrary, it enjoins upon us to "add to our faith knowledge."² And why should M. Godet, who has sounded the depths of more than one profound mystery, that of the incarnation for instance, debar us from the less transcendent study of our own last end? The suppression of eschatological research would mutilate theology. Besides, in the absence of a sound eschatology, every man will secretly make an unsound one for himself ; there is no one who has not in his mind some kind of eschatology. Of all the different parts that make up dogmatics, eschatology remains the most indefinite and nebulous ; it is chaos. With regard to this it may be said, as of the epoch of the Judges, that each one does that which is right in his own

¹ A. Gretillat, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 190. M. Jean Monod has expressed himself to the same effect : "Faith, taking possession of the whole man, stimulates his thinking power ; he wishes to account to himself for that which he believes ; to the *pistis* he would add *gnōsis*. When faith proceeding from the inner recesses of the soul expresses itself, that expression ought to be as closely as possible in conformity with its contents, ought not to neglect any element in it, but ought to give to each element its relative value. This involves considerable intellectual labour, which has been called theology, and which is continually going on within the Church : *fides quærit intellectum*. Should the Church fail to carry on this labour incessantly through the medium of its thinkers and theologians, it would be likely to see erroneous and superstitious traditions or vain imaginings taking the place of the realities of the faith. The faith has no need to fear the efforts of thought ; science, which is the truth of things, can never be in real conflict with faith, which unites the soul with the God of truth."—Lichtenberger's *Encycl. des sciences relig.*, article *Foi*.

² 2 Pet. i. 5.

eyes. Yet it is of great importance, for it is the crowning of the edifice of religious thought.

The proposition made by M. Godet amounts to a truce on the basis of the incomprehensible, the contradictory. We will take care not to accept it; the more so as it would be entirely to the advantage of the traditional dogma. *Beati possidentes*, as Prince Bismarck said. A superstition of pagan origin has formulated a certain dogma which is affirmed in many an authoritative book, and still keeps its ground in popular teaching.¹ A conspiracy of silence would be altogether in the interest of that dogma. The proposal might be compared to that of the claimant of a contested inheritance who should say: "I take possession of the assets; as to the liabilities, they are doubtful; I leave them to my competitors." We are reminded of the argument of a personage in the fable: *Quia nominor leo!* In our view, this claimant is only a usurper, the traditional dogma is based upon a colossal error, and is a frightful calumny against the heavenly Father, a stronghold of Satan, our *delenda Carthago*; but let the servants of the truth, through good and evil report, continue unceasingly to blow the gospel trumpet, and the walls of this spiritual Jericho will, sooner or later, crumble to their foundations of clay.

VII.

We have completed our examination of the objections raised by M. Godet in the *Revue théologique* of Montauban, but as our honoured opponent has renewed his attack in an American symposium,² an imperious duty obliges us to follow him across the Atlantic. We shall only be following his example in thus pursuing the contest.

In addition to the arguments already put forward, the article in the American symposium contains some fresh elements which we will now proceed to notice.

We observe that the author's conviction seems to be considerably shaken. It appears to him that the study of the biblical

¹ See *ante*, p. 268.

² *That Unknown Country*; or, What living men believe concerning punishment after death, etc. C. A. Nichols and Co., Springfield, Mass., 1889. 51 essays, 943 pp. On this publication see p. 20.

texts leaves an impression in favour of the traditional dogma of eternal torments, but that even this conception "suggests great difficulties, both philosophical and biblical."

M. Godet begins by combating Universalism. On this point we are naturally in agreement with him; but in this combat we cannot help noticing the superiority of Conditionalism, for after having declared that "love is doubtless found in all God's ways" (p. 400), on the very next page M. Godet says that love and justice "enter as factors either simultaneously or *successively* into all the dealings of God towards his creatures," thereby giving an advantage to the Universalists. These would rightly say that the divine perfections form an indivisible whole, and that if the love of God were entirely absent from hell, God would be in a sense divided, and that M. Godet would be found in contradiction with himself, for it could no longer be said that "love is in all God's ways." We have seen how, in the Conditionalist view, the divine goodness prevails even in eternal chastisement.¹

We gratefully acknowledge that M. Godet speaks of Conditionalism with great respect; he "cannot but be struck by its plausible aspect," and says that from a purely rational point of view, "without the light of Christian revelation, it would seem difficult to arrive at any other conclusion."² But he proceeds to ask, "What is the good of this suffering in view of which God brings back the dead to life by resurrection, if it is to end simply in nothing?"

Conditionalists can reasonably reply that the partizans of the traditional dogma have no right to raise this objection, since a resurrection followed by judgement and eternal death is infinitely less repugnant to the Christian conscience than a resurrection immediately followed by eternal torments. But since our honoured opponent admits in principle the possibility of a further trial beyond the grave,³ we are in a position

¹ Chap. VII., sect. viii.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 405.

³ He says (p. 408): "Punishment, in the absolute sense of the word, will be visited upon those only who have resisted God's grace, not only in this world, but in the world to come, trampling under feet with full knowledge all the appeals of God's grace, thus committing the sin for which there remaineth no more sacrifice (Heb. x. 26)."

to give him a more satisfactory answer. The resurrection of the wicked may be explained as a last means of grace, and final destruction may be the fate of the most hardened only. The Rev. L. C. Baker, of Philadelphia, has very fully developed this view, which seems to be worthy of the most serious attention.¹ In fact, as appears by the original text, Jesus did not say that the wicked shall be raised for “damnation” (A.V.), but rather in view of a “judgement” (R.V.).² The phrase might even be translated “in view of a trial,” of an examination, a probation, literally a “crisis.” There is nothing to prevent the supposition that a whole life-time will be devoted to this definitive classification. If a bunch of grapes is tainted with rottenness, it is not thrown away so long as it contains some grapes in good condition. So also God does not entirely reject the man who is not yet altogether corrupt.³

“That God is able to destroy the soul is certain,” says M. Godet, but he argues that, being simple in its nature, the soul is not liable to dissolution. If we were to admit this argument, there would still be the possibility for the human soul to perish by extinction.⁴ But to us it little matters to know the way in which the soul perishes. We see that the least accident may suffice to deprive a man of his self-consciousness; but, finally deprived of self-consciousness, the man is as it were decapitated. No reawakening is to follow the second death. What is the force of an objection based on the simplicity of the soul in presence of this dismal and interminable sleep?⁵

Professor Godet maintains that for the soul to perish is not for it to be destroyed, but to live in a state of moral separation from God. To *perish* is to *live*! The paradox is violent, but it is more than a paradox: it is a contradiction. Jesus threatens the soul with an end essentially similar to that of the body. A human body that perishes is necessarily and finally

¹ *The Mystery of Creation and of Man*, Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1884; *The Fire of God's Anger*, Philadelphia, 1887; *Words of Reconciliation: a monthly periodical*, Philadelphia.

² John v. 29. See, too, a letter from the learned Professor Stokes; E. White, *op. cit.*, preface, p. vii.

³ Isa. lxxv. 8.

⁴ See p. 52.

⁵ See Chap. I., sect. vii.; Chap. III., sect. iii.; Chap. VII., sect. v., vi.; *Supplement* No. III., § 6.

abolished ; the analogy therefore requires a final abolition of the soul that perishes ; and, since M. Godet admits that " God is able to destroy the soul," the prospect of such an abolition forces itself upon the reader of the Scripture texts that speak of the final perdition of the soul.

Imitating an ineradicable habit of our opponents, M. Godet plays upon the word *annihilate* ; he argues that because the body is not annihilated when it dies, the soul will not be annihilated in the second death ; but that is only an equivocation, not to say a sophism. It is true that death does not annihilate the atoms of which the body is composed, but it annihilates the combination of those atoms, a combination indispensable to the existence of the body. The analogy, therefore, requires that the final death of the soul should involve the suppression of the conditions indispensable to the existence of the soul.¹

Endowed with a sensitive conscience and a tender heart, M. Godet is revolted by the shocking disproportion apparent in the traditional dogma : a fault committed in a moment of forgetfulness entailing torments without end. He endeavours to explain the incredible severity of such a retribution by saying that " this punishment is inflicted on sinners not only for the sin as a past act, but for the rebellion as an actual and persistent state." Like M. Godet, we believe that the moral character of a man has a tendency to become fixed, that the sinful soul may take a definite bias, and that the malady of sin may become incurable. We even believe in an eternal chastisement, the impenitence of the sinner leading to irremediable consequences, by involving him in complete destruction. The reasoning of our honoured opponent would be correct if it did not start by begging the question. The perpetually persistent state of rebellion supposes an inalienable immortality of the rebel, but, as we have seen, this supposition has no solid foundation. If M. Godet will renounce this *à priori* he will find himself naturally led to the point of view that we are defending.

In that case he will see that this point of view offers a more reverent homage than does the traditional dogma to the wisdom

¹ See p. 32.

of the Creator. Foreseeing that his creatures might abuse their liberty by persistent rebellion against him, and not being willing to expose them to the danger of eternal torments, God made them not absolutely immortal, but only capable of being immortalized. An obstinate rebellion will lead to the final destruction of the rebels, but this punishment, the result of the sinner's own act, is exactly proportioned to the sin committed ; while it respects human freedom, it does not include anything that can revolt the religious consciousness.

Conditionalists see in the doctrine of eternal torments a shocking calumny against the heavenly Father ; they believe that by the dissipation of this calumny the progress of the Gospel in the world would be greatly facilitated. M. Godet looks upon "the antipathy of the natural man" as the great hindrance to the success of the Gospel, and thinks the scandal caused by the ecclesiastical dogma of eternal torments only a pretext for the rejection of the Gospel. Even if that were so, we ought in charity to take away from the sinner this pretext which blinds him to his real danger. The question, however, is not whether unbelievers will remain such when the cause of offence is removed, but whether we do well to cause the offence by maintaining a doctrine as revolting as it is erroneous. It seems to us that there is here not only offence taken, but offence given, the elimination of which, if in any way possible, is a pressing duty.

Somewhat embarrassed, and being more and more sensible of the weakness of the cause of which he has made himself the champion, M. Godet has recourse to an argument which in his previous article he had disdained to use ; he quotes this text from the Apocalypse : "The smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever."¹

Let us examine the value of this proof invoked *in extremis*.

¹ Rev. xiv. 11. Dogmaticians generally agree in attributing only a half value to quotations from the Apocalypse. For example, Luther was of the opinion of those Church Fathers who rejected the book, and it was the only book of the Bible on which Calvin did not write a commentary. M. Godet himself abstains from claiming the aid of another text of this book which is often invoked by American orthodoxy. See *Supplement* No. XX.

VIII.

REVELATION XIV. II.

Enormous errors have been founded upon isolated verses. Those words of tender solicitude, "Compel them to come in," served as a pretext for the horrors of the Inquisition. When offering the bread to his disciples at the last supper, Jesus said: "This is my body;" and from these words the Roman Church has deduced the contradictory dogma of transubstantiation. Luther saw in them what he called consubstantiation, and had the dismal courage to refuse the fraternal hand of Zwingli, who could not admit his strange explanation. In our own day we have heard of a zealous though ignorant member of a Young Men's Christian Association who compared St. Paul to Christopher Columbus because a French version of the Acts states that the apostle and his companions "discovered the island of Cyprus." A study of the context would usually enable the reader to avoid such errors. If Luther had but turned the page, he would have noticed that Jesus, seeing his mother and the disciple whom he loved near to her, said to Mary: "Behold thy son;" in other words, him who will be to thee as a son. Just so does the bread in the Lord's Supper become, or rather represent, to us Jesus himself.

For the proper understanding of a book, the ideas that were prevalent at the time of its publication ought to be studied. We will proceed to do this with respect to the isolated verse which M. Godet quotes against us. The whole force of this passage as a proof depends upon an illusion. M. Godet seems not to have noticed that there is here an image borrowed from the book of Isaiah, and that Isaiah himself was inspired by the story in Genesis of the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Of Edom he says: "The streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoke thereof shall go up for ever."¹ At the present time there is in the land of Edom neither fire nor smoke, so that everyone has to admit that the

¹ Isa. xxxiv. 9, 10; cf. Gen. xiv. 10; xix. 27, 28.

prophet made use of hyperbolic expressions. So also did Jeremiah when he spoke of the fire that should devour the palaces of Jerusalem and should “not be quenched.”¹

Why, then, should not the author of the Apocalypse have the right to use hyperbolic expressions in his turn? He certainly has that right, seeing that his book bears an eminently poetical character. But it is said that in this case there cannot be hyperbole because the soul is immortal; that, however, is the very question in dispute, such an answer begs the question, it is an attempt to keep us in a vicious circle.

Must we repeat that which we think we have already sufficiently established? At the time when the Apocalypse was written, Jews and Christians still agreed in repudiating the pagan and insolent idea of a soul as imperishable as God himself. In his *Talmudic Dictionary*, Dr. Hamburger shows that the Synagogue “categorically rejects the opinion which makes immortality a consequence of the nature of the soul.” According to Dr. F. Weber, the Rabbis have generally taught the final destruction of the impenitent. According to Maimonides, whom the Jews call their second Moses, “the wicked shall be completely destroyed; it is the death from which there is no return.” In a lesson given at the University of Geneva, the Chief Rabbi Wertheimer stated not long ago that “the principle of an immortality inherent in the soul has been, is, and always will be repudiated by the Semitic races, because for them God is all.”²

For the endurance of endless torments there must be indestructible life; as the wicked do not possess such a life, how can there be for them endless torments? Besides, it has been shown that in the Bible the adjective “eternal” and the adverbial phrases which express eternity, “for ever,” “for ever and ever,” etc., indicate an indeterminate duration, whereof the maximum depends upon the nature of the persons and the things. Infinite when predicated of God or of beings who live by faith in communion with him, that duration is only relative for other beings. The sufferings of rebellious creatures cannot

¹ Jer. xvii. 27; cf. xlix. 18. See p. 324, note 1.

² See Chap. III., sect. xiii., *sq.*

be prolonged farther than is compatible with their perishable nature.

The language of the Apocalypse being symbolical, it is necessary to seek the metaphorical meaning of the smoke spoken of in our text. Smoke is a formless relic of an object that has been decomposed by the action of fire. It can only be an emblem of the remembrance left by the object destroyed. A perpetual smoke would therefore symbolize the ineffaceable remembrance of an irreparable ruin. Thus it is said of the great harlot that "her smoke goeth up for ever and ever."¹ But this same harlot has previously ceased to live, she has been "killed," her flesh has been devoured and her bones consumed. This harlot is a city, a government opposed to God, a temporal power. As M. L. Bonnet says: "It tells of a destruction without any hope of restoration."²

This does not by any means exclude long-continued antecedent sufferings. Written under the strokes of the frightful persecution by Nero, the Apocalypse accentuates the sufferings reserved for persecutors. It seems to us that the Conditionalist exegesis can accept this datum without striking on the fatal rock of dualism. The text of the Apocalypse brings face to face simultaneously the two notions: torments and ultimate destruction. Conditionalism reconciles these two notions; this fact enables it to claim the authority of the Apocalypse as on its side, whatever may be the value assigned to that authority.

The notion of utter destruction can scarcely be contested. Several times over the Apocalypse speaks of a "second death." As the first death brings to an end the life and ultimately the very existence of the body, the analogy would evidently lead to the supposition that the second death will bring to an end the life, and even the existence, of the soul. Two imaginary beings, Death and Hades, are cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. To what end? Will it be said that, by metonymy, these names are used to represent the victims of Death and the inhabitants of Hades? This evasion is inadmissible, seeing that, according to the immediately preceding

¹ Rev. xix. 3.

² Cf. Rev. xviii. 9, 18; Isa. xxxiv. 10; Dan. vii. 11, *sq.*

verse Death and Hades have already given up all their captives.¹ It will surely be admitted that an imaginary personage and an empty receptacle cannot be tormented. The Conditionalist interpretation seems unavoidable. When the obstinate sinners shall have perished, death will be abolished. This is also, as we have seen, the teaching of St. Paul.

We may here quote the admission of a loyal opponent previously mentioned, Archdeacon Farrar, who is an adherent of a mitigated Universalism. He says: "I do not accept the doctrine of Conditional Immortality, but its supporters at least have furnished an impregnable bulwark against the necessity for any man to believe in the hell of Tertullian, Dante, or modern revivalists. . . . I cannot find one single text in all Scripture which, when fairly interpreted, teaches, as a matter of faith or in any way approaching to distinctness, the common views about endless torments."²

IX.

It would seem that M. Godet himself would gladly be rid of the horror of the traditional dogma, for at the close of his article he proposes, by way of hypothesis, a theory which is surely somewhat heterodox, viz., that an impersonal existence of the rebellious soul might be maintained after its personality has been destroyed. M. Godet compares this soul to a glass vase fashioned by a workman, which, being accidentally injured, is put back into the furnace and is transformed into an incandescent mass which the workman can remodel so as to answer to his thought. Such would be the lot of the man who has refused to enter into the divine plan. In the furnace of suffering he would lose the sense of his identity, but from the insciant substance God might cause to spring forth a new personality. As M. Godet puts it: "May there not be at the bottom of this ruined personality an impersonal human existence which God can take back into his hands to draw from it by a subsequent developement a personality which shall

¹ Rev. xx. 13.

² *Mercy and Judgement*, pp. 423, 424, 474.

answer to his thought ?”¹ What does this mean, except that the first personality would be abolished ? But the suppression of the personality is precisely the supreme chastisement according to the Conditionalist view. When once the personality is destroyed, what value could there be in the remainder, if remainder there be ? Absolutely none ; at least, none for the individual who thus, along with his identity, has lost his autonomy, without which he is no longer a man, but a thing.² And what has become of the eternal torments of which we understood M. Godet to be the champion ? They have come to an end ! Well and good ! But in vain does M. Godet introduce into his closing sentence the recommendation to his readers not to “ try to anticipate the light to come ” ; is not the hypothesis that he has just formulated itself an anticipation, and the half-opened door through which will speedily escape all the denizens of the orthodox hell ?

So, then, it would seem that M. Godet has been opposing the Conditionalists on both sides of the Atlantic, and that the result of all his contention is a solution of the problem very much like their own ! The result of all these passages of arms is a practical surrender on his part ! What can be the explanation of this great and sudden concession ? We must suppose that he has at last perceived the weakness of the traditional arguments, on which he had previously set too high a value. His own researches must have more or less consciously converted him ; his opposition gives place to a note of acquiescence. We admire in him the skilful general who, after having done all that depended upon him to maintain an untenable position, at last builds a bridge over which, perhaps to-morrow, the army under his command will be able to retire in good order.

¹ Rev. L. C. Baker and M. Ott have propounded hypotheses somewhat similar. See Chap. II., sect. viii., § 12, and note on p. 363.

² See pp. 33, 86, 202, 235, and *Supplement* No. III., § 6.

CHAPTER XII.

HARMONIES AND BENEFITS OF THE TRUE BIBLICAL TEACHING.

I. The mystic Sphinx and the divine Œdipus—II. Recapitulation of the results arrived at in the preceding chapters. The Conditionalist solution of the problem is warranted by philosophy, exegesis, and the history of dogmas—III. As an evangelical synthesis, it bears the character of a theodicy, and it replaces in their true light several doctrines generally misunderstood : § 1, The notion of God and predestination ; § 2, The notion of man ; § 3, The Christological notion ; § 4, The notion of salvation ; § 5, Eschatology. Conditionalism establishes the law of exact proportion in future retribution—IV. It tends to reconcile science with faith, and reason with the Gospel : § 1, In the person of their most illustrious representatives, the schools of duty and of liberty have declared their adhesion to this conception of the Gospel ; § 2, Guided by universal analogy and by the law of continuity, Christian evolutionists have adopted the same point of view ; § 3, A glance at philosophical pessimism ; Conditionalism furnishes weapons with which to combat it—V. Conditionalism in practical theology. It stimulates missionary zeal—VI. The conditions of moral and religious revival—VII. A prophecy in course of fulfilment—VIII. Duty of propagating a salutary truth—IX. Conclusion.

I.

THE Greek poets tell how the Sphinx, stationed upon the road near Thebes, proposed to the passers-by an enigma to be solved. Those who failed to give the right solution were devoured or cast into the sea. At last came Œdipus, who expounded the riddle ; then the Sphinx, defeated, cast herself down into the waves, and Thebes, being delivered from the monster, placed her liberator upon the throne.

In this ancient myth we may see an evangelical parable. The Sphinx represents death, the scourge of God, punishing the people's sins. The passers-by are ourselves, each one of us being called upon during this earthly pilgrimage to solve the enigma of the great beyond. The sea is the dreadful gulf

of nothingness which threatens the man who fails to solve the fateful problem. Jesus Christ is represented by Œdipus the deliverer, revealing the secret of death, overcoming and finally suppressing that last enemy. In Thebes is seen humanity, groaning under the tyranny of death, but already hailing in Jesus Christ the conqueror of that king of terrors.¹

The longer we reflect upon it, the more are we convinced that the true solution of the problem propounded at the outset of our study is presented by the Gospel. But we mean the Gospel taken at its source in heights above the point at which the current has been empoisoned by human traditions.

II.

In mounting to those heights we have gathered up a number of precious truths: the time has now arrived for binding the sheaf. We will use as a bond this master-thought, which arises out of our study as a whole:

MAN, WHO IS HEIR PRESUMPTIVE OF IMMORTALITY, WILL NOT ASCEND THE THRONE WITHOUT FULFILLING THE CONDITION, ENTERING INTO COMMUNION WITH JESUS CHRIST AND WALKING IN HIS FOOTSTEPS.

While keeping aloof from this, the only way, man is advancing by a slow and painful death-process towards the eternal night out of which he has arisen, and into which every being must sink again who does not live in the holy life of the living God. The believer alone receives, through the Holy Spirit, that vital force which conquers the second death. In support of this main thesis we have shown the following facts:

1. In this age of universal emancipation, wherever Christian thought has freed itself from the fetters of scholasticism, that which is provisionally called Conditionalism has presented itself as the true biblical teaching. Everywhere it wins the adhesion of an increasing number of generally esteemed theologians.

¹ The name Œdipus, meaning the man with swollen feet, leads to the thought of the stigmata of the victim on Calvary. As the mythological story goes, Œdipus, when a child, had his feet pierced and nailed to a tree by a servant of his father, Laius, King of Thebes.

2. It has also won the more or less close adhesion of a choice company of metaphysicians, men such as Rothe, Weisse, Lotze, De May, Charles Lambert, Charles Renouvier, François Pillon, and Charles Secrétan, to mention only the principal names. Christian anthropologists, biologists, and physiologists are in agreement with modern metaphysics on this point.

Without being founded upon the vain reasoning of the schools, Conditionalism has the support of those moral presumptions which testify in favour of an eventual survival beyond the tomb.

3. Our thesis is in conformity with the data of the Old Testament and with the twenty centuries of teaching in the Synagogue, the principal chiefs of which have not ceased to affirm that God is the only being truly imperishable. This teaching is contradicted only by some uncanonical books and by the Kabbalah, a pantheistic doctrine of Indo-Persian origin which has no official authority in orthodox Judaism.

4. So, too, the New Testament teaches that "God only hath immortality," and that the indefinite perpetuation of existence is the exclusive privilege of the man who doeth the will of God. Immortality, which in the New Testament is called *eternal life*, or by abbreviation *the life*, is the very subject of the preaching of Jesus and his apostles. The final suppression of the impenitent is but a corollary of this teaching.

5. Jesus reveals to us the secret of immortalization; his supreme purpose is to restore life to the dying, and to restore the capacity of life to beings whom sin has excluded from the conditions of an eternal life.

6. This same notion has supplied us with a key to the symbolism of baptism and the Lord's supper: it explains the deep meaning of these rites, which form, as it were, the escutcheon of the Church.

7. The elimination of evil and of evil-doers by way of gradual extinction is in conformity with the historico-grammatical meaning of the Scripture, with reason, and with universal analogy. The religious consciousness cannot but subscribe to this declaration of the apostle: "The wages of sin is death."

8. The earliest Fathers of the Church maintained the primitive teaching.

9. The doctrinal deviation of the later Fathers is easily explained by the surreptitious infiltration of the Platonic philosophy into the degenerate Churches. It is now generally recognized that since the second century that philosophy has been an important factor in ecclesiastical theology.

10. The theory of universal salvation falls to pieces as soon as the pillar that supports it is taken away; and that pillar is nothing else than the Platonic *à priori* of the emanation and eternal pre-existence of individual souls.

11. A similar *petitio principii* is found to be the basis of all the arguments brought forward in support of the traditional dogma and against an acquirable immortality. Biblical evangelism is summoned, under pain of forfeiture and deposition, to restore to the fundamental terms *life* and *death* their ontological value, of which they have been unjustly deprived in favour of merely accessory notions. The legitimacy of such a restitution is implied in admissions made by interpreters of various schools. We have recorded these declarations. In conformity with the Latin adage: *Patere quam ipse fecisti legem*, Protestant orthodoxy, which makes its appeal to the biblical text, must in the end draw the conclusion from that principle, must accept it or abdicate. The fact that our principal opponent has ended his long contest, as may be seen in the preceding chapter, by an implied adhesion to one of our fundamental theses, is, in relation to the coming evolution of orthodoxy, like that swallow which does not make, but foretells the summer.

III.

In brief, a verdict favourable to our hypothesis is given, as with a common accord, by philosophy in the measure of its competence, by revelation as contained in both Old and New Testaments, by the history of dogmas, and by the religious consciousness; these confer upon it the right to a place in Christian dogmatics.

Dogmaticians will arise who will reconstruct on this foundation the tottering edifice of traditional beliefs.

During many past years much confusion has prevailed respecting the origin and developement of this system of interpretation. Discovering that one of its results is to establish a doctrine of future retribution which is irreconcilable with belief in the eternal misery of the lost, the advocates of the latter opinion, naturally impressed with the magnitude of the cause at stake, have, not “for the space of two hours” but for a whole generation, filled the air with doubtless honest outcries against what they describe as the “miserable doctrine of annihilation,” and have persistently represented that this doctrine is the beginning and the end of our endeavours. It now, however, begins to be understood, after many years of misconception, that much more is concerned than a doctrine of future punishment.¹

To see in Conditionalism nothing but a question of future punishment was to depreciate the doctrine, to look only on the reverse of the medal. Judges whose competence and impartiality are beyond dispute have called immortality “the great question.”² In the Christian system, as presented by Mr. White, for example :

The idea of *life* occupies the central position, and is, so to speak, its generative principle. Immortality brought again within the reach of creatures who are rebellious, and so devoted to absolute death : that, in short, is the “glad tidings.” When once properly understood, this doctrine lets in a flood of light upon all the rest, which, grouping themselves around it, help in their turn to corroborate it and give it precision. Thus Christianity, which is so often mutilated by the narrowness of its teachers, appears before us in its true logical sequence and in its grand unity.³

It will become more and more evident that far from overturning evangelical teaching, the thesis that we are defending can only rejuvenate by regenerating it.⁴

We have already had occasion to remark that this thesis brings a renovating element into biblical theology and exegesis, by a more rigorous application of the important hermeneutic principle of the historico-grammatical interpretation. A glance which we are about to cast at the various branches of dog-

¹ E. White, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

² MM. Dupont-White and Ch. Renouvier, *Critique religieuse*, April and July, 1878.

³ Chas. Byse, preface to his translation of Mr. White's book, p. vii., *sq.*

⁴ See the opinion expressed by Dr. Dale in *Supplement* No. II.

matics may convince us that, looked at from this point of view, many a doctrine generally misunderstood presents itself in its true light. We will mention, for example :

§ I. THE NOTION OF GOD AND PREDESTINATION.

This notion is of the highest importance, since it is in the nature of things that the believer transforms himself into the likeness of the God whom he adores.

In every religion the chief moral force is the God whom it reveals and whose sovereignty it establishes. A sleeping Boodh sends nations to sleep. An impure Vishnu depraves all India. An infinitely terrific power hardens and alienates the people. A God of more intelligible justice and mercy will more powerfully "draw all men unto him."¹

The God of evangelical orthodoxy does not always set a good example. His charity is absent from hell, where, however, more than anywhere else, it would seem to be needed.² To doom to endless torments unhappy beings of whom it is certain that they will never obtain any advantage from their sufferings is hardly a charitable act. Their bitterest enemy could scarcely show greater hatred. Even if they are incorrigible sinners, everyone would like to know why the Almighty does not open to them the door of nonentity, out of which they never asked to be brought forth. And is that the God who commands us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to do good to them that hate us? A venerable Christian has acknowledged to us that he had passed half his life in questioning whether the orthodox deity were not the devil. Any way, the docility of those believers who here and there still adore this contradictory deity is marvellous. From the Conditionalist point of view, God, always charitable, manifests his compassion even in the terrible chastisement meted out to the most rebellious sinners. Bestowing life upon all as a provisional gift, he does not impose upon any one the perpetuity of that boon. Not being able to consult his creature before having called him into existence, he interrogates him when self-consciousness has been attained. He inquires whether the life received is appreciated, and whether the creature

¹ E. White, *op. cit.*, p. 493.

² See p. 225, note.

desires the conservation of that life on conditions that he has appointed. The gift of life will not be taken back unless the creature does what he can to deprive himself of it. On his side the Creator will do his part towards leading the ungrateful recipient to repentance. Thus does Conditionalism dispel the dark cloud that dimmed the notion of God. Even hell itself is no longer withdrawn from the omnipresence of an indivisible divinity. Like propitious stars, justice and goodness, holiness and mercy shine into the dark abode of which the disappearance is provided for by the eternal wisdom.

In connection with the notion of God let us take one of the most discredited among the Calvinistic dogmas, that of predestination to evil. At the present day who preaches it, either in Calvin's own city or in Scotland? An enforced immortality which devoted the wicked inevitably to eternal torments, gave an odious character to the divine decree. Put aside this element of error, and election will be nothing more than God's liberty in the initial distribution of his gifts. There is nothing more striking in nature, nothing more undeniable than this liberty, whereof no man has a right to complain, since every benefactor has the right to "do what he will with his own," showing favour to whomsoever he may prefer. An unequal distribution is even indispensable for the variety which embellishes the universe. In order to prevent the possibility of the prerogatives conferred being taken as motives for jealousy, God would have had to limit his creation to one single individual. In his munificence he promises to enrich indefinitely all those who make a good use of the gifts confided to them. But he will banish from his universe those who, in their ingratitude, refuse to accept the position that he assigns to them, or rather he will at last abandon them to the fatal consequences of their guilty folly. The predestination of the wicked may simply consist in the determinate purpose of the Creator not to oblige those to live for ever who obstinately plunge themselves into death. The predestination of the righteous would be the determinate purpose and promise to give "eternal life to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption"; those will be the elect who will fulfil the required conditions. These purposes, at the same

time unchangeable and conditional, would leave intact the liberty of man, an intelligent mite going and coming at his will within the narrow precincts of his perishable dwelling.

For the repression of abuses in dealing with property some modern codes limit a father's testamentary power; but the heavenly Father, who can never abuse his rights, has evidently reserved full power to himself. He has created in the world hills and mountains, a Pascal, a Newton, and myriads of little or medium intellects. Let us not speak of the disinherited: there are none; all have a share. If privileges exist, it is because without inequalities God could not have created two beings differing one from the other. Even if we imagine two exactly alike, the one who is placed on the left might find occasion for being jealous of the one on the right, or *vice-versâ*. Granted the existence of two beings, privilege cannot but exist also; privilege is indeed the same thing as individuality. Let us, then, leave to God the liberty that he has assumed of entrusting to one five talents, to another two, to a third only one; let us leave to him also the liberty of taking away from this last his single talent if it is not used to good purpose. Let the hill, instead of envying the mountain, give thanks and rejoice that it is not a mere mound, and let the mound in its turn appreciate the unmerited advantage which raises it above the grain of sand.¹ The parable of the talents, to which allusion has just been made, teaches us, too, that capital well administered may increase. Prayer and work at all times open the ever-full treasury of divine gifts and graces.

Doubtless all are not equally endowed. But, first, each one will find a measure of happiness in the exercise of the several faculties that he possesses; secondly, each one will find an increasing measure of happiness in the truly divine prerogative which permits him to share his communicable advantages with others less privileged; and, thirdly, each one will find such an increasing measure of happiness in the attainment of advantages not at first possessed, or in the developement of those already possessed, that in the end he will no longer desire the lot of any

¹ This truth has found ingenuous expression in the liturgical prayer of the Israelites, who give thanks to God that he has not made them women. The women, for their part, give thanks to God that he has made them according to his good pleasure.

other. Why should we speak of envy? Such as we are, debtors to Providence, we shall all be animated with gratitude corresponding to the benefits of which not one among us is entirely deprived. Furthermore, we shall remember that every advantage creates a moral debt, and carries with it proportional obligations. The most richly endowed is, so to speak, the most deeply indebted.¹

§ 2. THE NOTION OF MAN.

To suppose with the poet that man is "A fallen deity, with memories of heaven," is to assign to him a nature consistent only with pantheism. From the biblical point of view, which we occupy, man has not fallen from heaven, having never been there. He is not a part of God, but only a perishable creature endowed with a certain aptitude for immortality. Sin, the parent of death, has diminished that aptitude, and will in the end destroy it, if not itself rooted out. The wild tree that bears only acid fruits is valuable only on condition of being grafted; if, endowed with liberty, it refuses the graft, it is good for nothing except to be burnt. In the spring-time the ground is strewn with the vine shoots cut off by the vine-dresser, but when autumn comes the vine shows no sign of having suffered by the pruning; this vine is an emblem of the human race. A being of an intermediate nature, as Theophilus of Antioch expresses it, risen above animality and a candidate for immortality, man has power to choose between progress and retrogression, between the nothingness that is behind him and the imperishable life that is before him. In this domain God has granted him liberty without reserve.

This notion, which opens up to us the most sublime prospects, shuts out the titanic conception of a being who, when punished by the Monarch of the universe, would avenge himself by forever pouring forth an inexhaustible torrent of curses and blasphemies.

¹ It may here be noticed what a light is thus thrown upon the social problem.

§ 3. THE CHRISTOLOGICAL NOTION.

A contributor to the *Témoignage* has affirmed that in Conditionalism "the divinity of Christ is superfluous."¹ There could not be a greater mistake. It is precisely upon the divinity of Jesus Christ that our hope of immortality depends; from our point of view there is much greater need for his divinity than there is from the traditional standpoint. It is, indeed, possible to conceive that the devotedness of a man might suffice to deliver us from impending ills, were they even eternal, and to procure the healing of our bodies or our souls. A created being may be able more or less to give happiness, to aid in our sanctification. But to communicate life eternal to a perishable creature is the work of the Almighty alone. If, therefore, we obtain in Jesus an eternal life, in our view he can be no other than God himself manifest in the flesh. From the biblical standpoint there is no life apart from the Word, of which Jesus was the incarnation. This creative Word animates as well as enlightens every man that comes into the world. Unconverted sinners have no other light than the twilight afforded by Christ, the Sun of souls, not yet visible on their horizon or already set below it. For us Jesus is not merely something, he is everything. One of the principal characteristics of the doctrine that we are defending is that it exalts the unique glory of him whom the apostle Peter calls the Author of life.² Thus to enforce a doctrine and bring it into bold relief, does that look like hostility to it, does that make it seem superfluous?

We believe, indeed, that from the standpoint of an inevitable immortality it may be easily shown that the essential divinity of Jesus Christ is by no means an indispensable dogma. It would suffice to see in Jesus a model man and the guide who brings back the erring travellers into the right way. But a doctrine that is not indispensable is in great danger of being rejected. A few biblical passages, the authority of which is contested, will not suffice to support it. In order to become

¹ M. Ménégos, in a review of our work entitled *La Fin du mal*, No. of 10 Aug., 1872.

² *Archégon tēs zōēs*, Acts iii. 15. Grimm, *Clavis N.T.*; Eng. R.V. margin.

unassailable, the dogma of the divinity of Jesus Christ needs to be placed upon a Conditionalist foundation.¹

§ 4. THE NOTION OF SALVATION.

Salvation originally signified conservation.² Conditionalism restores to this term its primitive meaning. In the traditional dogma the accessory notion of happiness usurps the whole position, the result being that Christianity has incurred the reproach of eudemonism.³ The Gospel, which is more profound and more moral, relegates to the background the selfish notion of happiness. It puts man into a condition in which he may fulfil his sublime mission. It re-establishes the failing conditions of existence, restores the primitive hierarchy of our faculties, and thereby renders us immortalizable.⁴ The emblematic rites of the Gospel are explicable only from this point of view; they tell us of renovation and a new life; the notion of happiness is not brought out by them.

§ 5. ESCHATOLOGY AND RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE.

The Conditionalist principle lightens up this mysterious domain by fixing what may be called a standard of measure in the matter of penalties and rewards. According to the Gospel, this standard consists in a given capacity for action or feeling, to which Jesus in the parable applied the name of *talent*.⁵

At the starting-point the portions allotted vary according to the good pleasure of the master, who at his will endows the servants to whom he confides the administration of his goods.

The recompense consists in the increase or the multiplication of the powers of those who have well used their capital; the penalty will be a diminution, or, if deserved, a suppression of such and such a faculty, or even of all the faculties. The moral and religious use of our faculties prepares for us eternal

¹ On the specific divinity of Jesus Christ, see *Supplement* No. XXI.

² See p. 277.

³ A system which consists in recognizing personal well-being as the supreme motive of all actions. It is one of the names applied to the doctrine of Aristippus and of Epicurus.

⁴ See Chap. V.

⁵ Matt. xxv. 14-30; Luke xii. 42; xix. 12-27; cf. xvi. 1-12.

riches, it creates within us a superior aptitude which we shall retain beyond the tomb, while all the riches of this world will vanish in smoke.

The traditional dogma has displaced the axis of the sphere of retributions, making it pass through the inferior notions of pleasure and pain. The importance of these notions is thus exaggerated. It is clear that the exercise of a faculty must be accompanied by a measure of enjoyment, and that the deprivation of that same faculty would involve a corresponding measure of suffering; but we ought to seek the cause that is behind the consequence. When Jesus speaks of the sufferings of the wicked in the future life, he describes them as being caused by a sight of the advantages of which they have deprived themselves by their own wilfulness.¹

Thus pain loses its odious character. It may be considered as an appeal by the divine charity, and as a means for rescuing the guilty from the essential chastisement, which is the gradual loss of faculties, and in the end the loss of all faculties. In itself a benefit, pain becomes a real misfortune only to him who refuses to profit by it.

Punishment will be strictly proportional. Guilt will be measured exactly by responsibility, and the measure of the responsibility will be found in the number and extent of the powers and privileges granted. The guilty one who has received much will suffer much, just because he will lose much. He who has received less will sin less, because he will abuse a smaller number of gifts; he will suffer less, because he will lose less. Everything will be taken away from the man who makes no good use of his faculties. Such a man will cease to exist, for a man *is* only by that which he *has*.

Otherwise stated, responsibility is measured by prerogative; guilt by the abuse of prerogative, suffering by loss, and loss by guilt. The duration and intensity of sufferings in the future life will be in direct proportion to the quota of vital forces and diverse faculties distributed at the first to each delinquent;

¹ Luke xiii. 28. On consideration it will be seen that all pain is either the consequence of actual loss or the symptom of a danger threatening that which we fear to lose. A toothache usually precedes the rottenness of a tooth. Painful blows cause bruises which themselves are threatenings of death, either local or general. See Chap. VII., sect. iv.

and that quota being always limited, the sufferings will be so too. No one can sin or suffer beyond the strict measure of the faculties received.¹

The ruin of a millionaire will cause privations which will be to him more painful than they would be to a poor man who has never possessed riches. The greater the mass of vital forces, the longer and more poignant will be the pain that accompanies their dissolution; the more richly a soul is endowed, the more guilty will it be if it falls from its high estate, and the more grievous will be its death agony. Thus, in the doctrine of Conditional Immortality is established an ever-exact equilibrium between these three factors: gifts, responsibilities, retributions. According to the saying of Akibah: "All is supplied under bond. The market is open; the merchant gives credit; but a register is kept; each debt is inscribed, and sooner or later the collectors will obtain payment in one way or another."²

There is, then, nothing to prevent us from subscribing to the principles laid down by M. Gretillat:

1st. Every creature being eternally called to perfect happiness in perfect holiness, at the time of retribution will have received a portion of the necessary means of grace sufficient for obtaining salvation.

2nd. The portions granted at their initial distribution to the different moral agents are unequal, and are sovereignly and unconditionally determined by the divine will.

3rd. The responsibilities incurred by the various moral agents are proportionate to the means of grace that have been granted to them.³

Our standpoint allows the determination with the greatest precision of the bases of the last judgement, and to some extent the nature of the retributions; while the traditional dogma, for lack of a proper datum line, is unable to measure the gradation of future rewards and punishments. In particu-

¹ The opinion of the learned Rothe was nearly the same. In his view the duration of the chastisement of a soul would be in proportion to its guilt, and this guilt in proportion to the sum of the divine elements that were in it. We may add that the law of analogy leads us to suppose that in the future life it will be as on earth, where we see suffering usually shortened in direct proportion to its intensity.

² *Aboth*, iii. Quoted by M. J. Cohen, *Les Pharisiens*, vol. ii., p. 426.

³ *Op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 366.

lar, the hell of popular theology is only a vast lake of fire and brimstone into which the guilty, small and great, are cast indiscriminately, and where they will live for ever in a promiscuous crowd. We, on the contrary, believe that God has established an exact and infallible correlation between sin and its punishment. The calculation will be absolutely correct; the balance will be more delicately poised than that of any jeweller. No artifice, no acceptance of persons, will ever make it turn; but, on the other hand, it will surely be affected by the slightest efforts and the least failures of the moral life.

The eternal law speaks to the conscience of every sinner, saying to him: "Whoever thou art, I have a right over thee, and I will judge thee at the last day. Do to-day whatever may please thee, to-morrow I will lay hold of thee. Lie, steal, kill, blaspheme, and laugh over it, I still hold a mortgage upon thy person. In the exact measure of thy delinquencies, thy capacities for action and feeling shall be diminished, and except thou repent thou shalt be miserably and definitively suppressed. The eternal order which thou hast violated shall be restored at thy cost; the universe, for a moment troubled by thy presence, will find thy disappearance to be an advantage. The very excess of evil shall result in the suppression of evil."

The penal code of human justice, the dread of which holds in check so many evildoers, is but a feeble echo of this threat of the moral law.

We may be told that to a perverse will this threat will not be found an all-powerful restraint. But where is there such a thing as an all-powerful restraint? It does not exist. God has not willed that it should exist, because he desires the maintenance of an element of spontaneity; none the less will the restraint that we have described replace with advantage the official dogma, which reassures the sinner by its excessive menace. That dogma, being incredible, encourages the secret hope of a final amnesty. It is like the scarecrow which, so far from frightening the pilfering birds, at last serves them as a perch. It reminds us of the bogey stories wherewith nurses too often fill the imagination of little children. A sound system of education rejects such well-meaning falsehoods.

The defect of the traditional dogma comes out clearly in the

presence of the most poignant realities. Recently, at Ain Fezza, in the province of Oran, an adulterous wife was found guilty of administering poison to her husband. Condemned to twenty years of close imprisonment, she poisons herself. A pastor presides at her burial; he consoles the mourning family by the presentation of a hope of pardon at last beyond the tomb, "the divine mercy being greater even than men's sins." A reputedly orthodox journal reproduces this funeral oration without the expression of any reserve. Nor are we going to blame it; but it must be admitted to be in flagrant contradiction with the doctrine that announces punishment beginning immediately after death and perpetuated without any possibility of remission. Will our brethren who call themselves orthodox never stir from the false position in which they still stand? By what right will they condemn us when they themselves are thus more or less chargeable with heresy?

Such is the horror arising from the prevalent creed, that it is seldom applied either to living multitudes or dead relations. A hopeful case is made out for almost everyone who dies, in direct opposition to Christ's words that "destruction" is certain for all except those who "hear his sayings and do them." The effect, moreover, of the existing opinion is to lower the standard of morality to zero, since the hell believed in is thought too dreadful for all except gigantic offenders.¹ Thus Christ's words on "wrestling to enter into life" become practically inoperative. The masses harden themselves in wickedness, and Christians deliberately set aside their Lord's lesson on the fewness of the saved. The effect of true doctrine will be to strengthen the moral testimony. When men believe in a terrible but credible perdition, they will allow the limitation of the offer of eternal life.²

The traditionalists are accustomed to assert that, if we assign an end to the sufferings of hell, vicious and hardened beings will plunge into evil with a renewed sense of security.

But such persons forget that these profligates have enjoyed the full restraining advantage of the threatening of everlasting woe with scarce an interruption during all their lifetime, and that even this has not deterred them from their dreadful career. They are already as wicked

¹ It has just been seen that even the orthodox are now reassuring themselves as to the future end of the greatest criminals.—E. P.

² E. White, *op. cit.*, p. 467, *sq.*

as they can be, and cannot be made *worse* by the modification of a threatening which they have utterly disbelieved in and defied. It is even possible that some alteration in the way of presenting God's justice and love to them may work for the better and diminish their blasphemies.

What is needed to arouse such profligates to reflection . . . to make them tremble at judgement to come, and to bring them to repentance, is the proclamation of a future remediless punishment, which carries its own credentials along with it, and while shaking the souls of sinners, even the most intelligent, as at a fiery handwriting on the wall, with a deep convulsive dread, shall leave no valid ground for moral speculations on its injustice and improbability. Such is, I submit, the doctrine of judgement as here set forth.¹

No sinner can hope to escape from this righteous condemnation to death, while everyone imagines that he will escape eternal torments, even if he believes in them for others. The enfeebled evangelism of our day has taken pains to substitute for the traditional hell the fear of a moral separation from God. It has always seemed to us that this motive can have very little hold upon souls. The sinner willingly accepts this prospect of an existence independent and uncontrolled; he has little dread of a moral separation from God, for to him God is only a constraint.

The ship of Conditionalism sails at an equal distance from these two rocks: the dualist pessimism which makes evil eternal, and the perfidious optimism which asserts that all will end well for every one.

We do not replace the faith of our fathers by a relaxed doctrine. Our God, too, is a consuming fire. An earnest Christian lady is said to have declared that she would no more seek to evangelize, but would "sit still in her drawing-room" if it should be proved that the torments of the damned are not endless. This pious person judges herself too harshly. She would quickly leave her drawing-room if in an adjoining chamber the beginning of a fire should threaten the life of an infant in the cradle; she will find herself even more strongly urged to leave her room in order to rescue souls from eternal death. "Flattering," "reassuring," death eternal! Is the

¹ E. White, *op. cit.*, p. 491.

bloody sword of the executioner flattering, reassuring? Will the sword of celestial justice be any more so?

Paul was accused of making void the law, and he exclaims: "Do we then make void the law? Nay! we establish the law" upon a more solid basis. So, too, we are accused of suppressing a salutary fear, while on the contrary we re-establish it. For the traditionalist the sinful soul is a diamond fallen into the mud, which soils but does not destroy it; delay is not absolutely fatal. In the view of the Conditionalist the diamond has fallen into a fire that is consuming it. Of these two views, which is the one that supplies the most urgent motive for a prompt and energetic rescue?

To point out the irreparable effects of sin, is that to deny its terrible reality, is that to enfeeble the notion of sin, is that to paralyze the activity of the missionary or the preacher? What! shall we see the physician lavish of his attention and his efforts with the sole object of prolonging his patient's life for a few years, or perhaps a few days? shall we call heroes the men who are ready to brave flood and flame in order to rescue their fellow-creatures from a death comparatively little dreadful, and shall we remain careless and indifferent in presence of the plague that is destroying souls? The true believer dreads for the whole race of men that danger to which they are insensible; he knows that if he does not hasten he will have to answer for the blood of his brethren; he knows that the ravages of evil will become irremediable, that the tide is rising, that the fire is spreading; is not that enough to enkindle his zeal and to keep the sacred love of souls ever burning in his heart?

In dread of the mortal peril which threatens the impenitent, we live in a state of perpetual alarm, for we are as it were upon an immense vessel on which a fire has already broken out, the fire and the water enveloping us on all sides, and the ship full of sleeping passengers. We lift up our voice and cry: "Sleepers, awake! Hasten to put on the life-belts! The shore is not distant, and all who will may be saved." This ship on fire is the world; the life-belt is faith. We do not believe that a ferocious God is going to occupy eternity in tormenting the damned in hell, but the motive of our life is the

desire implanted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit himself, the ardent inextinguishable desire to honour the heavenly Father by rescuing some of our fellow-creatures from an eternal death.

Over the converted sinner Conditionalism possesses a unique power, namely, the notion of a certain irreparability of evil. The traditional dogma ignores gradation; it attributes to faith the power of destroying, as by enchantment, all the consequences of sin. Salvation is all or nothing. Let a sinner give the rein to all his passions his whole life long, let him repent at the very last moment, his place is not only in heaven, which is true, but his place in heaven will be as good as that of the man who has not ceased to strive and to pray. Pursuing this mischievous way even to the end, the ritualist dogma has done away with all righteousness. A sacramental formula is to save from hell; a gift or a legacy to the Church is to shorten the duration of purgatory. Constantine could imbrue his hands in the blood of his own children, the baptism which he postponed until his last hour was to take the place of repentance.

All these abuses are cut short by the biblical principle of the condition of existence. According to that principle, sin is a corrosive, a burning, of necessity implying damage, destruction partial or total, local or general. Sin involves for the sinner more or less self-diminution. The penitent sinner will be saved as through the fire. Although saved, he must pay a proportionate tribute to the inexorable law of eternal justice. Repentance, even though followed by pardon, will not cause the disappearance of all the deleterious consequences of the sin that has been committed. It is possible to circumscribe a fire, to stop it, to rebuild the edifice that has been destroyed or damaged, but it is not possible to do away with the fact of damage or loss. Great sin means great damage; little sin, little damage; but in either case a loss that is irreparable, and therefore serious.¹

This austere truth leaves room for justice without excluding

¹ See Chap. V., sect. ix. See also the sermon by Rev. E. White on *The Secondary Consequences of Sin* in the volume entitled *The Mystery of Growth*, etc., Dickinson, 1877, and *Un redoutable Mais* in the *Journal religieux* of 9 Aug., 1890.

grace ; it assigns salvation to every believer, and renders to each man according to his works ; it gives us consolation, but does not soothe us with dangerous illusions. It occupies in moral retribution the position claimed in politics for the representation of minorities ; to the passions of the sinner who believes himself to be converted, and in reality is only half converted, it opposes a barrier unknown to the traditional dogma.

We may add that in the eschatological domain the resurrection of the body had become a kind of needless extra, not to say a retrogression. In the traditional view, the believer's soul, leaving its prison-house of clay, is in immediate enjoyment of celestial happiness. Why it should return to the bondage of a body is not explained. Thus it has come to pass that many theologians relegate to the background the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which in the New Testament occupies a foremost position. Conditionalism, not believing in a separate immortality of souls, restores to resurrection the predominant place that is assigned to it in Scripture.

We will sum up this section by noticing that :

1st. The truth of any teaching is confirmed when it introduces into dogmatics a synthesis which facilitates the methodical arrangement and connection of all doctrines.

2nd. A doctrine is beneficent when it satisfies the mind and the heart, solves our difficulties, urges to the practice of that which is good, represses evil, edifies and sanctifies the soul.

If these are true touchstones, Conditionalism deserves to be placed in the rank of beneficent truths.

IV.

§ I. ADHESIONS OF MORAL PHILOSOPHERS.

The doctrine of which the Conditionalists are the humble upholders is no human invention. All the honour belongs to Jesus Christ ; it is a revelation, and its divine origin appears all the more clearly since it has won the adhesion of thinkers belonging to the most diverse schools. We have gathered together some of their testimonies.¹ In them may be seen pledges of a

¹ See the prefatory letter by Professor Charles Secrétan and our first two chapters.

reconciliation between old rivals : on one side, human reason and science ; on the other side, faith and religion. The neo-criticism, of which M. de Pressensé said : " More than ever we have need of such a philosophy,"¹ has shown itself particularly favourable to an understanding upon such a basis. One of its standard-bearers, M. F. Pillon, now director of the *Année philosophique*, looks to the adoption of the Conditionalist point of view as assuring the future of Protestantism, whereof he has become one of the most eminent champions. He says :

On the one hand Conditional Immortality is perfectly admissible in philosophy for anyone who places himself at the point of view of metaphysics and criticist morality. On the other hand this theory seems to me to result clearly and certainly, in theology, from an exegesis that is truly scientific and in conformity with the Protestant spirit. I believe that it is necessary to make of it one of the essential foundations of the renovated Protestant theology. It offers the advantage of purifying without suppressing the Christian idea of damnation and salvation. In the conception of damnation the substitution of annihilation for an endless hell can and ought to serve as opposing Protestantism to Catholicism, the religion of freedom to the religion of servitude. The Catholic conception of the kingdom of God resembles the despotic Asiatic empires,² where the sovereign power is manifested in penal matters by horrible tortures without limit or purpose. The penalty of death is sufficient in the Protestant conception of the kingdom of God.²

We believe that the theological importance of this thesis can hardly be exaggerated. A theology is defined and characterized especially by the solution that it gives to the eschatological question, because it is eschatology alone that can fully determine the nature of the divine government, the scope of human freedom, the consequences of sin, the position and work of the Christ, the purpose of redemption. The theology of the sixteenth-century reformers remained half Catholic. The Conditionalists have understood that, in order to amend it, the first thing to be done is to put aside the Catholic conception of damnation and salvation, not by doubt or indifference, but by precise and resolute affirmations, by a doctrine in conformity with the Protestant method ; that is to say, taken from the Scripture, and not from tradition.³

¹ See p. 29.

² Private letter to the author, 6 May, 1887.

³ *Critique philos.*, 31 March, 1877.

§ 2. ADHESIONS OF EVOLUTIONIST SCIENTISTS.

Conditionalism, being in conformity with practical reason, may serve as the crown and completion of the evolutionist system, which has been adopted by so many learned men. That system is no longer dangerous when an element of liberty is admitted into it.¹ Thus regarded, evolution is the method followed by the personal God, who sometimes introduces unexpected threads into the tissue of his work. The creation of a principle of organic life, man's self-consciousness, the developement of moral liberty, the appearance of Jesus Christ, these are undeniable facts, new beginnings, which a determinist evolutionism cannot explain, and which must be taken into account.

The evolutionist who is faithful to his principle will become transformed into the image of Jesus, who himself transformed his humanity into the image of the heavenly Father. For a man to be satisfied with himself, to believe himself perfect, and not to evolve in the direction of the model man, would be a flagrant negation of the transformist principle properly understood. Conditionalism defies materialist evolutionism to find a developement for the human race superior to that which the Gospel proposes. In this way Christian sanctification becomes a postulate of science.

Evolutionism thus amended and completed would help us the better to understand the Gospel. The struggle for life and survival of the fittest prophesies in a measure the immortalization of the elect; the elimination of the unfit enables us to foresee the final suppression of the wicked, who withdraw themselves from the requirements of moral progress. The same laws are there, with individual liberty in addition.

The fossil remains of fifty thousand extinct species attest a certain contemplated loss in the work of creation. Such a fact

¹ See pp. 30 and 48, and the volume entitled *Christianity and Evolution*, a symposium reprinted from the *Homiletic Magazine*. London: Nisbet and Co., 1887. Several theologians among the contributors adopted the standpoint of Christian evolutionism. Dr. MacCosh, in his book *The Religious Aspect of Evolution*, Professors Flint, of Edinburgh, and Pfeiderer, of Berlin, belong to that school.

is of a nature to reconcile us with the notion, at first painful, of a corresponding loss in the operations of grace.¹

Let us distinctly keep in mind the fact that in the ecclesiastical doctrine the eternal hell is not only an immense loss, but is also an ever-festering sore. The superiority of the Conditionalist theory is, therefore, clearly perceptible.

Just as in the visible universe there is apparently an enormous and inexplicable waste of germs, seeds, and eggs of all kinds, which die simply because they are useless—analogy would lead us to conclude that something similar, and to at least as enormous an extent, happens in the Unseen with the germs of spiritual frames. The caterpillar which has not chosen a secure place of refuge in which to assume the chrysalis form does not live to become a perfect insect. The seeds that fell by the wayside, though scattered by an intelligent sower, were devoured by the birds of the air. “For many are called, but few chosen.”²

In the true Gospel teaching, the elect are neither the objects of a divine caprice, nor are they egoists; they will form a select portion of mankind, chosen on account of spiritual qualities. The men who are fittest for the life eternal will be found to be the most charitable, their ambition being indistinguishable from the desire to be useful and devoted in the highest degree, the greatest among them to the best of their power helping the least in their upward course.

In this conception there is no foundation for such accusations against Christian morality as the following:

This morality is arbitrary, superficial, and in fact immoral; it does not explain why it calls some actions good and others bad. It sets forth as the motive for doing right the assurance of thereby gaining a place in paradise, and as the motive for avoiding wrong the fear of burning in

¹ On this subject see the remarkable considerations of the second book of Esdras viii. 41; ix., *passim*, and various passages of the Wisdom of Solomon. Therein will be found a sort of presentiment of that which is well founded in Darwin's celebrated theory of the struggle for life and survival of the fittest. The partial loss does not in any way contradict the principle of the superabundance of grace, the effects of which will last and be manifest through eternity, while evil, a merely *ad interim* apparition, is abolished. See *Supplement* No. IX., end of § 6; cf. Chap. II., sect. iii., sect. viii., § 2; p. 289; and the end of *Supplement* No. V.

² *The Unseen Universe*, by Professors Balfour Stewart and Tait, 4th edition p. 265 art. 261.

hell. As a reason for not giving way to the temptation to deceive, by being apparently good while really wicked, it makes believe that everyone is always under invisible surveillance. Such is religious morality ; it is based upon egoism and the fear of corporal punishments, upon the hope of the advantages of paradise and the dread of the flames of hell. This morality is good for egoists and cowards, but especially for children who may be influenced by the threat of the whip or the promise of barley-sugar. In place of this morality, which appeals to the lowest instincts of man, progress lays down a general principle : the solidarity of humanity.¹

We have shown that the “ actions called good ” tend to the conservation of the being,² and as Professor Auguste Sabatier has very well said :

We scarcely think now that God’s universal work, his definitive work, consists in the mysterious choice of a few elect for future bliss. No doubt we still believe in God’s elect ; but they are elected, not for bliss, but for duty, for the salvation of their brethren. To be one of the elect is to be called, to be sent, into the Lord’s vineyard. It is not a privilege of selfish enjoyment ; it is the call to a greater, harder, and more glorious task. True salvation for a soul, in fact, consists especially in its birth to the life of love, that is to say, in its vocation to self-devotion for the sake of those who are still in death and sin ; in other words, our own salvation has its aim and object in the salvation of others. . . . Salvation consists in the developement of the eternal life of love.³

What is there now remaining of M. Nordau’s diatribes ?

§ 3. A GLANCE AT PHILOSOPHICAL PESSIMISM.

Professor Secrétan, in his prefatory letter, mentions certain thinkers “ who hold themselves aloof from eschatological questions, being persuaded that it is impossible to form an idea of a future existence that will be both precise and rational, and who are also led away by the idea that we ought to will the right for the sake of the right, without regard to personal consequences.” It seems to us that the ideal set forth by Professor Sabatier is exactly of a nature to satisfy such agnos-

¹ Max. Nordau, *Les mensonges conventionnels de notre civilisation*, translated by Auguste Dietrich, p. 351.

² See Chap. XI., sect. v., and *Supplément* No. V., § v.

³ *Deux conceptions du ministère évangélique. Revue chrétienne*, 1 Jan., 1891, p. 11, sq.

tics. Their admirable spirit of devotedness will find in the mission to which the elect are called a field of activity as precise as it is rational. They may even enter upon it at once, without quitting the present life.

Professor Secrétan further asks us to say a word for the benefit of persons otherwise excellent, "for whom the prospect of complete annihilation is a subject rather of hope than of fear." Are these good folk theists or pantheists? M. Secrétan does not say. If they belong to the latter category, we look upon them as being out of health and needing to place themselves under special treatment. If the tree is to be judged by its fruits, they will learn to distrust a tendency which, under the names of Brahminism and Buddhism, has reduced a great part of Asia to the state, little to be envied, in which we now see it. The desire to live being inherent in life, the enfeeblement of that desire is a symptom of coming death. Moreover, the virtue of these good people themselves seems to us to be in danger, for human morality has great need of a sanction which pantheism does not furnish, since it sanctions everything. Those who are tired of life should hasten to come back to the personal and living God. While recommending to them the study of the Bible and the society of sincere Christians, we will leave to others more competent the task of indicating remedies more efficacious.

In the Gospel Jesus tells us of a king who is angry because, having prepared a grand banquet, he learns that some of those who had been invited have, on frivolous pretexts, declined the invitation. If the personal and living God assigns to us a place in a better world, shall we not offend him if we disdain his gracious offer? Is it not insulting to the Creator for the creatures to decline the position that he calls them to fill? Has not an element of laziness some place in the readiness to forego life thus put forward? Would not the aspiration after absolute repose, when there is so much need for doing good, be a subtle form of egoism, and is not that abdication of all individual will the very death of liberty, which is the glorious aim of the universe?

The Christian is not his own; as a loving and docile son, he will heartily fulfil his Father's commands. Without allowing

himself a passionate attachment to the present life, nor even to the life to come, he will see in immortality not so much a reward as an opportunity for the accomplishment of a noble task. For him to start towards heaven is to go forward to the performance of fresh work.

There are some who through idleness shrink from this prospect, persuading themselves that their unwillingness is the effect of a sublime disinterestedness. They will get no admiration from us! We have a much higher regard for working Christians. Even though these should retain some degree of egoism, Jesus, their Chief, will take care to purify their notion of future bliss. Though there should be some alloy in the gold of their piety, would that be a reason for denying the natural connection between happiness and virtue? How can we doubt that a holy joy will fill the hearts of the workers in the future life?

A sumptuous feast is spread in the heavenly Father's house; if the child feels no attraction towards it, that shows that he is in a state of spiritual decline. But, faithfully acted out, the Gospel will restore both the will and the power to live, even to those who have lost both.

V.

The object of practical theology is the application of Christian teaching to the needs of the Church and of the world, and in that department also a return to the primitive Gospel will be of great advantage. The preacher is a soldier to whom Conditionalism brings new armour. There was a fault in the cuirass furnished by the traditional dogma. Since no apologetics could succeed in making the notion of a "hateful God" appear legitimate, that dogma has been used by free-thinkers in order to hinder the propagation of the Gospel. To this day they include both Catholicism and Protestantism in their hostility. In their view evangelism is only a species of Jesuitism, a lying invention, and an instrument of tyranny.

Exposed to these accusations, preachers cannot repeat without reserve the proud saying of the apostle: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel." Confined within their places of

worship they remain on the defensive, and unbelief mounts guard at the door of their temples. The Christian literary man blushes for his faith in presence of his intimate literary but worldly friend, who asks him whether he sincerely believes in an eternal hell. Is the relative sterility that characterizes much evangelistic work to be greatly wondered at?¹

The primitive Gospel, on the contrary, commends itself to all consciences as a manifestation of divine truth.² It may restore to preachers that freedom of speech which was characteristic of the apostolic period. Being founded upon an unassailable theodicy, demonstrating the harmony of these four books of God—the conscience, the Bible, nature, and history—it establishes the superiority of the Christian teaching over all religions and all systems of philosophy.³

“The application of a truth cannot generally be made at the moment of its recognition.”⁴ Having been counteracted by the irrational hostility of the Churches, Conditionalism has hitherto been prevented from manifesting the extent of its power. It is asked whether it has founded all the works of Christian

¹ See Chap. I., sect. iii. It is sad to see how, through lack of a dogmatic and philosophic synthesis, French Protestantism seems to be tramping without advancing. The *Sunday at Home* recently published a series of articles on religious thought in France. Towards the end the writer shows, with a certain sadness, that the Reformed Churches have lost all spirit of conquest and all hold upon the general public. Regarded by some as a detestable heresy and by others as a despicable superstition, Protestantism scarcely gains any recruits from among the cultivated classes. The home mission addresses attract a certain number belonging to the illiterate classes, but where are the earnest convictions? As for the Salvation Army, it does not even pretend to reach the thinking people; it brandishes in vain the blunted sword of an antiquated doctrine; it seems like the last convulsions of a sickly kind of evangelism.

Notwithstanding his optimist temperament, M. de Pressensé, who was in the best position for knowing, was convinced of the powerlessness of the traditional Calvinism. In a letter to Father Hyacinthe Loyson, dated September, 1887, he wrote: “I have not ceased to believe that we, the sons of the sixteenth-century Reformation, have not power sufficient to rescue our country from Romanism, and that for the accomplishment of that end it is necessary that an original reforming movement should arise within Catholicism itself.”—*Eglise libre*, 17 July, 1891.

² 2 Cor. iv. 2.

³ See *Supplement* No. XXII.

⁴ Octave Feuillet.

charity ; but how could it have done so, since it has only just arisen out of its age-lasting entombment ? Nevertheless, it already includes within its ranks preachers and evangelists of the first order, men like Dr. Dale, who was appointed President of the recent International Congregational Council, Rev. Edward White, the learned Dr. Perowne, now Bishop of Worcester, Rev. W. H. M. Hay Aitkin, whose daily services at New York some years ago attracted such crowds as to interfere with the commercial activity of that great city.¹ Sir Geo. Gabriel Stokes, Secretary and late President of the Royal Society, has borne witness to the zeal of Conditionalist missionaries ; in a printed statement he has shown their exceptional success.²

On the other hand the Rev. T. E. Slater has indicated a crisis in the affairs of the missionary societies. He declares that in many parts of Great Britain and the United States the zeal of the subscribers has cooled, and he attributes this fact to eschatological scepticism.³ Like the sword of Damocles, a schism is threatening the American missions on this very subject of future retributions. The former enthusiasm is, as we believe, to be brought back only by a victory of the primitive Gospel.

Where there is no belief in an end of evil beyond the tomb, the prospect of a suppression of misery on earth is not very likely to be admitted ; thus the traditional dogma has a tendency to paralyze the hope of social reformation. Before singing with the angelic host at Bethlehem, "Peace on earth !" the Church must cry with a conviction at present lacking : "Glory to God in the highest !" Such a conviction has become incompatible with a theology that makes hell eternal.

The true Gospel stimulates the zeal of both missionaries and

¹ See his biography in *The Christian* of 10 Aug., 1888.

² See *Supplement* No. XXIII., Conditionalism in Missionary Preaching.

³ "Strange to say, we hear in many quarters of a *decline in missionary interest*. There is not that enthusiasm in our Churches in respect to missions that formerly existed. . . . It is probably the *uncertainty* that has been gathering around the whole question of the future . . . that has cooled the ardour of missionary enterprise."—*The Christian World*, 2 Feb., 1882. *The Philosophy of Missions*, 1 vol., 16mo., 1882 ; see pp. 2 and 36. Chap. III. is entitled Decline of Interest in Missions. Cf. *Evangelical Christendom*, Dec., 1885.

philanthropists by giving the joyful certitude of a final triumph of the good ; it leads us on towards the epoch wherein, the episode of evil being ended, there will no longer be anything to disturb the felicity of the universe. But this hope does not inspire us with the fatal sense of security produced by the belief in an inevitable salvation ; we are responsible for those who, through our negligence, will be missing from the celestial assembly.

VI.

France is now passing through a crisis of vast import.¹ Her friends tremble to see her tossed about between atheism and the Syllabus upon a sea full of rocks. May she, being spared fresh misfortunes, listen to the counsel of one of her most devoted sons, who said : " That which France needs is a religion at once simple, positive, enlightened, tolerant, and moral, a religion that would live in peace with science and would be the ally of liberty ; in fact, the religion of the Gospel. Such a religion, we are bold to say, Protestantism could and ought to give to her ; but," adds M. Recolin, " that which seems to be lacking in evangelical Protestantism is a system of dogmatics more precise, more vigorous and more profound."²

The voice of the lamented François Bonifas, speaking as it were from the tomb, makes the same avowal ; he has said :

We need clear affirmations, precise doctrines. We must resolutely follow truth the whole way, and not fear to affirm all that the Bible affirms and teaches. . . . Let us bow respectfully before the mysteries whereof God has reserved the secret, but not without having used our best efforts to let in upon them all the light supplied to us by revelation. Let us thus construct a complete system of dogmatics which, without neglecting the precious heritage of past ages, will be careful to go back

¹ Closely connected with France, in addition to Belgium and French Switzerland, are the Latin nations, which in religious and literary matters move more or less in the orbit of France. The same fermentation extends in some degree to the Slavonic, Germanic, and Anglo-Saxon races ; in a word, to all our western civilization.

² *De l'état religieux de la France et particulièrement du protestantisme français*, a report presented at the international conference of the Evangelical Alliance at Copenhagen on the 2nd Sept., 1884. *Revue chrétienne*, Nov. and Dec., 1884.

to the biblical sources, and to give to the eternal truths of the Gospel a new form that will answer to the requirements of the present state of things.¹

Let us once more recall a saying that formed part of the spiritual testament of Pastor Bersier: "What we especially need is a sound and strong doctrine."²

By another we are told:

Young men say: "There is no thought in that which is offered to us." We need a movement of thought. Christians who are called to be missionaries in their generation ought to enter into living communion with this thought by the use of new formulas suited to the language of the age.³

In the biblical doctrine that we have been describing, we have met with these very characteristics: eternal truth, new form, scientific value, vigour, and depth. It furnishes a satisfactory solution of the eschatological difficulty, and, as M. Pillon has said, in dogmatics eschatology is of capital importance. It has been too much neglected in the recent crusades of the home mission, which may perhaps account for a certain lack of success likely to lead to discouragement. It is desired to preach the Gospel of salvation, but it is important to know what is the great danger from which we are saved by the Gospel.⁴ If, when interrogated on this point, the evangelist hesitates or stammers, his mission will be in peril. If he either wounds the consciences or lulls them to sleep, he is not likely to have greater success.

Several solutions of the difficulty offer themselves. They correspond to different notions as to God's character, human nature, sin and salvation. They are so many theologies,

¹ *Revue théologique*, July, 1878. These lines form part of the last article published by their author, who died the same year.

² See p. 4.

³ Lecture by Professor Raoul Allier on the moral conditions of a religious renewal. *Le Traité d'union*, 15 May, 1891.

⁴ "He who has not a clear notion of salvation, how can he have a clear idea of the Gospel ministry, which is nothing else than a work of salvation? Is not this the secret cause of the vagueness and uncertainty in which so many young pastors still remain as to the real nature of the task that they have to fulfil?"—Aug. Sabatier, article quoted, *Revue chrétienne*, 1 Jan., 1891.

among which a decision becomes urgent. We have rejected, after full examination, the official dogma which offends the religious sentiment by calumniating the heavenly Father. With no less energy do we reject the enervating doctrines of Universalism, whether absolute or conditional. Nor will we accept that dogmatic scepticism according to which the Bible would at the same time teach contradictory doctrines, all equally good, it is said, provided that a good use be made of them. There is nothing much more dangerous than such indecision. Man with heart unrenewed makes for himself an impenetrable retreat in a vague region of unlimited extent which is thus given over to him, and there he sleeps the sleep of eternal death. If the choice is left to him, it is needless to say that he will choose the pleasant and convenient doctrine of an inevitable salvation. And in that doctrinal indecision, which is proposed as an ideal, what becomes of the precision demanded by Messrs. Bonifas and Recolin? No, even hell itself belongs to the domain of Christian dogmatics, which, enlightened by the torch of an impartial exegesis, will sound the depths even of the second death, will burst open those dungeons wherein the gaolers of the old theology inflicted eternal torments upon imperishable victims, and, armed with the besom of religious criticism, will clear the temple of truth of the impurities left by the harpies of the middle ages.

There remains Conditionalism. This is a doctrine which uses neither palliation nor dissimulation; it rests straight and square upon the Bible, bringing all the biblical declarations into harmony; it was maintained by the earliest Fathers; it is in conformity with universal analogy, it satisfies the instinct of self-preservation, an instinct which is also a duty; within the sphere of liberty it is the crowning of the great scientific law of the survival of the fittest, the graft of the Gospel upon the vigorous but wild tree of evolution. It humiliates the presumptuous child of the dust; it glorifies Jesus Christ; it is the basis of a new theodicy; it keeps the golden mean between the manichæan pessimism which makes evil eternal and the optimism which sees no serious danger in evil. By removing the stumbling-block of eternal torments, it shows a God always faithful to himself, and merciful even in the terrible chastise-

ment wherewith he threatens obstinate sinners. By re-establishing the notion of irreparability, it restores to the preacher a weapon that he had lost. The fury of human passions is such that often nothing but the vision of the irremediable can arrest the sinner when exposed to temptation, but in the traditional dogma the irreparable had an odious character which paralyzed the preachers. They had overshot the mark, and so had been led to keep silence as to future punishments. Conditionalism boldly declares the irreparable consequences of sin ; the pardon that it offers is not impunity. Its mathematical morality deals out future retributions in exact proportion to the use made here below of the resources put within reach. A doctrine so clear and so just is a well-sharpened sword wherewith the defenders of the Gospel will be able to resume the attack, quitting the position of the besieged for that of conquerors. The traditional doctrine was a fetter on the feet of the evangelist, Universalism paralyzed his arm. Conditionalism terrifies the impenitent with the dismal prospect of a long agony and a no less lamentable eternal death. Is it possible to find a restraint at the same time more powerful, more moral, and more rational ?

Conditionalism is, however, not merely a restraint, it is also a motive force. Appealing to our thirst for immortality, it presents to us Jesus Christ as the only one who can satisfy that thirst. In other terms, it places man at the very heart of the Gospel.

It may thus be seen that :

Our principal thesis is not at the circumference, but at the centre of Christian dogma. It is a vital germ, a principle of regeneration for contemporary theology and preaching. In the measure in which our French Protestants assimilate this grand idea, deduce its logical consequences and thereby renew their faith, their apologetics, and their propaganda, in that measure we believe they will be seen to rise above their actual declining state and to exert their due influence in their country. They need this courageous evolution, which moreover is demanded by their own principles, they need this dogmatic reformation, which has been too long retarded by less pressing interests, if they are to win the ear of the present age.

On this ground, where they scarcely expected to meet us, the men

of science will be able to follow us. Then, perhaps, we may succeed in making them understand that the Gospel has no fear of the light, that it completes instead of contradicting the revelations of nature, that in a word there is an admirable harmony between faith and reason. Thus rejuvenated and transfigured in its fundamental conception, the religion of the Christ will be able afresh to manifest its legitimacy as the best explanation of our troubled world, as the divine answer to our most agonizing questions. To many sincere and reflective minds, driven in spite of themselves by the parching wind of doubt towards atheism and despair, it will bring an untold peace and a sublime hope.¹

VII.

Forty years ago, Isaac Taylor, although not professing himself a Conditionalist, had a kind of prophetic intuition of a rejuvenation of the Church by means of a new eschatology. He wrote :

When once this weighty question of the after-life has been opened, a controversy will ensue, in the progress of which it will be discovered that with unobservant eyes we and our predecessors have been so walking up and down, and running hither and thither among dim notices and indications of the future destinies of the human family, as to have failed to gather up or to regard much that has lain upon the pages of the Bible, open and free to our use. Those who, through the course of years, have been used to read the Scriptures unshackled by systems and bound to no conventional modes of belief, must have felt an impatience in waiting, not for the arrival of a new revelation from heaven, but of an ample and unfettered interpretation of that which has so long been in our hands.

The doctrine of future punishment . . . will take its place in the midst of an expanded prospect of the compass and intention of the Christian system.

So it will be with the future Methodism ; and although it will rest itself upon a laboriously obtained belief concerning the "wrath to come," a belief that will heave the mind with a deep convulsive dread, yet, and notwithstanding this preliminary, the renovation which we look for will come as the splendour of day comes in the tropics ; it will be a sudden brightness that makes all things glad !²

¹ Ch. Byse, in the preface to his translation of Mr. White's *Life in Christ*, p. xxxi., *sg.*

² *Wesley and Methodism*, 1851, p. 289, *sg.* E. White, *op. cit.*, p. 457.

VIII.

This prophecy, like many others, and like immortality itself, remains conditional. History teaches us that the truth triumphs only by the disinterested efforts of those who believe that they possess it, efforts which, although disinterested, are none the less obligatory, being required by loyalty. Those of our readers who share our conviction will understand also the imperious duty of propagating it. As M. de Pressensé said :

I hold that life is too short for us to lose time and strength in attenuating or disguising that which we believe to be true, for the purpose of making it more acceptable, and for the sake of not wounding numerous susceptibilities. We are here below in order to be ourselves, to speak the energetic language of our convictions, without looking to the right hand or to the left. It is only at the cost of this imprudence that the cause of truth is usefully served.¹

It should be well understood that in this matter we are not dealing with the theory of an individual, nor joining in a vain tournament of dialectics, but considering the gravest question in the world, the specially vital question, to be or not to be, the question of our eternal destinies, of the character of God, of the future of the Christian religion upon earth. Those whose eyes have been opened will see in that which we seek to maintain a portion of the glad tidings which has been misunderstood. Imitating the widow in the parable, they will not fail to importune their brethren until that which we are opposing, that tyrannical dogma which to so many souls bars the way to the kingdom of God, is utterly overthrown.

If the doctrine of pain that shall never end be the offspring of the combination of a false psychology with the traditionary interpretations of a superstitious and uncritical antiquity, it is easy to see that the Deity must abhor the falsehoods taught in his name, in Europe as in Asia, and will highly commend the work of those who set themselves to overturn this stumbling-block, and to rend the dogma which at once veils from sinful men his real and awful Justice, and from his children so much of the light of his eternal Love.²

¹ Quotation in the journal *Signes des temps*, 17 Feb., 1891.

² E. White, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

Our Western civilization, distracted by an intestine war, divided against itself, has now reached a point at which it cannot stay, nor can it long subsist if it fails speedily to discover and to make manifest to all a meeting-point between science and faith, between the old Gospel and modern progress. The Conditionalists believe that they know that meeting-point. The farther they advance, the more are they confirmed in their belief by the manner in which that belief sustains the attacks of opponents and satisfies the cravings of their own souls. But the more complete their certitude, the more would their silence become culpable. May they help to hasten the day when all the friends of truth will share in its benefits !

Every strong and sincere conviction tends to proselytism. When a man, after having long groaned under the yoke of ignorance and error, succeeds in finding a truth which satisfies all the needs of his reason and of his heart, which is like the *fiat lux* causing the radiant daylight to shine in upon the darkness and chaos wherein he was sinking ; such a man could not keep that truth to himself. He would feel his soul too narrow to contain its brightness and splendour ; it would produce in his mind so many thoughts, in his heart so many emotions, in his conscience the sense of so many obligations and duties, that in spite of his feebleness and timidity that truth would break forth in all his utterances, it would be perceptible in all his silences, in the fire of his eyes and the unusual radiance of his face. And should any authority, any despotic power succeed in shutting his mouth, that truth would become in his soul a consuming fire, an intolerable torment which would make him weary of life and cause him to long for that future existence wherein all his faculties will have full liberty of developement.¹

But yet, who will shut the mouth of the true believer ? Who will cool down his enthusiasm ? Cold water will intensify rather than extinguish the celestial fire by which he is animated. In the midst of a conflict which is often grievous he will call to mind the saying of a Christian thinker : " I know no greater delight than that of fighting for the triumph of a great truth that is still misunderstood."²

As regards the result of his efforts, the believer is patient,

¹ Jules Denys, *Le Signal*, 18 June, 1881.

² François Guizot, *L'Illustration*, 25 Oct., 1884.

because he has eternity before him. By his faith he dominates a transitory world. He pities those who do not share his treasure, but his solicitude does not interfere with his confidence in God. Although he should never see here below the success of the cause that he defends, he knows that he will one day contemplate it from a higher standpoint, and this assurance is sufficient for him. The faithfulness of his testimony will not depend upon the sympathy that men, be they good or bad, envious or benevolent, cowardly or courageous, may deign or not deign to accord to him.

Upon the Churches this testimony lays a certain responsibility from which they can free themselves only by a serious response to the challenge. The fate of Jerusalem, the torpor of the Synagogue, reduced to the condition of a chrysalis, not to say a mummy, the ever-lamentable situation of the Jewish people, all these are facts indicating what may become of religious communities that reject or pretend not to understand the appeals of the truth. Will it be said that the truth which is occupying our attention is of secondary importance? That would be to prejudge the question. In the first century of the Church the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, and the Herodians doubtless agreed in assigning only a secondary importance to the problems raised by the disciples of Jesus Christ. In the sixteenth century the Roman Catholic Church treated as secondary the question of justification by faith, which Luther set up as a standard, but which does not appear in the Apostles' Creed. Again, only some fifty years ago the ecclesiastical authorities of French Protestantism still spoke disdainfully of a "pretended revival," a religious movement the power of which was very soon to overcome their own.

IX.

If ever an age has claimed to be able to solve the universal problem; if ever an age has been called upon to gather up a past fruitful of instruction in order to prepare a future loaded with benefits; if ever an age has been great in its mission,

ardent in its hopes, indomitable in its enterprises, that age is surely our own; yet this age is agitated, breathless, weary, sick.¹ And this sick patient is distrustful of every remedy, ancient and modern; he wants the composition and effects of the medicines to be explained to him; he prefers death to the charlatans. The doctors must therefore meet the demands of their patient. The modern spirit rejects odious and contradictory conceptions. The required explanations can be refused only by obstinacy or ignorance.

We have asserted that every being exists only under a definite condition; that for every human soul this condition is personal communion with the personal and living God; that this, too, is the condition of immortality; that as a consequence of sin man finds himself outside of that communion; that he is invited to return into it; that this return is to be effected by faith in Jesus Christ, and is the healing needed by the age: are not these assertions reasonable, in conformity with universal analogy, with the laws of nature, and with the necessary conditions of life and progress?

Neither science nor conscience can contradict these assertions.

Science says: Conform to the condition of your existence, reject every element that is contrary to your physical or moral constitution. The Gospel says: Be ye holy.

Science says: Aspire after indefinite progress. The Gospel says: Be ye perfect.

Science demands the abandonment of every prejudice; the Gospel requires the docility of the little child.

The Gospel teaches that the Christ died for all, to the end that no man should live for himself alone. The blood of our Chief cries to us that we must live, and if needful die, for each other. Science responds with the cry: Solidarity, mutual trust; all for each, each for all. The object of social economy is attained when fraternity tends freely towards equality by the multiplication of the relations of all to each.

The Gospel tells us that many are called but few chosen, and that many of those who are invited will refuse to sit down

¹ Adolphe Monod, in the peroration of his sermon, *Qui a soif?*

at the banquet of eternal life. Observation convinces us that in nature only a limited number of choice germs are developed and perpetuated.

So, too, the Gospel and universal analogy teach us, as by a common accord, that the gift of life is conditional, that progress is effected by a process of elimination, or to vary the expression, that it is needful to "strive to enter in by the narrow door . . . for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many be they that enter in thereby; for narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it."¹

These parallels might be multiplied. From them it appears that the Gospel at the very outset gives to the believer the benefit of that healthful rule, whereof science is only in these later days formulating the definition.

Everything, said Joseph de Maistre, is announcing to us a great unity of some sort towards which we are hastening with rapid footsteps.²

In the words of a profound historian :

A fuller comprehension of the positive spirituality that underlies all forms, although not adequately expressed by any, must at last reconcile all antagonisms. We cannot give up the assurance that above these oppositions there yet rises the unity of a clear and therefore effective consciousness of God.³

In the distance, wrote M. Taine only recently, a moment is perceptible in which those two coadjutors, an enlightened faith and a respectful science, will together work at one picture, or else separately paint the same picture in two different frames.⁴

The time is approaching when God's eternal light, meeting at last with man's reason and experience, will chase from the face of the nations that night in which no man can work. . . . St. Paul said : "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." We ought now to understand for ourselves

¹ *Agönizesthe eiselthein*, Luke xiii. 24 ; Matt. vii. 13. See p. 63.

² *Soirées de St. Pétersbourg*, eleventh conversation.

³ Ranke, at the end of his "History of the Popes."

⁴ *Revue des Deux Mondes*, June, 1891, p. 509.

that which formerly we accepted as told to us. Humanity is reaching adult age, and the dictates of wisdom, patiently inculcated in our childhood by the heavenly Father, ought now, in the light of experience, to display before our eyes the immensity of their truth. St. Paul also said: "We are no longer under a tutor," we are ourselves becoming masters.¹

These are the first dawns of the promised day in which all from the least to the greatest shall comprehend religious truth, when "they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying: Know the Lord," for "the law of the Lord shall be written in their heart."² In the crisis through which we are now passing an imperfect science is shaking the faith of many; a riper science will change faith into sight.

And when, by the easier road of science, the hosts of mankind shall have reached the summits where light in full glory shines, they will there with surprise and joy encounter the men of faith, who, having gone forth from among them, will be found to have arrived long before, under the leadership of Jesus, and by the arduous and blood-stained paths of sacrifice.

Men of science, their minds having attained to maturity and to conformity with universal law and with God himself, will then return, but in resplendent light, to the formulas of the little, the humble, the simple, who with emotion and adoration say: My Father! They will see that those whose hearts were right have from the beginning of the world been in possession of the substantial and whole truth, which a partial thought and an immature science were not in a condition to grasp.³

In this glorious picture there is a dark shadow. It is the void left behind them by the voluntary victims of evil. We have seen that the wish to remove this shadow would be an interference with the principle of individual freedom. But the number of the victims is not fatally fixed; the believer can labour to reduce that number. A sublime vocation, a powerful incentive: he can strive to rescue perishing souls from the nothingness to which they are hastening.

¹ A. Gratry, *La Morale et la loi de l'histoire*, vol. i., p. 159.

² Jer. xxxi. 34, 33.

³ A. Gratry, *La Morale et la loi de l'histoire*, vol. i., p. 46.

This thought brings us back at last to the practical solution of the great problem. The prospect of a more consolatory future; a deeper love for a God better understood; a fear, in view of sin and its inevitable consequences, that is more salutary because more rational and exempt from superstition; and lastly, a more enlightened zeal for the present and future interests of mankind: such will be in every honest and good heart the fruits of the true biblical teaching in relation to immortality.

SUPPLEMENT.

SUPPLEMENT No. I.

THE FIRST FOUNDATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.¹

(See page 17.)

THE book of Dr. Hermann Schultz, of Göttingen, which I am about to give an account of, is entitled *Presuppositions of the Christian Doctrine of Immortality*; in German: *Die Voraussetzungen der Christlichen Lehre von der Unsterblichkeit*.

Although this book was published as long ago as 1861, it still remains the most profound study of the subject that it deals with: viz., the Old Testament considered as the foundation of the Christian doctrine of immortality.

Throughout the book the author uses the word *immortality* in its strict sense of a life beyond the reach of death or destruction, such a life being carefully distinguished not only from a mere survival beyond bodily death, but also from a destructible life, even though that life should be eternally sustained by a power outside itself. Immortality in this strict sense is the absolute possession of God alone; in its relative sense it can only be acquired by man through constant communion with God, and this communion must be of such a nature as will make the man a personal revelation of God as holy love.

Such is the main theme of the book, which is arranged in four chief divisions. Of these, the first treats of human nature in the light of experience; the three others deal with human immortality in relation to creation, sin, and grace.

I. The first division has to do with human nature as it exists under our observation. The author shows that immortality cannot be a native quality in any created being. God is the possessor and only source of life; this is indicated by the names under which he is revealed in the

¹ This statement, prepared by Mr. F. A. Freer with a view to the present work, was read by him before the Theological Society of the Canton de Vaud at its session on 9 June, 1890. It subsequently appeared in the *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie*, for July of that year.

Old Testament, as well as by the formal teaching of the New Testament. If, therefore, any being who is not God has life, and especially if that life be indestructible, that can be so only by virtue of some relation with God. All beings in the universe, visible and invisible, are in relation with God as creatures with their Creator. Man is no exception; his life is not inherent: it is derived, and therefore may be destroyed. That which God has created cannot be a part of God, and consequently cannot have in itself the source of life. The creature must, therefore, be always dependent upon that divine source for the continuance of its life, and cannot be essentially immortal, even though its life should be prolonged to eternity by a power outside itself.

The author here makes a careful examination of the principal arguments that have been advanced by philosophers of various schools, ancient and modern, in favour of the immortality of the soul, arranging them in the order of Göschel's classification as metaphysical, ontological, and teleological, and he comes to the conclusion that they are all insufficient to prove the native and absolute immortality of the human soul.

II. The second division discusses human nature as it was before the fall. By creation man became a living, but not an immortal, being. The Scripture assumes that the soul does not die with the body, and, further, that man is susceptible of immortalization; but it certainly does not teach that the human soul is indestructible. "We have seen," says Dr. Schultz, "that God alone is the source of life, and that the fact of having been created does not suffice to assure immortality to the creature. As an effect of the divine will, man's life might certainly be maintained through eternity, but for all that he would not be, properly speaking, immortal, since his life would always come from without, and might at any time be withdrawn from him. If, therefore, man is called to become immortal without losing his identity, some special relation with God must be open to him whereby he may become partaker of the divine life, so as to feel it to be his own. This is the effect of the ethical relation."

The author refers this ethical relation with God to a second, yet simultaneous, exercise of the creative power, which has made of man a being superior to the animals, and makes it possible for him by his own choice to become a sharer in the divine life. This special creation, on which rest all our hopes of immortality, as described in the second chapter of Genesis, is referred to in the New Testament. God is the supreme personality; man, who is a subordinate personality and an image of God, was not created holy and immortal, but he was endowed with the faculty by which he may attain to the absolute, becoming holy and immortal. He is destined for union with God, but the union can only

be voluntary and moral. By the first creation man is composed of body and soul, like the beasts. There is nothing in that which would make him capable of raising himself to the height of God. It is the second creation that gives him spirit, whereby he is brought into contact with that which is supersensual. The life of this ethical creation is communicated to the soul by the spirit, and to the body by the soul. Man was thus originally endowed with faculties which made it possible for him to attain the purpose of his creation and to acquire immortality. But it is the whole man, not any separate portion of his being, that can become immortal. If he fails to attain the assigned purpose of his being, he also fails of his immortality. The biblical story indicates this consequence when it tells that Adam was driven forth from the garden and from access to the tree of life.

"According to the New Testament," says Dr. Schultz, "the divine λόγος is he through whom and for whom all things have been created. We may, therefore, say that man can become immortal by his relation with the λόγος, the creative Word, who in his own person has furnished the ideal to be realized. The first Adam was created to this end, that in the Son of God he should have eternal life. By the uninterrupted developement of his natural faculties, by the free and voluntary acceptance of the circumstances in which the Creator had placed him, Adam would have united himself with the eternal Son, not indeed physically, so as to lose his own personality, but ethically, so as to acquire the kind of immortality that is accessible to created beings." The conclusion naturally follows: that the creation of man did not confer immortality upon him, but made him capable of acquiring it by continuing in filial relation with God.

III. The subject of the third division is: man and immortality as affected by sin and outside of the economy of grace. In all that has been said thus far the possibility of sin has been implied. Man can attain the purpose of his existence only by becoming voluntarily holy and immortal. It is evident that the possibility of attaining this purpose implies the possibility of failure. According to the Bible, although a possibility, sin is not a necessity of man's nature. In his original and normal condition he needed only to avoid wilful disobedience. When temptation assailed him, he had only to withstand it in order to become immortal.

"This temptation and the possibility of giving way to it," says our author, "were the conditions which would have enabled man to attain the true purpose of his existence. . . . Man was required to overcome the temptation to disobedience which was a consequence of his nature, both spiritual and carnal. . . . He had to overcome that temptation,

even though aggravated by the intervention of a supernatural evil power. Thus only would he have attained immortality."

Death is, therefore, the consequence of the moral failure. This self-chosen separation from God leaves him subject to the law which governs all living creatures, the law of mortality. Death is implied in sin as its necessary result, in accordance with the saying: "In the day when thou eatest thou shalt surely die."

Dr. Schultz regards death as a process, which began at the moment of the first sin, but is not completed by the cessation of bodily life. In the hour of bodily death natural law triumphs, the life-breath, the principle of individual existence, is withdrawn from the man; the body, being of dust, sinks to dust, as an integral part of the material universe. But the man's death is then only in its first phase. The spiritual soul is not delivered from the power of death in consequence of the loss of the body. Begun long before the body died, the work of death goes on long after that event. As life is the sphere of union with God, so death is the sphere of separation from God. The death of the body cannot be regarded as a liberation of the soul; it is rather the abstraction of its substratum, of the organ by means of which the soul acts.

Dying of inanition is the only way in which the soul can perish; it will therefore continue to exist so long as those sources of nourishment are available which can operate without the intervention of the body. Dr. Schultz thinks that the soul may find these sources of vital force in its relation with spiritual powers hostile to God. "The spiritual soul separated from the body, which was the medium connecting it with nature, separated from God, for the full comprehension of whom sin has unfitted it, is now in a state of death.¹ . . . When once those spiritual powers hostile to God shall have been brought to nought in the fire of the divine judgement, the soul, deprived of all support, and having no more vital force, will itself become the prey of utter destruction." This second death will be the completion of the death penalty of sin, the last stage of the long road that leads to death absolute. There could not be endless sufferings unless God, in his holy wrath and to increase the chastisement, should maintain for ever the existence of the soul with the express purpose of causing it to suffer for ever. Such a perpetuation of abortive beings is not at all likely. When God is all in all, when sin and death are no more, there will be no place for beings who are without moral relation with God; otherwise there would be a place where God would not be. God could hardly make free beings and yet make it impossible for them, while failing of their proper purpose, to abolish themselves.

¹ *Todeszustand*. In this expression there is evidently a proleptic element. It is a *mors moriens* as distinguished from a *mors mortua*.

IV. The fourth division of the book treats of man and immortality as affected by the forbearance of God. When man sinned he did not entirely cease to serve as an organ for the personal revelation of God. In strict justice God might at once have left him a prey to the second death ; but God's justice is to be also an exhibition of holy love, and so man comes under the operation of grace immediately after the fall. In all God's subsequent dealings with man punishment and grace go hand in hand, until in the end, by the redemptive work of Christ, grace makes it possible for him to attain the purpose of his existence by becoming a full personal revelation of God. Apart from that work of Christ man remains, and must remain, in his state of death. God's forbearance did not put an end to that state, but it postponed the operation of the second death. The divine forbearance could not restore to the human soul the source of life, for God could not fully reveal himself to man defiled by sin and so rendered incapable of being his organ. He would deny himself if he were to dwell in a soul in which there remained the least unexpiated sin. Even if God were to allow the time of his forbearance to last for ever, the unredeemed soul would still not be immortal, not having life in itself. This supposition, however, is inadmissible, for the rebellious soul, remaining an imperfect revelation of God, would make the fulfilment of the purpose of creation impossible.

The state of the disembodied soul must vary with the varying cases. The one who in this earthly life has yearned after God, and has striven to become as nearly as possible a full revelation of God, finds itself in a state wherein it may hope for more complete satisfaction. It is even possible that such a soul, separate from the body, may enjoy spiritual things none the less, or even more, than when united with the body. On the other hand, the soul that has lived only for itself or for this world must be without hope and in danger of utter destruction. This disembodied state is not a state of rewards and punishments, but only of waiting ; and if forbearance were the only manifestation of the grace of God, there could be no deliverance from this state of death. But God's grace goes farther : it strives to make of humanity a living revelation of the personal God. Still, God could not attain this end by an arbitrary act, by a simple declaration of pardon of sins. As Dr. Schultz says : " It is evident that such a notion is only possible if sin and its punishment are regarded as having only a mechanical, outward, and arbitrary connection. . . . So soon as it is seen that the chastisement of sin, that is, separation from God, is inseparable from the sin, that this abnormal state deprives the soul of the power to maintain a hold on life, that God, who is holy love, cannot be known by a being in whom sin abides, and that the sinful soul is incapable of communion with the divine person-

ality, then will be perceived the inadmissibility of the notion of salvation without moral conversion. It is, moreover, condemned as antichristian by a mere cursory examination of the New Testament."

A renewal of the spirit is necessary. This renewal is made possible by the incarnation, the life and death of Jesus Christ, the sole perfect representative of God. "In a living union with this living Saviour, a union accomplished by faith, now lies for each individual the only and last possibility of incorporating in himself the life principle and so of obtaining immortality, eternal life."

Here follows a lengthened examination of Old Testament views as to the condition of souls after death. The author maintains that the hope of saints under the old covenant amounted only to a survival in Sheol. That survival was, however, not in view of rewards or punishments, although the condition of the souls therein was held to differ according as they had been godly or ungodly. "As a hope of future good, immortality was known to the prophets ; as a positive doctrine, the books of Moses entirely ignore it."

From this brief analysis it will be seen that the work of Dr. Schultz is not a full exposition of the Christian doctrine of immortality ; it merely prepares the way for it ; lays its foundation. In other terms, the author seems to have set forth the premisses of that which in our day is called the doctrine of Life in Christ, or Conditional Immortality.

A letter from Dr. Schultz, received by the writer since the foregoing article was prepared, states that although he would now put his arguments in a somewhat different form, and would use other modes of expression, he feels more than ever assured of the correctness of his main thesis as being the only truly Christian basis for the doctrine of immortality.

SUPPLEMENT No. II.

EVANGELISM AND CONDITIONALISM AS REGARDED BY DR. DALE.

(See page 22.)

ONE of our former publications having been translated into English under the title of *The Struggle for Eternal Life*,¹ Dr. Dale was good enough to write the preface which appears at the beginning of the volume. We reproduce a portion of it, which explains the adhesion of the Birmingham minister to the conditionalist point of view :

¹ See *ante*, p. 24, note 3.

The Essay on *La Fin du Mal*, by my friend Dr. E. Petavel, was read by him rather more than four years ago before the Theological Society of Neuchâtel. It provoked an animated discussion, which was renewed on the following day in the General Assembly of Pastors meeting in the same city, several eminent theological scholars taking part in the debate. The objections urged against the position maintained by Dr. Petavel, with brief replies, are appended to the Essay.

The great doctrines of the Christian faith have such close and organic relations to each other that it is difficult to investigate a question like that which is raised in this volume, without including in the investigation many other questions which it was impossible for my friend to touch. The reorganization of a single doctrine involves the reorganization of that theological province to which it belongs. It is my impression, however, that if the theory vindicated by Dr. Petavel can be sustained—as I think it can—its effect on theological thought will be friendly rather than hostile to those great truths which are commonly known as Evangelical. On one or two points the theory may require that the definition of these truths should be slightly modified, but their substance is left untouched; and if I may judge from my own experience, faith in Evangelical doctrine, instead of being enfeebled by the acceptance of this theory, is made more intense and more vivid.

The present condition of thought in this country on the future of the impenitent is very unsatisfactory, and even perilous. The traditional theory of the endlessness of sin and of suffering has lost its authority. It is probably still retained in the creed of an overwhelming majority of the adherents of the English Church, and in the creed of an overwhelming majority of Evangelical Nonconformists. But its hold on the conviction and on the imagination of those who still believe it is not sufficiently firm to compel them, if they are preachers, to preach it with adequate earnestness and energy; or to enable them, if they are private Christians, to tolerate the vigorous and relentless enunciation of it by their ministers. There are also many who, while they cannot see how the rejection of the traditional theory can be justified by the New Testament, consciously recoil from it as too terrible to be true. To preach it at all, to listen to it at all, is for these men impossible.

The result is that, even among those who have accepted neither the theory of universal redemption, nor the theory advocated in this volume, there is a general avoidance of the appalling revelations of the New Testament concerning the "wrath to come." Men may listen to Evangelical preaching for years, and never be made to feel that their refusal to acknowledge the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ is likely

to be followed by any awful consequences beyond death. The appeal to fear is being silently dropped. Augustine said that it very seldom or never happens that a man comes to believe in Christ except under the influence of terror. This sweeping statement, to whatever extent it may have been verified by his own experience, is flagrantly inconsistent with all that we know of the rise of Christian faith and hope in the souls of men in our own times. But the menaces of Christ *mean something*. The appeal to fear had a considerable place in his preaching; it cannot be safe, it cannot be right, to suppress it in ours. . . .

R. W. DALE.

BIRMINGHAM,
Nov. 18, 1875.

SUPPLEMENT No. III.

VINET'S ESCHATOLOGY.

(See page 63.)

§ 1. WHO POSSESSES IMMORTALITY?

God alone is immortal, and he communicates his immortality only to such as are in conformity with him, to such as are united to him.¹

§ 2. THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

*Extract from a letter to Madame P——.*²

16 March, 1845.

. . . . To tell the truth, Madam, I think that our natural light on the subject of the immortality of the soul is quite insufficient to console and to fortify us, and what the ancients knew about it was very little, and very little consolatory. More than that, *I do not believe in the immortality of the soul*, but in the immortality of man, who is body and soul, a complete and complex whole; that is to say that I believe, with St. Paul, in the resurrection of the body, a dogma more reasonable than the other. Nor do I believe, or at least I have no proof, that God cannot *dissipate this breath, efface this personality, destroy this ego* composed of body and soul (*if, indeed, it is composite*). For this part of my faith I have need, as for all the rest, that God should have been manifest in the flesh. Take away from the world the divine charity manifested in Jesus Christ, take away from it that moral apparition which subjugates the consciences and the hearts, and all becomes dark to me: I have

¹ *Etudes évangéliques*. Discours sur les pierres du temple.

² *Lettres d'Alexandre Vinet*, Lausanne, 1882. Vol. ii., p. 278 sq.; Letter cc.—In this fragment and the two that follow the italics are our own.

only *vague presentiments, conjectures, needs* ; I have not that firm hope which gives life, impulse, support, and power.

§ 3. DANGER OF UNIVERSALISM.

*Extract from a letter to Madame Auguste de Staël*¹

30 September, 1839.

. . . In the opinion of Mme. de B—— there are two distinct parts and degrees : first, all men will hear the voice of the Gospel ; second, all men will listen to it. And it is at once felt that the second of these ideas has more important consequences than the first. The consequences of both are serious. The persuasion that, here or elsewhere, the merciful appeal of the Saviour will be heard, seems to abstract something from the urgency of the order given to us to make known that appeal to every creature ; but there remain always God's order, sacred for every true believer, and the grave uncertainty in which we now are whether the soul, when called later on, will listen as willingly as it would have done earlier ; for *who knows if a life without God, a life of sin, does not wear away the soul and extenuate it to such an extent as to render it incapable of listening, and almost of hearing?* Mme. de B—— puts to herself this question, to which for my part *I should have little hesitation in giving an affirmative answer.* I think that there is a moment known to God alone in which *the renewal of the soul could only be the cessation of its identity.* The Gospel supports this idea by more than one saying, and warrants the belief that for the soul, still living the natural life, there is *a death more absolute*, more irrevocable than that of which St. Paul speaks to the Ephesians when he says : “Ye were dead in trespasses and sins.” But this consideration, which seems to me to urge us with the greatest force to hasten the appeal to souls, does not exist, I admit, for all believers, as they do not all believe in this *remediless mortality of the soul*, or rather of the spiritual and divine principle which reveals itself in the soul. Nevertheless, and all things considered, I do not fear that the persuasion that all, here or elsewhere, *will hear*, is likely to extinguish in the heart of any true Christian his zeal for the conversion of souls. I know men who with that persuasion join with none the less ardour in every work of evangelization.

As for the second degree of the opinion in question, I mean the assurance that all, here or elsewhere, *will listen*, I do not remember very distinctly, Madam, how your late sister expresses herself with regard to it. But it seems to me that she does not admit that there may be for the soul at any period of its existence *a danger of the total extinction of the spiritual principle* ; and it seems to me that in a series of questions,

¹ *Lettres*, etc., p. 84 sq. ; Letter cxliv.

which are questions only in form, *she supposes a final and universal restoration* by means of the acceptance of the offered pardon. If these questions were taken as affirmations, these affirmations, or rather *this affirmation, would appear to me*, on the one hand, *to go beyond* the author's purpose, which is to expound the system of *Christian faith*, and on the other hand *it might excite some uneasiness* in those who, not sharing that conviction of the immortality of the regenerative principle in the human soul, are at the same time well aware that man is disposed to put off his conversion as much from century to century as from year to year. *This uneasiness, this scruple, I feel myself, and perhaps*, if I had to come to a decision as to the advisability of publishing the writing that you have allowed me to read, *it would cause me considerable embarrassment.*

§ 4. THE NOTION OF COMPLETE PERDITION.¹

An object that is lost [absolutely, not relatively lost] is also an object that is destroyed, that no longer has the integrity of its parts and its qualities, that has perished and *is no more.*²

§ 5. IMPLIED POSSIBLE SALVATION OF CONSCIENTIOUS HEATHENS.³

In order simply to say, I have need of a Saviour ; to add even, My punishment is greater than I can bear, Lord be merciful to me a sinner, and if thou canst pardon, pardon me ; in a word, my brethren, in order to feel our faults, to deplore them, to cry unto God from the depths of our distress, to refuse to apply to this interior malady all the dangerous remedies and deceptive palliatives of superstition, to embrace, as our only resource, the pardon of God when offered to us, is it positively necessary to have cognizance of the promise, to have heard the name of Jesus Christ ? My brethren, we could not believe it. . . . We attribute all these sentiments directly to grace, to the influence of the divine Spirit, who has always breathed where he would, and has never allowed himself to be bound ; only we believe that in all ages and in all places

¹ *Le Salut*.—See the *Année pastorale*, by D. Bonnefon, p. 346 ; Paris, 1880. This volume is a collection of plans of sermons, of which the last hundred pages contain notes of a course of homiletics given by Vinet at the Academy of Lausanne. The editor of this appendix, M. Jules Tallichet, a retired pastor, had previously published in the *Église Libre* (1877, Nos. 30-32) the sermon from which the above lines are taken. Vinet had made it the subject of his lesson on 10 Jan., 1843, and M. Tallichet had been able to refer to the summary written by his professor's own hand.

² The text published in the *Année pastorale* has a note here, which is given as being also Vinet's own : "It is said of a man that he is lost or that he loses himself when, having the intention to arrive at such and such a place, or to attain such and such an object, he takes a wrong road which leads him away from the right one and misleads him. If the way that he takes leads him to the edge of a precipice or of an abyss into which he falls, then his loss is *complete and consummated.*"

³ *Nouveaux discours*, Paris, 1842. L'œuvre de Dieu, pp. 120-123.

there have been involuntary witnesses to the great truth which is at the foundation of all Evangelical truths ; we mean the conviction of our first fall, and of our powerlessness to raise ourselves again without the intervention of God himself. Well, what rank would you assign to such souls as had perceived this truth before the great truth of the divine mediation was revealed to them, souls which, so far as was possible to them have believed before having seen, relatively to those souls who, knowing Jesus Christ, believe in him with a literal and passive faith, not with a free consent, but with a servile belief, and who, to sum up all in one sentence, do not go out towards him, do not embrace him, and do not crown themselves with his merits, with his glory, and with their dependence upon him ? Which of these two classes best fulfils the conditions of true faith ? To which of them is their faith the more likely to be imputed as righteousness ? To those whose belief is complete but dead, or to those whose belief is incomplete but living ? To those whose faith is a work, or to those whose faith is not a work ? To those who have not known the Saviour, but who have desired him ; or to those who, knowing him, do not desire or appreciate him ? To those who believe in a Saviour, or to those who believe in the need of a Saviour ? Your conscience, my brethren, shall decide. . . . Ah ! happier in their humiliation, and in their anguish, those who would fain believe and cannot ; those who are moved by a quenchless thirst for righteousness ; those who feel that in the greatest privation they have all if they have God ; those who every day cast off their own merits, even without being able to reclothe themselves, because he by whom they may be clothed has not yet been manifested ; because some obstacle, from without or from within, has hitherto prevented them from believing in Jesus Christ. They will one day believe in him ; God will not leave unfinished a work of which the best part is already accomplished in them. But this painful trial may be still prolonged ; it is needful that the prayers of the Church should work with them, should strive for them ; it is needful that from the midst of the assemblies and from the secret of the closet those who have been delivered should cry to the great Deliverer : " Lord, they believe ; help thou their unbelief."

§ 6. OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRECEDING FRAGMENTS.

In view of that declaration of the first-quoted letter, " I do not believe in the immortality of the soul," one of our opponents, M. George Godet, has recognized that Vinet denies the survival of the soul alone.¹ But since there could be no immortality without survival, we do not under-

¹ *Chrétien évangélique*, 1882, p. 503.

stand how M. Godet could write in the very same paragraph, "Does Vinet deny the immortality of the soul? Not in any way." What! does not Vinet deny immortality understood *in the way* that you have just indicated: the immortality of the soul *alone*, separate from the body? Does it not look as though you were contradicting yourself, and has not the expression betrayed your thought?

You will not contest the evidence. Vinet did at least deny the immortality of the soul *understood in a certain way*. Your "not in any way" reminds us irresistibly of the eloquence of a clever politician addressing the electors of a country village: "Gentlemen," said he, "your village has but little importance (murmurs); allow me to explain, Gentlemen, it has great importance (applause)."

We accept M. Godet's categorical admission: *Vinet denied the immortality of the soul separate from the body*. We ask no more. It has never occurred to us that Vinet was an unbeliever denying the resurrection and all future life; nor have we ever intimated anything of the sort. It is enough for us to show that by denying the *separate immortality of the soul* Vinet broke away at once from Plato, from Descartes, from the old spiritualism, and from the traditional dogma. We even ask ourselves whether that phrase, "I do not believe in the immortality of the soul," ever appeared in French religious literature, with or without comment, before the appearance of Conditionalism. Or, rather, we will hold that such a declaration was already incipient Conditionalism. To borrow an expression from our honoured opponent, when this important denial of Vinet is well weighed "a certain boldness is needed in order to make him a representative" of *unconditional* immortality.

Perhaps, however, we shall be reminded that, after having denied the immortality of the soul alone, Vinet affirms "the immortality of man, who is body and soul." But "man," a collective expression, does not necessarily designate *every man* without exception, very far from it. In this matter Vinet makes important reservations which we will proceed to examine. We speak, of course, of the true Vinet, of the Vinet who had "reconquered himself," who must be preferred to the traditionalist Vinet of earlier years.¹

¹ In his recent studies of *Vinet d'après sa correspondance inédite: Le développement de la pensée de Vinet*, M. de Pressensé has thus expressed himself: "Gradually

It seems to us that the second letter quoted tends to a limitation of the number of actual immortals. Vinet seems to admit the prospect of an "absolute" death. According to M. George Godet, it is there *only* a question of "moral paralysis." We might well ask here what would be a personality of which the moral paralysis should be complete.¹ But to come more directly to the point, we would observe that M. Godet appears to forget that earlier in the same letter Vinet had said that he had *little hesitation in affirming that a life of sin wears away the soul and extenuates it to such an extent that the renewal of the soul could only be the cessation of its identity*. In other words, for Vinet the human soul is that which it is in our own view: a finite, contingent creature, which can be *worn away* and *extenuated*. To what extent? Vinet fixes no limit. Let us, then, prolong the lines, and we shall reach, if not annihilation, at least a quantity practically equal to zero. According to Vinet, in order to restore a soul *worn away* to such an extent, it would be needful to begin by giving it a *new personality*, without identity with the first. This implies that the first personality no longer exists, for if it still existed it would, without perishing, benefit by the eventual renewal of the soul, and it could always be saved by a hypothetic conversion of its will, and so Vinet would not speak of an *inevitable* cessation of identity. If, on the contrary, the first personality ends in non-existence, that is the best proof that it was not immortal. But, as we have said, our business is with the immortality of the personality.² There is no true immortality without the maintenance of conscious identity. It is with the *ego* as with the king in the game of chess: it comes to an end when the king dies.³

Vinet came to understand to what an extent his conception of Christianity obliged him to break away from the dominant orthodoxy on points of the first importance . . . a progressive march on a painful road."—*Revue Chrétienne*, 1 Oct., 1890, p. 268. Let us also here record M. de Pressensé's practical conclusion, as follows: "It is more than ever necessary that the mental activity, the conscientious labour of our French theologians, should be concentrated upon that scientific renovation which is destined to pass beyond the superannuated formulas, and come to close quarters with the eternal gospel."—*Idem*, 1 Nov., p. 331.

¹ A man *completely* deprived of that which Vinet calls *the spiritual and divine principle which is revealed in the soul* would no longer be a being *in the image of God*; and as it is the image of God that essentially distinguishes man from the animals, it may be said that such a man would no longer be a man, but a kind of brute. Is it possible to understand the immortality of such a brute?

² With reference to Professor Drummond, page 33.

³ *Checkmate*, from the Persian *Shah math*, the king is dead; in Hebrew, מָת, participle of מָת, to die.

Let us add that in the fourth quotation Vinet defines his understanding of absolute perdition : *the object completely lost is no more*. An *object* is, according to the dictionary, anything that presents itself to the mind. The soul is an object, so that according to Vinet the soul that is absolutely lost is no more. The preceding quotations prove that he had little hesitation in affirming the possibility of a complete perdition, a "remediless mortality of the soul."

After his definition of absolute perdition, Vinet added : "It is possible that an object may still exist and yet be lost in so far as it had a definite destination to which it no longer answers ; and that except as it responds to that destination *it might just as well not exist at all* : 'It would have been better for him if he had not been born.' It is *especially* in this third sense that we can answer the question raised respecting our text :¹ that which is lost is every man, and it is the whole man."

That word *especially*, on which we lay stress, seems significant ; it contains the idea of *also*. The preacher goes on to develop this third sense ; but far from excluding the two others, he implicitly adopts them. It is as though he had said : "first, every man is a lost being, *gone away*, or *taken away*, from his legitimate possessor ; second, every man is lost, going on towards a *complete destruction* ; third, every man is lost in the sense that he *no longer answers to the destination* apart from which he might as well not exist at all. It is at this last point of view that the preacher will place himself *by preference* in order to consider the sinner's perdition."

The detailed study of the second sense would evidently have scandalized his hearers. Vinet, who thought that the time had not arrived for an open rupture with the traditional dogma, on this point or others, restrains himself, and permits only a glimpse of his inner thought to be perceived. We believe that he would have displayed an heroic courage when the time had come, but men's minds were not then ripe. They are hardly ripe half a century after him. Besides, although Vinet was on the track of Conditionalism, he was still far from having discovered its formula. His dogmatics were preparing to weigh anchor, his thought was at work at the capstan, but the ship had not yet left the traditional port.

¹ "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." Luke xix. 10.

"This reserve on Vinet's part, which we might be tempted to think excessive, resulted from two causes: a psychological cause, which was his scrupulous dread of wounding a single conscience; and an historic cause, arising out of the theological situation of our French Protestantism during his life. He was, in fact, taken from us before the occurrence of the theological crisis provoked by the famous letter of Edmond Scherer on inspiration, and by the foundation of the *Revue de Théologie* at Strassburg. If he had but lived a few years longer, he would no doubt have been obliged to declare himself publicly on the subjects that were then discussed with so much vehemence. His reserve has given a great advantage to the strictly orthodox party, by whom the profound divergences of his views from those accepted by that party have been strangely minimized and even put out of sight. In truth, the portion of his correspondence published by Messrs. Rambert and Charles Secrétan ought to have sufficed to dissipate that illusion. . . . But now the attempt to present to us a Vinet orthodox in the old sense is more and more abandoned."¹

We believe that we have not gone beyond the thought of the Lausanne professor; but if anyone should object that it does not reveal itself to the reader without a certain labour of induction, we willingly admit it. Vinet decidedly had ideas in reserve (*de derrière la tête*), and they are not always to be discovered without an effort.

It will, however, be easy to justify the use of that expression, which has been looked upon as involving a reproach against a man for whose memory we have a very special veneration. M. George Godet has written: "Let us not dwell on the expression, *thoughts in reserve*, which is repugnant when speaking of a man so profoundly sincere as Vinet."²

The repugnance of M. Godet only proves that he has not had occasion to read a certain recommendation of Pascal, wherein the phrase to which objection is taken is used in a good sense. Pascal says: "It is well to have a thought in reserve, and to judge of everything thereby, while speaking, however, like the common people." According to Sainte-Beuve, "that means simply that it is well to have a clear and well-grounded conception of that which the good sense of the common people accepts without understanding."³

¹ E. de Pressensé, *Revue chrétienne*, 1890, p. 263 sq.

² *Chrétien évangélique*, 1882, p. 502.

³ *Pensées de Pascal, disposées suivant un plan nouveau*, by J. F. Astié, p. 270. Paris, Fischbacher, 1883.

But it is so not only with Pascal. A contemporary writer, Amiel, has made use of the same expression without attaching to it an unfavourable meaning, but rather the contrary. He says: "In my reserved thought, my essay is to me of slight importance, and seems lilliputian; I find these trifles useless," etc.¹ Here the *thought in reserve* is surely the wisdom of the inner sense blaming the vanity of the poetical writer. Moreover, Vinet's own comment on this expression is extant. To Louis Leresche, one of his most intimate friends, he wrote in 1823: "I am anxious to see you . . . for there is no one to whom I can open my mind as I can to you; there are *thoughts in reserve*, as Pascal says, which, without dissembling or falsity, we do not care to tell to all the world." We will close by repeating what we wrote seven or eight years ago: "The thoughts in reserve which Vinet whispered in the ear of his correspondents are now published. This event is of a nature to encourage the most timid; it comes to put an end to the esoterism which has so long reigned in respect of these questions. May we not run the risk of following the wise and pious Vinet?"²

SUPPLEMENT No. IV.

ANNIHILATION THE LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE OF THE FALL.³

(See page 71.)

THE Creator's liberty is absolute. The best creation that we can conceive is that of free creatures. But the liberty of the creature is necessarily relative to that of the Creator, and therein lies the origin of good and evil, the possibility of a fall. The fall is a fact originating in liberty although not to be logically deduced from it, but the possibility of a fall is inherent in the best possible creation: that is enough to justify God in permitting the presence of evil, but not enough to satisfy the needs of our thought.

What is the natural and logical consequence of the fall of the creature? In order to understand that, it will suffice to ascertain what is included in the idea of the fall. The fall is a determination of the creature's will in a direction contrary to God's will, that is to say, contrary to the

¹ *Fragments d'un journal intime*, vol. ii., p. 201. Geneva, 1884.

² *Critique religieuse*, Jan. 1883, p. 330.

³ *La philosophie de Leibnitz*, fragment of a course of lectures on the history of metaphysics, by Ch. Secrétan, p. 125s.—Lausanne, 1840.

infinite, the absolute will. Consider that in its origin we can understand the creative will only as a simple, that is, an infinite, absolute will. Now what is the consequence of this collision between the two wills? It is impossible to conceive of any other than that the creature's will should cease to be, for if it were otherwise the Creator's will would no longer be absolute, but limited, limited by the contradiction endured. The creature's will ceases to be. But, according to what we have said, the creature is made for the exercise of his will. Liberty is the reason of his existence, liberty is his essence; the annihilation of his liberty is then the annihilation of his essence. It is then the whole creature that is annihilated by the collision of the two wills, and that infallibly, irresistibly. Any other view of the case would be arbitrary and at bottom contradictory; for, without going any farther, if you suppose the creature continuing to exist without liberty, you suppose the continuance of a thing without a purpose. The creature would exist, being no longer the best, since that which entitled it to be so called was the liberty itself. The creature would be no longer worthy of God; to suppose its continuance, in whatever mode, is to set up a contradiction to the idea of God. The direct consequence of the fall is the total annihilation of the creation, if the will which at first formed it is to continue to reign without any obstacle. It is taken back, it has no existence, everything returns to the fathomless abyss of the eternal absolute essence.

But in fact events have not so happened, the creature has endured. The fall truly has taken place, for evil exists, and yet the creature has continued to exist, we are here and we are speaking. Besides, wonderful fact! the creature exists with his liberty, not, of course, with the perfect liberty of the primitive creature, but still he is free. We are free, we will, we have power to will with or against God!

This proves to us that our previous reflections did not take in the whole case, and that God's liberty is infinite in a way different from what we thought. The theoretical problem may now be stated thus: The free creature having set himself in contradiction to God's liberty, how can he continue to exist as a free creature? Evidently that is because God's liberty is not only infinite externally, if we may so express it, but is also infinite internally. By virtue of this infinity it has imposed upon itself a limit. It has restricted itself, repressed itself, withdrawn itself, so as to leave room for the creature's liberty; while naturally this would have been annihilated by God's liberty, which occupies all space, that is to say, all existence.

SUPPLEMENT No. V.

A STUDY OF EVIL.¹

(See page 84.)

I. THE notion of evil is twofold. It implies the *fault* of a responsible agent and by metonymy the *effects of the fault*.

Viewed from the religious standpoint the fault bears the name of *sin*. In accordance with biblical data, sin may be thus defined: *the insensate rebellion of a conscient and free creature, whose egoism rebels against the Creator*. There are creatures who on their own sole responsibility and in their pride break the bonds of love which united them to their Creator, creatures that prefer nonentity to any sort of dependence. "God being the supreme good, God being love, and love being definable as the union of self-assertion and self-abandonment, sin consists in asserting self against God, in abandoning self to that which is not God, in not loving God, and in loving that which is not God instead of him."²

Sin is insensate, for it tends to separate the creature from the God who gives it life; it is "the effort of a being towards nonentity;"³ "that which exists without having a reason for its existence."⁴ "Good can exist without evil. . . . Evil is an intruder and a parasite in the world . . . it is the will that is self-centred and sets up itself as sovereign authority, the will of the free individual taking itself for its rule . . . beginning with pride, or self-exaltation, ending with the subjection or the overthrow of all that resists it."⁵ "It is an historic fact, which implies the previous creation of a free agent by a free God."⁶ Sin is fundamentally the only evil; it has been called the *principal evil*.⁷ It is more than privation of good,⁸ it is hostility against good, its contrary and not merely its opposite.⁹

"There is good reason for regarding as a fourth postulate that which in terms of religion would be called the postulate of *sin*. This is no less essential than the others to the definition of a moral world, since by it alone is it possible, while tracing physical evil to fault, to regard radical evil as a fact which *has been*, but which *might not have been*, and whereof the condition of possibility was a good, namely liberty. It is only in this way that pure goodness can be perceived as presiding over the

¹ This essay is the reproduction, with some additions, of an article that we were asked to prepare for F. Lichtenberger's *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, see vol. viii., pages 580-590.—Evil being the great obstacle in the way of the *immortalization* of human nature, a study of the subject is in its proper place in our book.

² Dörner.

³ Charles Secrétan.

⁴ J. F. Astié.

⁵ Louis Choisy.

⁶ César Malan, jun.

⁷ F. Pillon.

⁸ Augustine.

⁹ Thomas Aquinas.

origin of things as it may also preside over their end, and that the problem of the world's morality receives its solution."¹

Sin is displayed, consummated, and exhausted in *effected evil* (Germ. *Uebel*), which extends from the rebellious will to all the sinner's faculties, and to the world that surrounds him. The increasing disorder attains its climax in the arrest of all vital functions, and if no remedy is found the sinner finally perishes body and soul.² As is practically and legitimately admitted, *good* is life with all that maintains and favours it.³ It has been recognized that the instinct of self-preservation is the strongest of all natural instincts. *Effected evil* must then be all that which is contrary to life, which obstructs and destroys it; its completion is in death, which is the extinction of life.

Evil in man is in its essence a culpable as well as absurd recoil towards nonentity. By extension the notion of evil includes everything that interferes with the interests of the man, everything that brings to him damage, hindrance, pain, or displeasure. The greatest of evils in principle is moral evil, that is to say, sin with a sense of guilt (*culpa*), and remorse, the most terrible of all sufferings, the bitterness of which is *sui generis*. There is a direct connection between moral evil and the crimes and vices with their hereditary influence, whereof the malignity is felt by every individual of the human race;⁴ also between moral evil and social disorders: wars, slavery, idolatry, polygamy, prostitution, pauperism, etc.

The term *physical evil* has been applied to sickness and to the perturbations of nature: earthquakes, cyclones, hailstorms, inundations, the furious and often cruel fights among the animals in the struggle for life, pestilences, famines, etc. The term *evil* is also applied to sufferings of the affections, of the body, of the mind, to the lack of fitness or propriety, to the error that shocks the reason and the ignorance that humiliates it, to the ugliness that offends the æsthetic sense, and indeed to all that is out of place, to all that appears to be without use or purpose.

Ignorance, when not the result of idleness, is occasioned by that which Leibnitz has called *metaphysical evil*. Every creature being necessarily limited, is consequently *imperfect*. This so-called evil is

¹ Renouvier, *Esquisse d'une classification systématique des doctrines philosophiques*. Vol. ii., p. 333. Paris, 1886.

² Matt. x. 28.

³ Lange.

⁴ "That which has made men sinners is the physical and physiological heredity of inclinations satisfied in spite of the conscience and strengthened by that satisfaction, and then the solidarity produced by customs and institutions, by education and imitation. . . . So much is there of truth in that corruption of human nature which is neither a miracle nor a mystery, but a fact which is repeated every day under our eyes on a constantly varying scale." Renouvier, *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*. Fragment quoted by M. Astié in his article *Péché (Sin)*, p. 371.

really a good. Implying the possibility of sin, "it is the condition of the morality of the universe."¹

According to the Bible, God has so arranged the world that sin has produced *evils*. By a simultaneous and mutual action of the divine justice and mercy, *evil as adversity* becomes also chastisement. Sin, in principle free, comes to bear a *providential* character. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps";² amidst all the agitations of life God leads him. Suffering the consequences of his fault, seeing with dismay his disfigured countenance in the mirror of evil, the chastised sinner is urged to repentance.³ *Evil as chastisement* thus becomes for him *evil as a benefit*. At its starting-point insensate, evil thus fulfils a purpose, it becomes subservient to the conversion and salvation of the sinner. If the culprit remains obstinate, his final and total destruction will produce a salutary fear in the survivors. Pardoned or punished, evil serves to reveal and glorify two divine attributes: the avenging justice and the clemency of the sovereign law-giver. Both of these shine forth to the eyes of faith from the cross of Calvary.

II. These biblical theses as to the *origin*, the *nature*, and the *teleology* of evil command the respect of our religious consciousness. They put aside and replace the explanations of this great problem that have come down to us from pagan antiquity. At the bottom all paganism is a more or less disguised pantheism. But from the pantheistic point of view evil exists necessarily, for it is more or less closely connected with the divine nature. If it is necessary, it ought to exist; if it ought to exist, it is good. This explanation of evil amounts to a denial that it exists.

In the systems of his own invention man exculpates himself by accusing nature. Adam's excuse, which cast the blame of his fault upon the wife given him by God, reappears, so to speak, in pagan *ponerology*. The seduction of the world is considered as the sole cause of sin, and evil is held to result from the nature of things. In the dualist religions⁴ evil is personified; it is God equally with the good principle. *Matter* is often regarded as the eternal principle of evil. In the Hindoo pantheism matter is injurious through the deceptive magic of its continual transformations; in the Chinese doctrine of Fo-hi or Fo, it is the feminine or passive principle; in the Greek system it is blind, and

¹ Ch. Secrétan.

² Prov. xvi. 1, 9.

³ Jer. ii. 19.

⁴ Persian, Slavonic, ancient Scandinavian, Paulician, Catharesian, etc.—Dualism, by considering evil as necessary, weakens the moral energy and deadens the sense of sin.

without real existence. It is none the less considered as eternal in its resistance to the God who organizes it. • Underneath this dualist opposition there is the hidden unity of pantheism. The opposition is produced by emanation from the eternal principle of the divinity: a descending emanation in the Hindoo system of the Vedas; ascending in the Greek theogony. Among the Hindoos the starting-point of the emanation is the original light of Brahm, sinking down into the lower world of phenomena; while among the Greeks the Olympian gods arise out of Chaos by the help of other and obscure divinities.

The wisest philosophers, Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, erred grievously on this question of evil. According to Aristotle, real evil is only imperfection of being. Socrates imagined that "error is the only origin of our evil actions"; that men are deceived as to the nature of their obligations, but that "they do that which they regard as their duty." The poet Euripides, his contemporary, could have given him a lesson in true philosophy on the subject, by reminding him of this elementary truth: "We know what is good, we acknowledge it; but we fail to do it."¹ "Error and sin are closely related, but they are perfectly distinct facts. Error has its seat in the intellect, but sin is an act of the will."²

The fault of the Socratic philosophy is accentuated and aggravated in neo-Platonism. Plotinus said: "Without the existence of evil the world would be less perfect"; and in order that no doubt should remain as to the scope of this declaration, he expressly ranks wickedness among the elements that contribute to the perfection of the universe.

Yet the voice of conscience made itself heard even among the heathen. It speaks in various myths relating to the fall.³ In Parseism the fall of the first couple (Meschia and Meschiana) is connected with that of Ahriman and with the evil world created by him. In the Hindoo mythology the sinners of this world are spirits incarnate, undergoing imprisonment in punishment for offences committed in heaven.

The philosophical and religious systems of Christendom have too habitually failed to recognize the rights of conscience. We will mention particularly the gnostic doctrines, the theory of Augustine, and that of Pelagius.

The Syrian gnosticism of Saturninus, that of Marcion, and the Manichæan conceptions proceeded from the Persian dualism. Basilides and Valentinus had taken for the foundation of their teaching the emanation of the Hindoo system, mixing up Platonic ideas with it.

¹ *Hippolytus*, tragedy, verse 380, *sq.*, and Ovid, *Metam.*, vii. 20, *sq.*

² E. Naville. ³ Prometheus, Edda.

Carpocrates went so far as to attribute to all natural inclinations the force of legal obligation.* The serpent-worship or gnosticism of ancient Egypt was a most dangerous antinomism ; it identified evil with the laws revealed in the Old Testament. Greek idealism in very early times infiltrated itself into the theology of the Fathers of the Church, and so passed into scholasticism.¹

The doctrine of Augustine was grafted upon Platonism ; it went beyond the biblical teaching, seeing in the mortal sin of the first man the destruction by anticipation of all true liberty for his descendants. Pelagianism made the contrary mistake of denying absolutely the heredity of evil.

The conceptions of pagan antiquity are reflected in many modern systems. There are some which approach towards gnosticism by the hypothesis of evil inherent in matter. Dualism has its representatives.² We perceive its influence in the ecclesiastical dogma which makes Satan the chief of an imperishable kingdom of immortals like himself. Other theories remind us of Brahminism by the supposition of a fall occurring before all time in the world of *the creative idea*.³ Ophitism or serpent-worship was a forerunner of the systems which connect the notion of evil with that of primitive life, and see in the first transgression the emancipation of a slave.⁴ According to Edmond Scherer, "Evil is the condition of the spiritual developement of humanity throughout the ages." In the grosser pantheism of Spinoza, evil is only that which prevents our enjoyment ; with more rigorous formulas, it is the old theory of Carpocrates. Those systems which treat evil as the result of an eternal conflict between matter and spirit are closely related to Pelagianism. From the standpoint of rationalism, evil is produced by the domination of sentient matter over the spirit, or by a discord between these two factors of human life ; as though moral evil had not its seat in the rebellious spirit, matter being entirely without will and morally neuter.⁵ According to Schleiermacher, evil has no objective existence ; it has no reality except in the human consciousness ; it manifests itself in consciousness of evil ; then the spirit triumphs over the sentient nature in repentance. Augustinism reappeared in the rigid dogmatics of the supralapsarian Protestants. Pelagianism is a characteristic feature of the new rationalism. It may be said that the *Theodicy*

¹ "Scotus Erigenus, yielding to his Platonizing tendency, declares evil to be absolutely necessary, while for Augustine it was only relatively so. It becomes an indispensable factor, like the shade in a picture." Astié, art. *Péché*, in the *Encycl. des sciences rel.*, 1881, p. 337.

³ Kant, Steffens, etc.

² Jacob Böhme, Bayle, Schelling, Daub, etc.

⁴ Hegel, K. L. Michelet, etc.

⁵ The Greek Fathers had recognized this : Τὸ σῶμα οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει, ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος ἡ ψυχή.

of Leibnitz betrays the pantheistic element of Platonism. God's nature takes precedence of his will : "Sin is, not because God wills it, but because God is." The absence of sin would interfere with the universal harmony. Augustine had already expressed similar views;¹ he inclined towards the same optimism; he is known to be the author of the pernicious and celebrated hyperbole : "*O felix culpa quæ talem ac tantum meruit habere Redemptorem! O certe necessarium Adæ peccatum, quod Christi morte deletum est!*" It was reserved for contemporary pessimism to identify existence and life with evil, so that the essence of evil would have its seat in the *wish to live*.²

Kant's philosophy and that of M. Charles Secrétan deserve honourable mention as having vindicated the supreme authority of conscience and liberty. M. Secrétan has sought to maintain both the liberty of man and that of God. Julius Müller has pointed out the principle of the eternal necessity of evil in most if not all of the systems that we have just referred to. We have not space to enter upon that analysis. We will confine ourselves to the support of the theses formulated at the beginning of this article, by means of passages of Scripture and some considerations respecting them. This is the more necessary as among those propositions there are some which might pass for being new, although in fact they are as old as the apostolic age. But in order faithfully to interpret the texts "it is needful to break away more than has hitherto been done from the false or insufficient doctrines of Greek tradition."³

III. Moses said : "I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil."⁴ There is the relation between cause and effect. Moral good perpetuates life; moral evil leads to death. The words just quoted seem to sum up the teaching of the Pentateuch. They set forth the principal terms of the problem propounded at the outset of the book of Genesis.

Almost at his first step along the road of life, Adam sees temptation rising before him. Supreme goodness could not but confer upon his most favoured creatures the supreme good of liberty. But liberty involves the danger of a fatal choice. Not being a machine, an automaton, an irresponsible being, such as the animal, the idiot, or the newborn babe, man, by himself, must make his own choice. Created innocent, he has to *become* righteous and holy; this is required by the law of liberty, which is also the law of moral progress. Where would

¹ *De Gen. ad lit.*, xi., 7, sq.; *De lib. arb.*, iii. 9.

² Schopenhauer, Leopardi, Hartmann.

³ Ernest Naville, *L'Évangile et la philosophie, Chrétien évangélique*, Oct. 1874.

⁴ Deut. xxx. 15.

virtue be if there were no possibility of being vicious? Virtue is a thing so beautiful and so good that, for the sake of its possession, it is worth while to be exposed to the greatest of dangers, that of being able but not willing to attain it.

The prohibition relative to the tree of knowledge of good and evil was to raise the spirit of Adam and Eve above the inferior enjoyments of sense and of vanity. Man was intended to learn to prefer God and communion with him, or in other terms virtue and holiness, moral and religious progress, above those external advantages of which the value although more apparent was really less. Such is the condition of all education, and the fundamental purpose of the present life, which is the testing time of candidates for a life eternal; some, even the majority, despise this sublime vocation, while a chosen few, comparatively, "by patience in well-doing seek for glory, honour and incorruption."¹

It is for each one to make his own choice according to his understanding, and to determine his own course among a thousand different ways; the only course that he is not free to take is that of never choosing. The refusal to make a choice is not merely forbidden, it is impossible. People talk of equalities that are chimerical; here is an equality that is veritable and fundamental, universal and tragical: the equality of all in respect of the obligation of making a choice, sooner or later, between the flesh and the spirit, between the old and the new man, between retreat and progress. In presence of this great equality all the provisional inequalities of strength, knowledge, fortune, are diminished or effaced. Even the greatest of potentates and the man of superlative genius must make this choice, must rise in the moral scale, and rise continually, or else go down, down, and perish for ever.

The divine fatherhood is far from being a lax indulgence. The living God wills, at all costs, the progress of his creature. The Spartan mother whose son was starting for the battle, handing him his shield, said: "With it or upon it; victorious, bring back thy shield, or let it be thy bier!" The divine law of moral progress cries to each one of us: "March, or die!"

Men of honour understand this language, the cowards make vain efforts to evade the unavoidable necessity of choosing; useless efforts, for in the case of a responsible being the refusal to choose the good is itself to choose the evil. In the Greek language a wicked man is first of all a coward.²

To this category belonged a poor paralytic whom a Christian was

¹ Rom. ii. 7.

² *Κακός* probably from *χάζω*, *χάζομαι*, to draw back, to slink away. *ῥποχωρῶν*, stealing away. *Etym. mag.*

exhorting to patience and moral conversion ; he refused, saying : " Change my disposition, adopt new sentiments, I shall do nothing of the sort ; why did not God make me good all at once ? " So he envied the condition of the bee that makes its honey and the sheep that gives its wool without either knowledge or will ; as though there were not already a sufficient number of beings that are stationary in their native goodness ! God, on his part, desires the multiplication of free creatures who are voluntarily progressive.

But it will perhaps be said that the Creator might have so acted that the choice of evil should be immediately followed by the death of the culprit : why should there be a long and painful period of decay preceding the final destruction of the sinner ? We answer that a finite being cannot manifest himself entirely in a single act. Universal analogy indicates a gradual developement of all things, and with the providential intervention of grace, a period of suffering and decline gives an opportunity for the conversion and salvation of the culprit.

IV. The story in Genesis is complicated by a mysterious element : the intervention of a tempter in the form of a serpent. According to the New Testament, this serpent is " the Devil, who was a man-killer from the beginning."¹ The serpent was no doubt chosen as an emblem of the malign power because of two of its special physiological characteristics. First, having no eyelids, a transparent membrane taking the place of those movable veils, the serpent is, at least apparently, the animal that has its eyes always open. It may thus be understood why, notwithstanding the smallness of its brain, it has been thought the wisest, the most vigilant, and the most intelligent of all animals. It was thus that the owl among the Greeks was an emblem of wisdom because it sees in the dark. The name of the *dragon*, a kind of serpent, means : *the one that sees*.² The serpent has even been worshipped, seeing that

¹ John viii. 44 ; Rev. xii. 9 ; xx. 2.

² Δέρκομαι or δράκομαι, to have good sight.—The eyes symbolize knowledge ; εἶδω means both to *see* and to *know*. To have the eyes open is to be circumspect ; to have them *always open* is to exercise unremitting vigilance.

In heraldry the serpent is the hieroglyph of wisdom. In the *caduceum*, which was always carried by the Greek heralds in their negotiations, the two serpents *facing each other* probably were symbols of the wisdom which when it exists *on both sides* pacifies enmities. The serpent was believed to see in the night, and so it was consecrated to Æsculapius, the god of medicine, and to his daughter Hygieia, goddess of health. A divinatory perception was considered to be characteristic of the healing art. The diagnosis of a clever practitioner had made an impression on the popular imagination.

In Egypt the gods and the kings are always represented with the *ureus* or curled serpent upon the head. In Greece, Pallas Athene, goddess of wisdom often wears a necklace of entwined serpents ; sometimes, too, a reptile entwines itself at her feet. The serpent placed in front of a mirror would be the symbol of reflective wisdom. Serpents are still worshipped in Africa, in India, and in the West Indies. In the kingdom of Dahomey a temple has been erected in their honour.

in the popular imagination it possessed the divine attribute of perpetual watchfulness without any interval of sleep. The dragon was sacred to Minerva ; true wisdom never sleeps. One of the oldest gnostic sects, the Ophites, or serpent-worshippers, attributed to the serpent universal knowledge.

The second physiological peculiarity of the serpent is that under an inoffensive appearance it often conceals a mortal venom which has an almost magical effect. Clearness of sight, malignity, perfidy, terrible and mysterious power, all these qualities would naturally make of the being in which they were united the symbol of a *maleficent intelligence*.

The Bible is very sober in its teaching as to the personality of Satan : it presents him to us as aiding in the fall of man. The part that he plays in the drama is the ground of a divine intervention for the purpose of saving his dupes. We see in him a creature who, like man and before him, took advantage of his liberty in order to do evil, and who, by occult means that we know not of, can exert a pernicious influence. This is in the domain of faith ; but, apart from the personality of Satan, may it not be said that, from a moral and psychological point of view, there is in every man a fatal disposition to imagine that he can do evil with impunity and obtain from it some positive advantage ? At the basis of a culpable consent there is the illusion which prevents the recognition of the inevitably *deleterious* character of the fault : "Ye shall not surely die," said the Serpent. In fact, that lie prevails even to the present day in the so-called "orthodox" doctrine of unconditional immortality. But it will not always prevail. The day is approaching, promised in the protevangel of Genesis, when the serpent's head will be crushed. In the Hebrew language the head means also the principle and essence of the being ; it contains the brain that conceived the falsehood, and the tongue that uttered it.

V. Whatever may be the value of these interpretations of detail, we believe that the foundation of the story of the fall rests on the very nature of things. It is a question of the conditions of good and evil, of life and death. In order to ascertain these, reference must be made to the notion of being, and to the conditions of existence. Universal analogy shows that a being can maintain its existence only by virtue of a double series of relations : interior relations between its several constituent elements, and exterior relations with other beings. To maintain these relations is to maintain the being that sustains them ; to develop and multiply them will be in the same measure to develop and increase the being ; to cause these relations to cease is to destroy the being :

the same result will be produced by the substitution for the normal relations of other relations incompatible with the nature of the being.¹ Disintegration and final ruin become the portion of the being that is outside of the conditions of its existence. It is the fate of the locomotive that is broken and very soon comes to a standstill after having run off the rails.²

The moral law determines the conditions of existence for individuals endowed with liberty. There is no long life for man without some degree of virtue ; all excess tends to the shortening of life. History shows us that the duration of empires is in direct relation with their morality.³

Except the pessimists, there are few people who would refuse to subscribe to the principle laid down on the first page of Scripture. The creation of being is the primary good ; consequently its destruction is an evil. The creation of man, the crown and keystone of the arch of our universe, is a very great good : after the formation of man, God saw that it was very good.⁴ The destruction of man will therefore be a very

¹ It is possible to define *good* by saying that it consists in the existence of beings and the maintenance of the normal relations that unite them. A relation is normal when, being founded on the nature of things, it does not by its establishment diminish the number of pre-existing relations, but on the contrary is favourable to the formation of more numerous normal relations. The multiplication of normal relations, and of beings that sustain them, constitutes *progress*. The destruction of a being or of any of its relations is an evil whenever it is not indispensable in view of the establishment of a greater number of relations. Evil would consist in the establishment of abnormal relations tending to diminish the number of beings and of the normal relations between the beings.

² In other terms, the *supreme* evil in the individual ends in the destruction of the being ; *partial* evil suppresses one or another special faculty.

"What is it that humanity in all ages has called evil if not the act, whatever it may be, which *suppresses* or *restrains* in us a force, or a faculty, or a sense, or an organ, or an action, or an affection, or a cognition ?

"For example, you call paralysis an evil because it *destroys* movement ; slavery, because it *mutilates* the will ; deafness, because it *stifles* speech in its passage ; blindness, because it *extinguishes* the ray of light on our eyeball ; prison, because it raises a barrier between the world and the man, and thus *intercepts* sympathy, that is to say, the soul of each one as represented in the soul and multiplied by the soul of each other ; proscription, because it deprives us of our country and makes of the whole world a prison without walls ; and lastly death, because it violently and prematurely *suppresses* the life in full possession of itself and in its full power."—Eug. Pelletan, *Profession de foi du dix-neuvième siècle*, p. 387. Here again the italics are our own.

³ "History does not permit us to doubt that the destiny of each nation is generally in proportion to its degree of morality. The picture of the misfortunes of peoples becomes confounded with the picture of their crimes ; and the annals of societies that are decaying are little more than the representation of a *prolonged suicide*. The general history of humanity leads to the same conclusion ; it refers most of the misfortunes under which the human race is groaning to a principle of corruption, everywhere diffused, which vitiates its faculties, misdirects its forces, interferes with its action, and makes of even its most glorious developments a series of frightful convulsions, of murderous shocks, and of bloody catastrophes."—Vinet, *Nouv. études évang.* pp. 247 and 248. Paris, 1851.

⁴ Gen. i. 31 ; cf. ver. 4.

great evil ; this is the reason why Jesus calls Satan, the type of evil, "a man-killer."¹ In the Hebrew language evil is primarily a *rupture* ; etymologically and metaphorically, a *corruption*.²

The law of progressive developement being admitted, sin in man will consist in the refusal to develop the superior elements of his nature, reason and the religious sentiment. This refusal is a beginning of self-destruction. Every sinner lowers himself in the scale of being. The palm-tree of which the top withers will die altogether. The man who does not rise, descends. Sin thus becomes a retrogression towards the condition of the animals.³

Although in a grotesque form, there was a profound thought in those mediæval paintings wherein Satan is represented as a man on the way to become animalized, with cloven foot, goat's horns, and the tail of certain quadrumana.⁴ The return towards the animal state is evident in the coarse passions which carry off and kill so many victims. The more subtle sins of ambition, falsehood, pride, and religious indifference are also mortal. They destroy the normal relations of man with God and with the world ; these relations being necessary to human life, the egoist at last perishes in a sort of asphyxia. As Vinet has said, "We live in proportion as we love ; egoism is a consumption, a death, a suicide."⁵

The notion of retribution naturally springs out of that of evil. The punishment of sin is identical with its consequence for the sinner ; it is measured out in an adequate, exact, and necessary proportion to the evil committed.⁶ The ancients gave it the name of Nemesis. With sin and its punishment it is as with those ingenious suspended apparatus which can be raised or lowered at will, and always adjust themselves and maintain their equilibrium. Evil becomes its own chastisement ; it kills the evil-doer.⁷ It is none the less God who chastises, since it is he who

¹ John viii. 44 ; cf. Rev. ix. 11.

² רעע adj. *bad* and subs. *evil*, moral and physical, from רעע, *to break noisily* (Ps. lxxiv. 3). So also the French word *mal* (*evil*) is derived from the Sanscrit *mar* or *mal*, *to crush or pulverize*. עורה *to curve or twist*, *piel to overturn*, whence עון *iniquity*, חטא, עול, *deviation, error*, הבל, *vain* ; נבלה, *folly*. In the New Testament sin is also presented as a dissolving, disorganizing principle. Gal. vi. 8 ; Rom. vii. 5 ; James iv. 1, etc.

³ *Pêché* (sin), from the Latin *peccatum*, connected with *pecus* (a sheep), whence the French *pecore* (beast, fool). Cf. Ps. xlix. 12.

⁴ In the fanciful illuminations of some missals Satan has a human body, but hairy, with a goat's beard, ears, horns, and tail, and an eagle's claws.

⁵ *Nouveaux discours*, p. 414 ; cf. p. 61, sq. Paris, 1841.

⁶ Eccl. xii. 14 ; Matt. xvi. 27.

⁷ Ps. xxxiv. 21 ; cf. xciv., 23 ; Prov. viii. 36, xiii. 6 ; Jer. ii. 19 ; see also *Supplement* No. VI.—"The ills that come directly from God's hand are the least frequent and the least numerous. In order to punish man God needs little besides man ; and all the forces of nature could not cause to us one half of the evil that we cause to

has established beforehand the correlation between sin and death. In creating, governing, rewarding, and punishing, everywhere and always, God acts only through intermediaries. Natural necessity is the divine will, since it is the work of God.¹

The New Testament confirms and completes the same teaching. Evil proceeds from the responsible will of the creature,² seduced by lust, by the world that lieth in the wicked one,³ and by Satan.⁴ It consists in the violation of the divine law.⁵ Sin, when full-grown, engenders death;⁶ but, thanks to the compassionate wisdom of God, the very effects of sin sometimes serve in the salvation of the sinner. In the greatest crime ever committed on earth, in the murder of Jesus Christ, the Gospel enables us to see an occasion for the highest manifestation of goodness, in the heroic devotion of the victim, and indirectly a means of saving those who believe.⁷ Those who, on the contrary, reject this same means of salvation, will be definitively lost.⁸ Sin will then in the end contribute to the creation of a new bond between the creature and his Saviour God, the bond of an altogether special thankfulness.⁹ When this result shall be attained, "evil must be annihilated."¹⁰

VI. This leads us to speak of the *end of evil*. Faith in Jesus Christ puts an end to *moral evil* by renewing the will,¹¹ and thereby the whole man.¹² The end of moral evil will bring about the end of *physical evil*, which exists only on account of moral evil.¹³ Not that it dates only

ourselves."—Vinet, *Nouvelles études évang.*, p. 245. Paris, 1851.—"Such as we are, we need to see that misery springs from evil, and that the sinner is punished by his sin. It is the will of God himself that so it should be; he has voluntarily left to our evil deeds the greater part of the execution of the sentence pronounced against them; and there is nothing to prevent our belief, but rather everything to lead us to think, that the punishment of evil, here below and elsewhere, will be entirely the result of the evil itself, so that the merciful design conceived by God in our favour finds its full accomplishment in our regeneration, or our interior deliverance, the basis of which is the good news of pardon."¹—Vinet, *Études sur la littérature française au dix-neuvième siècle*, vol. i., p. 341. Paris, 1849.

¹ "God will not separate that which he himself has united. But he has united, by their basis, by their very essence, sin and misery, as well as happiness and virtue. He has made these things in such a way that they answer to each other, as the eye to the light, as the lungs to the air. He has put into our conscience the need for this correspondence, and the conviction that in the end misery must be connected with sin, that holiness and happiness will eventually be inseparable."—Vinet, *Le méchant et le jour de la calamité (Nouveaux discours)*, p. 61. Paris, 1841.

² James i. 13, 14; iv. 17; Matt. xxiii. 37; John v. 40.

³ 1 John v. 19.

⁴ 1 Thess. iii. 5.

⁵ 1 John iii. 4.

⁶ Rom. vi. 21, 23; viii. 6, 13; Gal. vi. 8; Phil. iii. 19; James i. 15; 1 John v. 16.

⁷ Acts ii. 17, 21; iii. 13-15; iv. 27, *sq.*; cf. Gen. i. 20.

⁸ John xv. 22, 24; 2 Cor. ii. 15; Heb. x. 26-29.

⁹ Rev. v. 9.

¹⁰ Martensen, *Dogmatique*, translation of M. Ducros, p. 254.

¹¹ 1 Pet. i. 22.

¹² Rom. xii. 2; 2 Cor. iv. 16.

¹³ Ps. cvii. 33-36; Rom. viii. 18-22; Moulinié.

from the deluge or from the fall of man. Geology and palæontology teach us that cosmic evil goes back to the first days of creation. Therein some have seen an invasion of fallen angels, who are supposed to have created the monstrous beasts of the antediluvian world.¹ In support of this idea has been introduced the translation, "The earth became waste and void";² but M. Le Savoureux has made it clear that such an interpretation is not warranted by exegesis.³ Having nothing but hypothesis to deal with, we should prefer to suppose that, foreseeing the possibility of the fall, God when creating the world introduced into it, *in materiam vilem*, physical evil, which in itself is without sin; so that, if the case should arise, it might serve to instruct and correct the sinner. It is thus that, in prospect of possible sickness and accidents, a ship is supplied with poisons which may serve as remedies; surgical instruments, too, are added, which an ignorant person might take for instruments of torture.

Thus would be explained the passages in which God is said to have created darkness and evil.⁴ *Cosmic evil* would then not be the effect of sin, since it existed beforehand. God would have created it "in view of the possibility of sin," as a resource laid up in reserve for the eventual correction and salvation of delinquents.⁵

In the hands of the divine educator, physical evil still serves in the developement of energy of character; it obliges man to become prudent and provident; it excites a noble compassion; it can even provoke heroism.

That *physical evil* can be a benefit seems to be indicated by the respective morality of the northern and southern peoples, in Europe as well as in America. The delights of Capua enervated Hannibal's soldiers, whose courage had been invigorated in crossing the glaciers of the Alps. No climate can be more charming than that of some islands in the Pacific Ocean: there reigns perpetual spring; there the bread-fruit-tree furnishes abundant food that needs no preparation; but such has been the corruption of morals that the indigenous population is rapidly disappearing. But let us now turn to Iceland, one of the poorest countries of the globe. Terrible famines have decimated these islanders,

¹ Splittgerber.

² Gen. i. 2.

³ *Bulletin théol.*, 1864.

⁴ Isa. xlv. 7; Amos iii. 6.

⁵ "From the moment when the personal and free God determined, in his love, to create a free being in his own image, he had necessarily to take the risk of this grand enterprise resulting in the actual constitution of our world. Himself powerless to foresee the use that would be made of liberty by the intelligent and moral coadjutor that he had thought well to provide for himself, he had to be prepared for either event, according as the test should turn out, well or ill." J. F. Astié, article quoted, p. 369.

but among them there is no police-agent to be found, nor any prison, and for centuries the memory of crime has been lost.¹

But we feel a strong repugnance to admit the necessity of suffering without any relation to sin. The normal dwelling of man, while innocent, is in paradise, symbol of exemption from physical evil. It is after his offence that man, banished from the privileged enclosure, learns to know cruel hunger, fatigue, and pain.² It is true that suffering and death existed upon earth before the fall of man; but in the paradise of Eden Adam was protected from them both. The characteristic notion of paradise is, in fact, the absence of physical evil: a temperate climate, simple but plentiful food, no poisons, no wild beasts, nor briars, nor thorns, nor fatigues, nor pains. As soon as Adam has sinned, he is set to struggle against cosmic evil. These are two educational methods, the second being employed after the ill-success of the first.

This point of view would furnish a reply to the principal objection of a deep thinker, John Stuart Mill, in his posthumous work on *Religion*. He makes out, and finds it shocking, that the visible world could not be the work of a God at the same time all-powerful and all-good. Our reply is that the cosmic imperfections and evils have been expressly ordained for the purpose of discipline. Even for the men most favoured with the good things of earth this planet is still a place of exile, a vast penitentiary colony, where things are not all arranged solely with a view to the comfort of those detained in it, but rather with a view to their moral reformation by a mixture of kindness and severity.

Connected with physical evil there is that which has been called immorality in nature, as for example the evil inclinations of certain animals. On the hypothesis indicated, the animals, whatever may be the mystery of their origin, in addition to their practical usefulness, would have a symbolical destination; they would be types of virtues and vices.³ The tiger, the shark, the ape, the serpent, the dove, the bee, the sheep, etc., would, so to speak, teach by their aspect the contrasts of moral life.⁴ Man's education once ended, the moral edifice once built, physical evil would disappear. A new earth and new heavens would replace the existing world.⁵

It is a curious coincidence that on this point the Bible is in agreement

¹ See *En Islande*, by Dr. P. Vouga. *Bibliothèque universelle*, 1880, p. 225.

² Gen. ii. 16; iii. 16-19.

³ Cf. Gen. ii. 19, 20.

⁴ From this point of view the animal world would be like a vast psychological museum. The different species, like so many photographic proofs, would fix the thousand and one attitudes of the human soul. This fact has been abundantly utilized by the fabulists.

⁵ Ps. cii. 26; 2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1.

with the modern doctrine of evolution.¹ A dramatic writer has had an intuition of the same truth: The good is stronger than the evil. To the question of one of his personages: "Why do we so often see evil triumphing over good?" he opposes this answer: "Because we do not look at it long enough."²

In order to designate the ultimate fate of the irreconcilables, the New Testament employs the terms used by Plato in speaking of annihilation.³ The devil is to be destroyed.⁴ The lawless one being brought to nought,⁵ the revolt being suppressed,⁶ there will be no more curse,⁷ death will be abolished;⁸ it has already lost its sting.⁹ Death and Hades will join Satan in the abyss of destruction called in the Apocalypse the lake of fire and brimstone.¹⁰ "God will be all, in all," in all those who will have survived the final judgement.¹¹ This promise affords a glimpse of the suppression of that which has been denominated *metaphysical evil*; it may relate to an economy in which the categories of time and space will no longer exist. However that may be, the redeemed will survive for ever.¹² Evil had abounded, it will disappear; and grace will yet more abound.¹³

That all one day shall yet be well, our hope remains.

That all to-day is well, is a mistaken view.

The wise men have deceived me, God alone is true.¹⁴

"The hypothesis of the temporary character of evil, legitimately suggested by the wish, and not to be rejected unless replaced by another hypothesis, is nothing else than the *postulate of divinity*. It consists, in fact, in a recognition of the need for the world to be good in its origin and good in its end; that is to say, such as to realize the purposes of being, purposes conceived and required by conscience, whatever may be the intermediate states through which it may pass. But that is to recognize the need in accordance with the most practical and most generally understood sense of divinity, that the world should be the work of God."¹⁵

¹ *De l'élimination graduelle du mal*, translated from Herbert Spencer, Paris, 1875. *Social Statics*, p. 80.

² Dumas fils, *L'Etrangère*, act iii.

³ 2 Thess. i. 9; Phil. iii. 19.

⁴ Heb. ii. 14, 15; Rom. xvi. 20; cf. Gen. iii. 15.

⁵ 2 Thess. ii. 8.

⁶ Rev. xix. 20; cf. Dan. vii. 11, 26.

⁷ Rev. xxii. 3.

⁸ 2 Tim. i. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 26; Rev. xxi. 4; cf. Isa. xxv. 8.

⁹ 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56.

¹⁰ Rev. xx. 14.

¹¹ 1 Cor. xv. 28.

¹² Matt. xxv. 46.

¹³ Rom. v. 20.

¹⁴ Voltaire. The French lines are:

Un jour tout sera bien, voilà notre espérance.

Tout est bien aujourd'hui, voilà l'illusion.

Les sages me trompaient et Dieu seul a raison.

¹⁵ Renouvier. *Esquisse*, etc. vol. ii., p. 290, sq.

SUPPLEMENT No. VI.

LIST OF BIBLICAL TERMS USED TO DENOTE DESTRUCTION.

(See page 88.)

IN the Hebrew language there are more than fifty roots which are used either habitually or occasionally to signify the destruction of animated beings. Many of these are employed in the Old Testament to specify the ultimate fate of the impenitent, and convey the idea of a complete suppression of the individuals of whom they are predicated. This may be seen by consulting any of the dictionaries that are recognized as having authority; as, for example, those of Gesenius and Fuerst and the English-Hebrew Lexicon of Selig Newman at the word *annihilate*, or by reference to the best critical versions.

It may be objected that the Old Testament has not sufficient dogmatic authority when the question relates to the future life, of which the Jews had but a vague notion. We reply by means of the following list, showing that the New Testament adopts, confirms, and gives precision to the teaching of the Old on the point in question. In so doing it makes use of the terms which serve to represent the corresponding Hebrew words in the Greek of the LXX. It adopts the symbols of the Old Covenant in order to describe eternal realities. Thus the biblical doctrine is, as we may say, clenched. In both Testaments the wicked are said to be "destroyed for ever," but the vague and indefinite eternity of the Old Covenant becomes absolute in the New.

The New Testament terms are the same that the English-Greek dictionaries give as the equivalents of the words *annihilate* and *destroy*, the same that are used by Plato in the *Phædo* to indicate annihilation.¹ The expressions are identical, only Plato denies that which the Bible affirms; he sets himself to demonstrate that the soul cannot be destroyed. The Bible, on the contrary, asserts without reserve or restriction the final and total destruction of both soul and body in the eternal fire as the fate of the impenitent. On this subject the New Testament, like the Old, employs the strongest terms of ordinary language.

To the verbs and nouns in our list should be added a host of proverbial expressions, a long train of figures, which occasionally seem such as would mutually exclude each other, but which always by association of ideas point in the same direction:

¹ See the developement of this proof in Rev. Edward White's *Life in Christ*, 3rd ed., pp. 360-369; also *ante*, p. 317.

The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head : the head in Hebrew symbolizes the principle and essence of the being. This is, then, a promise that the very principle of evil shall be destroyed. The wicked, banished far from the tree of life, will be destroyed in darkness, in the place of silence. They will see no more, will hear no more, will speak no more. Bound hand and foot, they will be in the inaction of death. They will be devoured by the worm and the fire. The worm, however, which eats only dead flesh, excludes the idea of sensibility, and the fire excludes the simultaneous presence of the worm ; but these two metaphors both equally symbolize a complete destruction of the being that has already ceased to live. Even the remembrance of the lost is to perish. The wicked are to perish like brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed ; they will pass away like a morning cloud, like the early dew, like a dream when one awaketh ; they will be as the vessel broken to shivers, as ashes trodden under foot, as smoke that vanisheth, as the chaff driven away by the wind ; they will be as tow, as the bundles of dry tares, as thorns, as stubble, as vine branches pruned off, as wax, as the fat of the sacrifices, all combustibles more or less rapidly destroyed in the fire, all of these being images which exclude the notion of sufferings indefinitely prolonged.

Other images may be recalled : that of the lost sheep, threatened with speedy death by hunger and thirst or the wolf's jaws ; the withered tree, without root or branch, a stript trunk that can never again give sign of life ; the garment that is moth-eaten ; the abortion, dead before its birth ; the axe and the fire spoken of by John the Baptist ; sin likened to the leprosy that consumes the tissues. Everywhere and always we find the notion of a final cessation of the being's existence, of a decomposition, of a breaking of the links of the organism, of a return to a state of unconsciousness, never that of an immortal life in suffering.

In the Apocalypse the wicked are threatened with the fate of the inhabitants of Sodom : by fire and smoke and brimstone was the third part of men killed. There is nothing more deadly than sulphurous vapours ; they destroy life even in its microscopic germs. In symbol they kill Death itself, and death exists no more.—Rev. xx. 14 ; xxi. 4.

It is with the symbolism of the Bible as with its vocabulary : the sacred writers seem to have exhausted the resources at their disposal in order to affirm that which we maintain. If required to express in Hebrew or in Greek the notion of complete destruction, we would ask whether in the usual vocabulary of those two languages there are to be found terms more forcible than those in the following list.

Our readers are recommended to refer either to the original texts or to the most exact modern versions. The quotations within *parentheses* lend an indirect support to the others by fixing the true and fundamental meaning of the words. The figures between *brackets* relate to the numbering in the Hebrew when different from the English.¹

אַבַּד, ἀπόλλυμι, *destroy*: Psal. ix. 5 [6]; Ezek. xxii. 27 (not in LXX.) (Dan. vii. 26); *come to destruction*: Num. (xxiv. 20, 24); *perish*: Deut. (vii. 24); vii. 19, 20; xi. 17; Job iv. 9; xx. 7; Psal. xxxvii. 20; (xli. 5 [6]); xlix. 10 [11], wise men *die*, the fool and the brutish person *perish*; lxxiii. 27; (cii. 26 [27]); *fail*: (Ezek. xii. 22); ἀπωλεία, *destruction*: Esther viii. 6; Prov. xxvii. 20, *Abaddon*, the place of *destruction*; Jer. xii. 17—New Test. R.V. ἀπόλλυμι, *destroy*: Matt. ii. 13; x. 28; Mark iii. 6; Luke vi. 9; xvii. 27, 29; John x. 10; Rom. xiv. 15; James iv. 12; Jude 5; *perish*: Matt. (v. 29, 30); xviii. 14; Mark iv. 38; Luke xiii. 3, 5; xv. 17; John iii. 16; (vi. 27); x. 28; xi. 50; Rom. ii. 12; 1 Cor. i. 18; xv. 18; 2 Thess. ii. 10; Heb. i. 11; (James i. 11); 2 Pet. iii. 9; *lose*: Matt. x. 39, (42); Luke ix. 24, 25; xv. (4, 6, 8, 9) 24, 32; John vi. (12), 39; Ἀπόλλων, *destroyer*: Rev. ix. 11, cf. John viii. 44; ἀπωλεία, *destruction*: Matt. vii. 13; Rom. ix. 22; 2 Pet. ii. 3; *perdition*: John xvii. 12; Phil. iii. 19; 2 Thess. ii. 3; 1 Tim. vi. 9; Heb. x. 39; *waste*: (Matt. xxvi. 8).

אַחֲרִית, τελευταῖα, *end*: Prov. xiv. 12; xvi. 25—N.T. τελευτή, *death*: Matt. ii. 15; τέλος, *end*: Phil. iii. 19; 1 Pet. iv. 17.

אֵיד, ἀπωλεία, *calamity*: Job xxxi. 3, see **אַבַּד**; καταστροφή, *calamity*: Job xxi. 17—N.T. καταστροφή, *overthrow*: (2 Pet. ii. 6).

אָכַל, ἐσθίω, φάγω, κατεσθίω, κατέδω, καταφάγω, *consume, devour*: Deut. vii. 16; Isa. i. 20; Hos. xiii. 8; ἔμπυρος, *devoured*: Ezek. xxiii. 37—N.T. (Matt. xiii. 4; Luke xv. 30); Heb. x. 27; Rev. xi. 5; πύρωσις, *burning*: Rev. xviii. 9, 18.

אָפַק, ἐκλείπω, *consume*: Zeph. i. 2; *take away*: Hosea iv. 3—N.T. *fail*: (Luke xxii. 32) Heb. i. 12.

בֹּס, ἐξουθενώ, *tread down*: Ps. lx. 12 [14]; cviii. 13 [14], Vulg. *ad*

¹ [The list, as prepared by Dr. Petavel in a different form, may be seen in his book, *The Struggle for Eternal Life*, 1875, and in the later editions of Rev. E. White's *Life in Christ*. It has here been re-arranged by the translator for the greater convenience of English students. The Hebrew roots are given in their alphabetical order, each being followed by reference to its occurrence in the O.T., and generally by the word or words that are used to represent it in the Greek of the Septuagint and in the English Revised Version. References are given to some of the N.T. passages in which occur those Greek words which are of chief importance in the controversy, with the corresponding English words according to the R.V. The list will thus enable the reader easily to trace the way in which the language of the N.T. is linked with that of the O.T. by means of the LXX. version.]

nihilum deducet; καταπατίω, καταπάτημα, *tread down*; *t. under foot*: Isa. xiv. 25; lxiii. 6.

בלה, παλαιώ, *consume*: Job xiii. 28; Ps. xlix. 14 [15]—N.T. *become old*: Heb. (viii. 13).

בלע, ἀπώλλυμι, *destroy*: Job ii. 3, see אבר; καταπίνω, *swallow, s. up*: Ps. (cvii. 27 marg.); Isa. xxv. 8—N.T. (1 Cor. xv. 54; 2 Cor. v. 4); Heb. xi. 29; *devour*: 1 Pet. v. 8.

בער, καίω, κατακαίω, *burn, burn up*: Isa. i. 31; Mal. iv. 1 [iii. 19]—N.T. Matt. iii. 12; xiii. 30, 40; Luke iii. 17; Rev. xvii. 16; xviii. 8.

גדע, ἐκκόπτω, *cut off*: Judges xxi. 6; συνθλάω, συγχλάω, *cut off*: Ps. (lxxv. 10 [11]; Lam. ii. 3)—N.T. ἐκκόπτω, *cut off*: Matt. (v. 30); Rom. xi. 22; *cut or hew down*: (Matt. iii. 10; Luke xiii. 7, 9).

גוע, ἐκλείπω, *die*: Zech. xiii. 8. See אדם.

גז, *cut down*: Nahum i. 12.

גול, *consume*: Job xxiv. 19.

דכא, *break in pieces*: Ps. lxxii. 4.

דעך, σβέννυμι, *put or go out, quench, extinguish*: Job xviii. 5, 6; xxi. 17; Prov. xiii. 9; xx. 20; xxiv. 20; Isa. xliii. 17; ἐκκαίω, [*burn out*] *quench*: Ps. cxviii. 12—N.T. σβέννυμι: Matt. xxv. 8; Mark ix. 48; ἄσβεστος, *unquenchable*: Matt. iii. 12; Mark ix. 43; Luke iii. 17.

דקק, λεπτύνω, *stamp small, break in pieces*: 2 Kings [xxiii. 6]; Dan. ii. 44.

הרג, ἀποκτείνω, *slay*: Gen. iv. 8; Ps. lxxviii. 31; cxxxvi. 18; κατασφάζω, *slay*: Zech. xi. 5—N.T. ἀποκτείνω, *slay*: Rom. vii. 11; (Eph. ii. 16); *kill*: Matt. x. 28; xvi. 21; xxvi. 4; Mark iii. 4; x. 34; Luke xii. 4, 5; John v. 18; Acts iii. 15; 1 Thess. ii. 15; Rev. ii. 23; *put to death*: Matt. xiv. 5; John xii. 10; ἀθροποκτόνος, *murderer*: John viii. 44; κατασφάζω, *slay*: Luke xix. 27.

הרס, καθαιρέω, *break down*: Ps. xxviii. 5; *overthrow*: Jer. i. 10 (omitted in LXX.)—N.T. *destroy*: Acts xiii. 19; *pull down*: Luke (xii. 18); καθαίρεις, *casting down*: 2 Cor. x. 8; xiii. 10.

זנת, καταλείπω, *cast off*: 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Cf. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

חבל, *bring destruction*: Prov. xiii. 13.

חרם, ἀναθεματίζω, ἀνάθεμα, *devote, devoted thing*: Lev. xxvii. 28, 29; cf. Deut. vii. 26; Josh. (vi. 17); *destroy utterly*: Deut. xiii. 15 [16]; xx. 17; ἐξολοθρεύω, *destroy utterly*: Josh. x. 39; 2 Chron. xx. 23; ἀπόλλυμι, *utterly destroy*: Isa. xxxiv. 2, see אבר. Note in Segond's French version at Lev. xxvii. 29: "These vows of devotion were irrevocable, and involved the destruction of that which had been so devoted." [The exceptional permission in Ezek. xlv. 29 does not invalidate this general statement.]—N.T. ἀναθεματίζω, ἀνάθεμα, *curse, anathema*: Acts (xxiii.

12, 14, 21); Rom. ix. 3; 1 Cor. xvi. 22; Gal. i. 8, 9; ἐξολοθρεύω, *utterly destroy*: Acts iii. 23.

טבע [to sink], ἐνεπάγησαν ἐν διαφθορᾷ, *sunk down in the pit*: Ps. ix. 15 [16].

כבה, σβέννυμι, *quench*: Isa. xliii. 17, see קבע.

כחך, ἀφανίζω, *cut off*: Job xxii. 20; ἐκπρίβω, *cut off*: 2 Chron. xxxii. 21; εἰς ὄλεθρον, *cut off*: 1 Kings xiii. 34—N.T. ἀφανίζω, ἀφανισμός, *vanish away*: Heb. (viii. 13); James iv. 14, cf. 1 Pet. iv. 18; *perish*: Acts xiii. 41, quoted from Hab. i. 5. Sept. version; *consume*: Matt. (vi. 19, 20). Σαδδουκαίοις δὲ τὰς ψυχὰς ὁ λόγος συναφανίζει τοῖς σώμασι. Josephus, *Antiq.* xviii. 1, 4; ὄλεθρος, a word specially employed by Plato to signify extermination, *destruction*: 1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Thess. v. 3; 2 Thess. i. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 9.

בלה, ἐκλείπω, *consume*: Ps. xxxvii. 20, see גוע; συντελέω, *consume*: Ps. lix. 13 [14]; Isa. i. 28; συντέλειαν ποιεῖν, *make full end*: Neh. (ix. 31; Jer. iv. 27; v. 10, 18; xlv. 28); ἐκλείψιν ποιεῖν [a doubtful reading], *make full end*: Jer. xxx. 11.

כרת, ἀποθνήσκω, *be cut off*: Gen. ix. 11, see מות; ἐξολοθρεύω, *cut off*: Exod. xii. 15, 19; Lev. xvii. 14; xxiii. 29; Ps. xxxvii. 9, 38; Isa. xxix. 20; xlviii. 19; Zech. xiii. 8; ἐξαιρέω, *cut off*: Nahum i. 15 [ii. 1]; Zeph. i. 3; ἐκκόπτω, *cut down*: (Job xiv. 7), see גרע—N.T. ἐξολοθρεύω *utterly destroy*: Acts iii. 23; ἐξαιρέω, *pluck out*: Matt. (v. 29; xviii. 9); αἰρέω, *take away*: John xv. 2.

כתת, συγκόπτω, *beat down*: Ps. lxxxix. 23 [24].

הה, φλογίζω, *burn up*: Ps. xcvi. 3.

מאס, ἐξουθενεῖσθαι, *melt away*: Ps. lviii. 7 [8].

מול, ἐκπίπτω, *cut down*: Job xiv. 2—N.T. *come to nought*: Rom. (ix. 6); *fall*: James i. 11.

מות, ἀναιρέω, *slay*: Isa. xi. 4; ἀποθνήσκω, *die*: Isa. xxii. 13; θάνατος, *death*: Ps. xiii. 3 [4]; cxvi. 15. "And now I must begin again, and first find another argument which will assure me that when the man is dead the soul *dies not* with him" (ὃ συνἀποθνήσκει).—*Phædo*, ch. xxxviii., Jowett, p. 437—N.T. ἀναιρέω, *slay*: Matt. ii. 16; Acts ii. 23; 2 Thess. ii. 8; *kill*: Acts vii. 28; *put to death*: Luke xxii. 2; *take away*: Heb. x. 9; ἀποθνήσκω, *die*: Luke xx. 36; John vi. 49, 50; viii. 21; Rom. v. 6, *sqq.*; viii. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 3, 22, 31, 32 (36); Heb. ix. 27; νεκρός, *dead*: Rom. vii. 8, without law sin does not exist; Eph. ii. 1, 5 (James ii. 17, 26); νεκρώω, *mortify*, *marg. make dead*: Col. iii. 5; θάνατος, *death*: John v. 24; viii. 51, 52; Rom. v. 10, etc.; vi. 16, 21, 23; 1 Cor. xv. 21, 26, 54, *sqq.*; James i. 15; v. 20; 1 John iii. 14; Rev. ii. 11; xxi. 4, 8; θανατώω, *put to death*: Matt. xxvii. 1; Luke xxi. 16; 1 Pet. iii. 18.

חָח, ἀπαλείφω, *destroy*: Gen. vi. 7; ἐξαλείφω, *destroy*: Gen. vii. 4, 23; *blot out*: Exod. xvii. 14; xxxii. 32; Deut. xxix. 20 [19]; Ps. ix. 5 [6]; (li. 9 [11]); lxix. 28 [29]; cix. 13, 14. To blot out the name of a being is to destroy the being; to strike out the name from the catalogue of the living is to eliminate from the number of beings. "Let his name rot!" was a formula of cursing, see Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judenthum*, i. 69-72. Cf. Prov. x. 7. According to the Talmud the damned in hell know not their own name; it is the unconscious state of the second death—N.T. ἐξαλείφω, *blot out*: Acts (iii. 19; Col. ii. 14); Rev. iii. 5; cf. Luke x. 20 and Phil. iv. 3; *wipe away*: Rev. (vii. 17; xxi. 4).

יָח, συνθλάω, *smite or strike through*: Ps. lxxviii. 21 [22]; cx. 5—N.T. *break to pieces*: Matt. xxi. 44; Luke xx. 18.

מָמ, ἀνταναιρέω, *melt away*: Ps. lviii. 8 [9]; τήκομαι, *melt away*: Ps. cxii. 10—N.T. τήκομαι, *melt*: 2 Pet. iii. 12.

מָצָא [to find], ἄ; ἔχεις, *which are here*: Gen. xix. 15; εὕρισκω, *find*: with *neg.* Isa. xli. 12; passive Gen. xviii. 29; pass. with *neg.* Job xx. 8; Ps. (x. 15); xxxvii. 36 (Jer. l. 20); Dan. xi. 19. *Not to be found* is a Hebraism for having ceased to exist. That which is no longer visible to God's eye has ceased to exist. See Delitzsch on Ps. x. 15; cf. Jer. xxiii. 39, and the *Bible annotée de Neuchâtel*, in loco.—N.T. examples with *neg.* Rev. xii. 8; xviii. 21 (xx. 11); cf. 1 Pet. iv. 18.

מָקָם, τήκομαι, *pine away*: Ezek. xxiv. 23; xxxiii. 10. See **מָמ**, καταφθείρω, *pine away*: Lev. xxvi. 39—N.T. *corrupt*: 2 Tim. iii. 8; *destroy*: 2 Pet. ii. 12.

נָסַח, ἐκτίλλω, *pluck out*: Ps. lii. 5 [7]; ἐξωθήω, *root out*: Prov. ii. 22—N.T. *thrust out*: Acts (vii. 45).

נָפַל, πίπτω, *fall*: Ps. xxxvi. 12 [13]; πτώσις, *fall*: Jer. xlix. 21; Ezek. xxxi. 16—N.T. Matt. (vii. 25, 27); Luke xx. 18; 1 Cor. x. 12; Heb. iii. 17; Rev. (xiv. 8); ῥήγμα, *ruin*: Luke vi. 49.

נָפַץ, συντρίβω, *dash in pieces*: Ps. ii. 9—N.T. *break in pieces or to shivers*: Mark (v. 4); Rev. ii. 27; *break*: (Mark xiv. 3); *bruise*: Rom. xvi. 20; σύντριμμα, *destruction*: Rom. iii. 16.

נָתַן, καθαιρέω, *destroy*: Ps. lii. 5 [7], see **הָרַס**.

סָוָה, ἐκλείπω, *consume*: Zeph. i. 2, 3; *perish*: Esther ix. 28, see **גָּוַע**; ἀναλίσκω, *come to an end*: Isa. lxvi. 17; λικμᾶω, *consume*: Dan. ii. 44—N.T. ἀναλίσκω, *consume*: Luke ix. 54; Gal. v. 15; with *κατα* prefixed, Heb. xii. 29; λικμᾶω, *scatter as dust*: Matt. xxi. 44; Luke xx. 18.

סָפָה, ἐκλείπω, *consume*: Ps. lxxiii. 19, see **גָּוַע**; συναπόλλυμι, *consume*: Gen. xviii. 23; xix. 15—N.T. *perish with*: Heb. xi. 31.

עָבַר, παρέρχομαι, *pass away*: Ps. xxxvii. 36, marg.; παράγω, *pass*

away: Ps. cxliv. 4 — N.T. *παρέρχομαι*, *pass away*: Matt. (v. 18); xxiv. 34; Luke (xvi. 17; 2 Cor. v. 17); James i. 10; *παράγω*, *pass away*: 1 Cor. (vii. 31; 1 John ii. 17).

עמד, *διαμένω*, *endure*: Ps. cii. 26 [27]; *ὑφίστημι*, *stand*: Ps. cxxx. 3; Mal. iii. 2; *ἵστημι*, *stand*, with *neg.* 2 Chron. v. 14; Ezra ix. 15 — N.T. *διαμένω*, *continue*: Heb. i. 11; *μένω*, *abide*: 1 John ii. 17; *ἵστημι*, *stand*, as opposed to falling; Matt. (xii. 25, 26); Luke xxi. 36; Rom. xi. 20; 1 Cor. x. 12; Rev. vi. 17.

צמת, *ἐξολοθρεύω*, *destroy*: Ps. liv. 5 [7]; lxxiii. 27, see **כרת**; *ἀφανίζω*, *cut off*: Ps. xciv. 23, see **כחד**; *ἀποκτείνω*, *destroy*: Ps. ci. 8, see **הרג**.

קום, *ἀνίστημι*, *stand*, with *neg.*: Ps. i. 5. Cf. **עמד**.

קטל, *ἀποκτείνω*, *slay*: Ps. cxxxix. 19, see **הרג**; *ἀναίρω*, *slay*: Dan. vii. 11, see **מות**.

רמס, *καταπατέω*, *trample under feet*: Ps. xci. 13; *καταθλάω*, *trample*: Isa. lxiii. 3.

רעע, *break in pieces*: Job xxxiv. 24; *break*: Ps. ii. 9.

רצץ, *συντρίβω*, *break*: Ps. lxxiv. 14, see **נפץ**.

רקב, *rot*: Prov. x. 7.

שאה, *pant*, marg. *devour*: Isa. xlii. 14.

שבש, *συντρίβω*, *destruction*: Isa. i. 28; *broken*: Isa. viii. 15, see **נפץ**.

שבת, *παύω*, *make to cease*: Deut. (xxxii. 26) — N.T. Acts (xx. 1; 1 Cor. xiii. 8).

שואה, *desolation*: Isa. x. 3.

שחק, *λεπτύνω*, *beat small*: Ps. xviii. 42 [43].

שחת, *καταφθείρω*, *destroy*: Gen. ix. 11, see **מקק**; *διαφθείρω*, *destroy*: 2 Sam. i. 14; *διαφθορά*, *corruption, destruction*: Ps. xvi. 10; lv. 23 [24] — N.T. *διαφθείρω*, *destroy*: Luke (xii. 33); Rev. xi. 18; *decay*: 2 Cor. iv. 16; *διαφθορά*, *corruption*: Acts ii. 27; xiii. 34, *sqq.*; *φθείρω*, *destroy*: 1 Cor. iii. 17; *φθορά*, *corruption*: Gal. vi. 8; 2 Pet. i. 4.

שמד, *ἐξολοθρεύω*, *destroy*: Deut. vii. 24; Ps. xcii. 7 [8]; cxlv. 20, see **כרת**, *ἀπύλλυμι*, *destroy*: Isa. xlviii. 19, see **אבר**.

שקע, *κατάδυμι*, *sink*: Jer. li. 64.

שרש, *ῥιζίζω*, *root out*: Job (xxxi. 8); Ps. lii. 5 [7] — N.T. *ῥιζίζω*, *root up*: Jude 12.

תלה, *σταυρώω*, *hang*: Esther vii. 9, cf. ver. 10 — N.T. *crucify*: Rom. vi. 6; Gal. ii. 20; v. 24; vi. 14. These quotations relate to “the annihilation of the evil element in man, of sin, and of the flesh.” — Prof. Reuss, *Histoire de la théologie apostolique*, vol. ii., p. 163, edition of 1852.

תמם, *ἐκλείπω*, *be consumed*: Ps. civ. 35; Jer. xxiv. 10; Lam. iii. 22.

In the LXX. καταργέω is used to express a forced cessation of *work*, as representing the Chaldee בטל: Ezra iv. 21, 23; v. 5; vi. 8; but it is not applied to *life*. For the N.T. use of the word see the following: *abolish*: 1 Cor. xv. 24, 26; 2 Tim. i. 10, cf. Rev. xxi. 4; *bring to nought*: 1 Cor. i. 28; vi. 13; 2 Thess. ii. 8; Heb. ii. 14; *come to nought*: 1 Cor. ii. 6; *do away*: Rom. vi. 6; 1 Cor. xiii. 8, 10; 2 Cor. iii. 14; Gal. v. 11; *pass away*: 2 Cor. iii. 7, 13; *discharge*: Rom. vii. 6. See p. 347 sq.

N.T. Ζωή, ζωὴ αἰώνιος, *life, life eternal*: the impenitent sinner shall *not see it*, shall *not have it*, judges himself *unworthy* of it: John iii. 36; v. 40; vi. 53; Acts xiii. 46; 1 John iii. 15; v. 12. Delitzsch says: "To *see* the grave is to suffer death (Ps. lxxxix. 48 [49]; Luke ii. 26; John viii. 51). On the contrary, to *see* life is to possess and enjoy it (Eccl. ix. 9 in Heb. and marg. R.V.; John iii. 36). Sight, the noblest of the five senses, is used to designate sensation generally, and metaphorically all our perceptions. . . . To *see* the fire is to become warm (Isa. xlv. 16). To *see* is often used for mental perception."—*Commentary on the Psalms*, Ps. xvi. 9-11, and *Biblical Psychology*, sect. x.

The following phrases may also be indicated as denoting a complete suppression:

עוֹר אִינֶם, ὥστε μὴ ὑπάρχειν αὐτοὺς, *let the wicked be no more*: Ps. civ. 35.

כִּאִין וְכֵאֵפֶם, ὡς οὐκ ὄντες καὶ οὐκ ἔσονται, *as nothing and a thing of nought*: Isa. xli. 11, 12; xxix. 20. Cf. Rev. xviii. 21 (1 Cor. i. 19; Heb. viii. 13); Acts xiii. 41, R.V., marg.

הֵיוּ כְּלוֹא הָיוּ, καθὼς οὐχ ὑπάρχοντες, *as though they had not been*: Obad. 16. Cf. Job. x. 19.

כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם כִּאִין מֵאֵפֶם, τὰ ἔθνη ὡς οὐδὲν εἰσιν καὶ εἰς οὐθὲν ἐλογίσθησαν, *all the nations are as nothing, they are counted less than nothing*: Isa. xl. 17. Cf. ver. 23; xli. 12.

יִשְׁחַת בְּלִי, *pit of corruption, or of nothingness*: Isa. xxxviii. 17.

לְהַשְׁמֵדָה וּלְהוֹבִידָה עַד-סוֹפָא, ἀφανίσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι ἕως τέλους: *to consume and to destroy it unto the end*: Dan. vii. 26. Cf. ver. 11.

SUPPLEMENT No. VII.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF SOME APOCRYPHAL BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.¹

(See page 103.)

ONE thing is certain, namely, that the philosophy of the Alexandrian Jews pressed with all its weight upon the theology of the Fathers ; and it is possible that, through the Fathers, our own theology may still be here and there impregnated by modes of thought derived from that source. . . .

The idea of the pre-existence of souls was quite foreign to the purely Hebraic thought : the Pseudo-Solomon owes it to the influence of Plato and Pythagoras. . . . The doctrine of the pre-existence of souls is found also in the Talmud and the Kabbalah. But it is probable that if this doctrine is thus to be found in the Kabbalah, in the Talmud, among the Pharisees, and among the Essenes, it has come to them from a foreign source. It is a doctrine which is neither explicitly nor implicitly taught in the Bible. The logical developement of the Old Testament germs would never have produced it ; an extraneous influence was needed. Some have indeed claimed to have found traces of the doctrine of the pre-existence of souls in certain passages of the Bible,² but those traces exist only in the Alexandrian translation of the passages in question. It is historically certain that the earliest Jewish writings in which that doctrine is found are the work of authors who were under the influence of Greek philosophy. . . .³

God created the world and man. Death was no part of the Creator's plan. The world and man were all created for immortality. But the devil, the prince of death, who is death itself, was jealous of this world and this humanity, which were placed beyond the bounds of his jurisdiction. So he managed to secure allies within the fortress. Among men themselves a number made alliance with him, and thus death entered into the world. For the men who became allies of the devil, this death seems destined to be utter death, death of the body and annihilation of the soul. The wicked flatter themselves that the righteous will share their fate ; and in this they are partly right and partly wrong. The righteous

¹ Henri Bois, licencié ès lettres, doctor in theology : *Essai sur les origines de la philosophie judéo-alexandrine*, pages 1, 276 sq., 289 sq., 298, 302, 304, 310. Paris, Fischbacher, 1890.

² Deut. xxix. 14, 15 ; Job xxxviii. 19-21.

³ In the subsequent paragraphs M. Bois sums up the eschatology of the *Wisdom of Solomon*.

indeed die physical death, but as a reward of their virtue God gives to them the immortality of the soul. . . .

Then comes the last judgement, when the souls of the wicked find themselves face to face with the souls of the righteous. The wicked are altogether troubled and astonished at the confidence of the righteous man and at his salvation; they have no trace of virtue that they can show. They are condemned, annihilated among the dead for ever. The righteous, however, live eternally; they are near to God, among his saints and angels, and in the enjoyment of communion with Him. . . .

It is not easy to fix the meaning of *θάνατος*; in the book of *Wisdom*, and this word has been variously understood by the interpreters; for our own part, we are inclined to admit the following explanation: God's purpose is life, life absolute, in its ontological sense. The devil has caused the entrance of death, that is to say of destruction, into the world. The wicked, who are the allies and subjects of the devil, will be the prey of this destruction, destruction of their body and of their soul, of their whole being. As for the righteous, they die, that is incontestable, and the wicked think that, therefore, the righteous will suffer the same complete destruction as themselves. But the wicked are mistaken, they do not understand God's mysteries; they do not know, or they do not wish to believe, that if the devil has succeeded in extending to the earth his empire of death, if, thanks to the devil's jealousy and the wickedness of certain men, death comes upon all men, it can finally swallow up only the wicked. It strikes the righteous only apparently or in part; for justice remains immortal in spite of the devil and the wicked. If the righteous die, it is only their body that dies, their soul does not die, although those who are without sense may imagine that it dies with the body; their soul is in God's hand (Chap. III.). From this it appears that the fate of the wicked is probably destruction, and not eternal torments. The reward of the righteous is immortality. Death, as it is given by the devil, as he has caused it to enter into the world, and as he wishes to make all share it, is the complete death of body and soul. Such is the death of the wicked. But God's mystery consists in this: that for the righteous he has reduced this death to the bodily death alone. The righteous obtain the immortality of their soul, that is to say, of that which is most important; and thereby the devil and the wicked are foiled. . . .

The wicked will be chastised; they will lose the immortality of remembrance (IV., 18), that immortality of which they had no hope (II., 4), but which the righteous possess (IV., 1). They will be completely ruined, overthrown, and cast down from their place, mute with

terror and head downwards, after which they will be cast out among the dead, without honour, covered with ignominy for ever. The righteous, on the contrary, will enjoy a blessed immortality, communion with God.¹

. . . One of the fundamental principles of earthly retribution is, as we have seen, that each one is punished in the line of his sin (XI., 16). Let us then apply this principle, so dear to the Pseudo-Solomon, to the final as well as the earthly retribution. Verse 10 of chap. iii. seems to authorize this application (*καθ' ἃ ἐλογίσαντο ἑξουσίαν ἐπιτιμίαν*). The wicked have declared that there is no life beyond the tomb. They have asserted that when man's end approached there was no remedy; that after death they would be as if they had never existed. What will be their punishment? It will correspond in quality to the fault. Have they denied immortality? They shall be taken at their word! That immortality shall not exist for them; all that they have asserted as to the nothingness and complete destruction of man shall be verified for them.²

While the Hebrew canon of the Old Testament does not contain any undeniable trace of the influence of Greek philosophy, the Greek canon of the Old Testament, on the contrary, bears incontestable evidence of Hellenization in the Greek translation of the Hebrew canonical works (the version of the LXX.) and in the Apocrypha (*Ecclesiasticus* and *The Wisdom of Solomon*).

SUPPLEMENT No. VIII.

PRETENSIONS OF THE KABBALISTS.³

(See page 112).

To the majestic simplicity of the Scriptures, to the sublime and consolatory doctrine of redemption by the blood of the only Son of God, the Synagogue had preferred its thousand and one traditions, true and

¹ III., 9, 13, 14; V., 16; cf. VI., 18-21. [Cf. Isa. lxvi. 24. and Dan. xii. 2, 3.]

² [Precisely the reasoning of Victor Hugo, who may have been inspired by the same text. See *ante*, Chap. II., sect. viii., § 5, p. 64.]

³ *Dissertation sur la Kabbale ou la philosophie spéculative des Hébreux*, read at the public session at the commencement of the scholastic course at the Academy of Neuchâtel, on 18 Nov., 1848, by Abram François Petavel, doctor of philosophy, and minister of the Gospel, p. 50, *sq.*—Neuchâtel, H. Wolfrath, 1848. [Dr. A. F. Petavel, father of the author of this work, was born in the last decade of the eighteenth century, and lived until 1870. During many years he was professor in the Academy of Neuchâtel, of which he was twice rector. Throughout his long life he took a deep interest in the Hebrew people, and was a diligent student of their language and literature.]

false, sensible and absurd, moral and immoral, religious and impious. Reason was stifled, liberty crushed, the memory failed under such a mass of prescriptions, legends, distinctions and contradictory decisions. If only Israel had returned to the Lord his God with all the heart and with all the soul! He would then have met with the Master who is meek and lowly in heart, and would have recognized his voice. "O Israel, if thou wouldest hearken unto me!"¹ "For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."²

Among the Jews there have been wise and God-fearing men who have said: "In the Scriptures there is a spiritual meaning which we ought to discern, in tradition there is a clue that we ought to follow; there is truth, there salvation, and it is God who gives intelligence." These have well spoken, and if they had set themselves to search the Scriptures in a spirit of faith and obedience, and with continual recourse to divine aid, no doubt they would have found the salvation and the truth that they sought; for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him,"³ and "he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."⁴

But others have come, who, following their own reasonings or drawing from foreign sources, introduced certain theories as to the nature of things, as to God, man, and the universe, transcendental and audacious theories, which were only told in secret with reserve and infinite precautions; and, in order to prevent these theories from being traced to their true source and estimated at their proper value, as well as to legitimate in their own eyes the occultism⁵ that was mingled with their speculations, they affected to connect them with the text of the Scriptures by an artificial method and forced interpretations. They feigned or imagined that God had confided the secret to the first man, who had transmitted it to the patriarchs, and these to Moses and the elders of Israel, who had caused it to be passed on from generation to generation, and from mouth to mouth, by a small number of chosen and initiated souls, until the moment when this sublime and mysterious *recipe*, which is the meaning of the word *Kabbalah*,⁶ had itself been embodied in writings such as the *Sepher Jetsirah*, or book of the *Formation*, the *Zohar*, or book of the *Light*, and others, their origin being ascribed to very early time, although their appearance is but of recent date.⁷ He, therefore, who had succeeded in mastering the Kabbalah possessed the key of the revelations, the understanding of all the mysteries; entering into close relation with the divinity, if he would he could work

¹ Ps. lxxxi. 9.² Matt. xi. 30.³ Ps. xxv. 14.⁴ Matt. vii. 8.⁵ French, *interdit*.⁶ קבלה, in Pihel, *to receive*.⁷ The first edition of the *Sepher Jetsirah* is that of Mantua, published in 1565 (Frankf.).

miracles, and mould to his will both spirit and matter, he was king of the creation. Such is the idea which has been entertained of the Kabbalah among the Jews and elsewhere; such are the advantages that were promised in connection with it.¹

SUPPLEMENT No. IX.

IMMORTALITY ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE; DECLARATIONS CONTAINED IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.²

(See page 143.)

THUS saith the Lord: Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. *Jer. vi. 16.*

The Jews in Berea were more noble than those in Thessalonica. . . . They examined the Scriptures daily to see whether these things that they were told were true. Many of them therefore believed. *Acts xvii. 11, 12.*

I. MAN IS NOT BORN IMMORTAL; IMMORTALITY IS AN ATTRIBUTE OF GOD ALONE.

The Lord God commanded the man, saying: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." *Gen. ii. 16, 17.*

. . . But the Serpent said unto the woman: "Die! Ye shall not die."³ *Gen. iii. 4.*

Then the Lord God said: "Behold the man is become as one of us to know good and evil, and now he must not put forth his hand and

¹ Shall we be surprised at the pretensions of the Kabbalah, supposed by the Jews to be the key of all mysteries. when we find the Roman orator defining philosophy as *the science of things divine and human and the knowledge of the causes of all that exists?* *Tusc.*, iv. 26; *Offices*, i. 43. The Roman juriconsults, not content to define their traditional doctrine as *the science of the just and the unjust*, declared it also to be *the knowledge of things divine and human.*—*Instit. Lib. i.*, Tit. i., § 2.

² In those passages in which our translation varies from the usual versions, we refer the reader to the original texts. See *ante*, p. 176, note 1.

For the better understanding of these passages they should be studied in their context and with the aid of the best translations. In French those of Lausanne, Perret-Gentil, Rilliet, Segond, Oltramare, Lasserre, Stapfer, and Ostervald revised by the French Bible Society, seem to us most suitable for this purpose; in German, that of Professor de Wette rather than that of Luther, and in English the R.V. rather than the A.V.

Without placing the Old Testament on the same level as the New, and while admitting that revelation has been progressive, we would call attention to the unity of biblical teaching in relation to the subject of our study.

³ The Serpent, which is the Devil or Satan, is the father of lies. That dogma is, then, of diabolical origin which for the sentence of *death* pronounced against the sinner substitutes *eternal life* in torments. Satan thus appears as the earliest and the most skilful advocate of *unconditional* immortality.

take of the fruit of the tree of life, to eat and to live for ever." Then the Lord God sent the man forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim with a flaming sword, to keep the way of the tree of life.¹ *Gen. iii. 22-24.*

Man that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish. *Ps. xlix. 20 [21], cf. 12 [13].*

Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.² *Matt. x. 28.*

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the spirit is spirit.³ *John iii. 6.*

As the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself.⁴ *John v. 26.*

I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. *John xiv. 6.*

Because I live, ye shall live also.⁵ *John xiv. 19.*

God will render . . . to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life.⁶ *Rom. ii. 7.*

I say the truth . . . I could wish that I myself should perish accursed and separated from Christ for the salvation of my brethren . . . Israelites.⁷ *Rom. ix. 1, 3.*

¹ If words have any meaning, these verses signify that the divine mercy wished to spare the sinful man such a horrible fate as that invented by a self-styled orthodoxy: an eternal life in sin and suffering. The tree of life and immortality are favours reserved for a chosen number of penitent sinners. See *Rev. ii. 7; iii. 5; xxi. 6; xxii. 14.*

² Unless this is a vain threat of Jesus, it implies that even the soul can be destroyed, and will be destroyed, when the case requires it.

³ Water cannot rise above its level; flesh can engender only flesh. The unregenerate man, being naturally carnal, cannot form part of the kingdom of God, wherein love and self-sacrifice are fundamental principles, while the flesh is essentially selfish.

⁴ Unconditional immortality is, then, an attribute of the divinity exclusively.

⁵ The Christian's existence depends upon that of Christ.

⁶ According to the traditional dogma, God grants immortality or incorruptibility with eternal life even to those who do not seek for them. All the damned would thus be immortal. This would be a direct contradiction of the apostle's declaration.

⁷ Paul here repeats the vow of Moses (*Ex. xxxii. 32*). He is willing to renounce life, and even existence, if by this sacrifice he can save his people. This is a truly sublime devotion; it is in conformity with the meaning of the word *anathema*, which designates a victim devoted to destruction. In Segond's version of the Bible there is a note to *Lev. xxvii. 28*, stating that "vows of devotion were irrevocable, and involved the destruction of that which had been so devoted." But is it possible to conceive that Paul could ask to become one of those outcasts who, according to the traditional doctrine, *in ceaseless torments, fill eternity with their blasphemies*? No, the apostle could never for a moment have dreamt of forming so impious a wish! The wish that he might cease to be is not unlikely. That implies no eternal hatred of God, and even of the Saviour himself. The inner consciousness revolts from the thought that Paul could consent again to blaspheme, even for a patriotic purpose, while there is nothing repugnant in the idea of a pure and simple sacrifice of existence. On the contrary, it is the most noble and admirable conception that can be imagined. This passage is one of the thousand rocks on which the ecclesiastical dogma makes shipwreck.

There is a natural [unspiritual]¹ body, and there is a spiritual body ; and so it is written : "The first man, Adam, became a living soul,"² the last Adam is a life-giving spirit. The first man taken from the earth is earthy ;³ the second man [the Lord] is of heaven. As is the earthly such are they also that are earthly ; and as is the heavenly [spirit] such are they also that are heavenly [spirits]. Brethren, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 1 *Cor.* xv. 44, *sq.*

God only hath immortality. 1 *Tim.* vi. 16 ; cf. i. 17.

Ye owe your new birth not to a corruptible germ, but an incorruptible, the word of God which liveth and abideth. 1 *Pet.* i. 23.

Great and precious promises have been made to us, that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, enabling us to escape from the corruption⁴ that is in the world through lust. 2 *Pet.* i. 4.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. . . . He that overcometh shall not be hurt⁵ of the second death. *Rev.* ii. 7, 11.

I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. *Rev.* xxi. 6.

Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life.⁶ *Rev.* xxii. 14.

II. IMMORTALITY IS A PRIVILEGE GRANTED TO THE RIGHTEOUS, AND A FAVOUR OFFERED TO THE PENITENT BELIEVER.

The king . . . O Lord ! . . . asked life of thee ; thou gavest it to him, even length of days for ever and ever. *Ps.* xxi. 4 [5].

¹ Literally, a *psychical body*, animated by an inferior life, without spirituality, organized for the life of sense or governed by the senses. *Animalis . . . quod homines cum brutis commune habemus . . . qui naturæ sensibus obnoxie appetitu et cupiditate regitur.* Grimm, *Clavis N. T. philologica.*

² A "living soul" in the Bible is synonymous with an *animal* or *animated* being.—*Gen.* i. 20, etc.

³ The very name Adam signifies *earthly, taken from the earth.*

⁴ Φθορά, at the same time *moral corruption* and *destruction, rottenness.* "These promises should induce us to flee from the vicious tendencies of the world, which lead to corruption, that is to say, to perdition, to ruin, to death ; then, positively, to aspire after the divine nature, which is incorruptible, not subject to death."—Reuss, *Épîtres catholiques*, p. 242.

The natural man does not partake of the divine nature, he possesses only its image. A pool of water reproduces the image of the sun, without participating in the nature of that luminary.

⁵ Ἀδίκηθη. Cf. *Luke* x. 19.

⁶ It should be remembered that in the Bible the word *life* keeps everywhere and always its ontological meaning ; it is firstly and fundamentally *existence.*

In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no-death.¹ *Prov.* xii. 28; see, too, xv. 24.

In this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.² *Luke* x. 20.

The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.³ *Luke* xix. 10.

They that are accounted worthy to belong to that age, and to share in the resurrection from among the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels, being sons of God and children of the resurrection.⁴ *Luke* xx. 35, 36.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. *John* iii. 16.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life; he cometh not into judgement, but hath passed out of death into life.⁵ *John* v. 24.

Ye search the Scriptures because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me, and ye will not come unto me that ye may have life. *John* v. 39, 40.

The bread of God is he that cometh down out of heaven and giveth life unto the world. They said therefore unto him: "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Jesus said unto them: "I am the bread of life . . . the living bread which came down out of heaven. . . . He that eateth this bread shall live for ever. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have

¹ Delitzsch, in his Hebrew translation of the New Testament, uses the term מוֹת־אֵל which is here translated *no-death* as the rendering of the Greek word *ἀθάνατος*.—*1 Cor.* xv. 53, *sq.*

² In biblical phraseology a name inscribed in heaven is an image representing the notion of a perpetuity of the person whose name is so written.

³ To "save" and to "lose" are two words the meaning of which has been perverted by traditional orthodoxy. To *save* is in the original to *conserve*, to *preserve* or *snatch from destruction, from annihilation*. In English, to *save* money is to *keep* or hoard it. This meaning has not disappeared from modern usage; it is found in many an expression: to *save* life, *save* the State, *salutary* herbs, such as are wholesome, suited to maintain life, *safe and sound*. When the Bible speaks of *salvation* the first meaning of the word is *conservation*. Thus it is said: "Thou savest [preservest] man and beast."—*Ps.* xxxvi. 6 [7]. So, too, in the New Testament: "Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved."—*Rom.* v. 10. Here *saved* evidently signifies not to be *snatched away from hell*, that being a result of the reconciliation, but to be *preserved alive* by the communication of a divine life. There is no lack of Hebrew or Greek terms for expressing the idea of *happiness*. If, therefore, the sacred writers tell us of *life* and *immortality*, why not allow these words to bear their natural sense?

⁴ The wicked, too, will be raised, but they will have to die again; this is called in the Revelation "the second death."

⁵ From a beginning of death to a renewal of life.

not life in yourselves. . . .¹ It is the spirit that giveth life, the flesh profiteth nothing ; the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life." . . . Simon Peter said : "Lord, to whom should we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life." *John* vi. 33-35 ; 51, 53, 57, 58, 63, 68.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my word he shall never see death. *John* viii. 51.

I am come that my sheep may have life, and may have it in overflowing measure. . . . I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. *John* x. 10, 28.

I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die.² *John* xi. 25 ; see, too, xiv. 19.

Go ye, and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. *Acts* v. 20.

They glorified God, saying : "Then hath God permitted the Gentiles also to come to repentance, that they may have life." *Acts* xi. 18.

The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Rom.* vi. 23.

If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from among the dead dwell in you, he that raised up the Christ from among the dead shall also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit that dwelleth in you.³ *Rom.* viii. 11.

The names of Euodias and Syntyche . . . are in the book of life.⁴ *Philip.* iv. 2, 3.

When Christ who is our life shall appear, ye also shall appear with him in glory. *Col.* iii. 4.

Lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou wast called. *1 Tim.* vi. 12.

¹ Jesus declares that through him alone can man "live for ever." This declaration is repeated twenty-eight times in the first six chapters of this Gospel, fifty times in the same apostle's various writings, and yet for all that there are those who maintain the native and indefeasible immortality of all souls !

² In other words, the believer, whose body dies, shall not be subject to the second death. Using the orthodox vocabulary, this saying would run : "Even though he were *miserable*, he who is *happy* and a believer shall never be *miserable*." A veritable *reductio ad absurdum*.

³ Twenty times in this Epistle the apostle tells us that death is the punishment of sin, and in more than a dozen passages he reminds us that life and immortality are exceptional privileges. Will it be said that to "give life to mortal bodies" is to make them happy ?

⁴ The book of life, according to the biblical image, is the register in which are inscribed the names of all living ; to be blotted out of this book is to be cut off from the number of beings, in other words, to cease to exist. Such erasure is the penalty of a bad use of human freedom. See *Rev.* iii. 5 ; xx. 15 ; xxii. 19.

Some have thought to see in the book of life the election of grace ; but since the election is the object of an unchangeable decree, erasure from it would be contradictory.

The Lord is not slack . . . but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 2 *Pet.* iii. 9.

The world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.¹ 1 *John* ii. 17; see also 1 *John* ii. 25; iv. 9; *Rev.* xxii. 17.

III. IMMORTALITY IS A CONDITIONAL PRIVILEGE: THE BIBLE NEVER SPEAKS OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.²

Ye shall keep my statutes and my laws, which if a man do he shall live in them. *Lev.* xviii. 5.

See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. . . . I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life. . . . Love the Lord thy God, to obey his voice and to cleave unto him, for it is he who is the source of thy life and who lengthens thy days. *Deut.* xxx. 15, 19, 20.

Moses said to Israel: "Take to heart all the words which I testify unto you this day . . . for it is no vain thing for you, because it is the source of your life, and through this word ye shall prolong your days." *Deut.* xxxii. 46, 47.

Wisdom saith: "Whoso findeth me findeth life . . . all they that hate me love death." *Prov.* viii. 35, 36.

Righteousness tendeth unto life, but he that pursueth evil doeth it to his own death. . . . The fear of the Lord tendeth unto life. *Prov.* xi. 19; xix. 23.

The soul that sinneth it shall die. . . . When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity he shall die because of it. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he hath opened his eyes and turned away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.³ *Ezek.* xviii. 20, 26, 28.

¹ Of the wicked, on the contrary, there abides only a remembrance, and that gradually disappears, like smoke that is dissipated. That which belonged to the wicked will become the heritage of the righteous, who survive. *Matt.* xiii. 12; xxv. 29.

² It has been asserted that the immortality of the soul is taken for granted. A doctrine which might rather have been taken for granted is the eternity of God; yet the Bible teaches this: *Rom.* i. 23; xvi. 26; 1 *Tim.* i. 17; vi. 16. There would be stronger reasons for the Bible to teach the immortality of the soul, if that were true; but it teaches the exact contrary.

³ In order to be in accord with traditional orthodoxy, the prophet Ezekiel ought to have thus expressed himself: "The soul that sinneth shall live for ever in torments. If the righteous turn aside from his righteousness, he shall be eternally tormented; if

O house of Israel. . . . Return ye, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin. . . . For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God ; wherefore turn yourselves and live. *Ezek.* xviii. 30, 32.

Enter ye in by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many be they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leadeth unto life, and how few be they that find it ! *Matt.* vii. 13.

Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life ? Jesus said unto him : “. . . If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments.” *Matt.* xix. 16, 17.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth may in him have an eternal life.¹ *John* iii. 14, 15.

He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto a life eternal. *John* xii. 25.

The mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the spirit is life and peace.² *Rom.* viii. 6.

If ye live after the flesh ye will shortly die ; but if by the spirit ye make to die the deeds of the body, ye shall live.³ *Rom.* viii. 13.

We are a sweet savour of Christ unto God in them that are being saved and in them that are perishing ; in these an odour of death, unto death, and in those an odour of life, unto life. 2 *Cor.* ii. 15.

Be not deceived, God is not to be mocked : whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap ; for he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption ;⁴ but he that soweth unto the spirit shall of the spirit reap eternal life. *Gal.* vi. 7, 8.

Lay hold on the life eternal. 1 *Tim.* vi. 12.

Blessed of God is the land which, drinking in the frequent rain, bringeth forth herbs useful to those for whom it is tilled. But if it beareth thorns and thistles it is worthless. It will soon be accursed, and its end a burning. *Heb.* vi. 7, 8.

the wicked turn away from his wickedness, he shall enjoy unending felicity. Turn ye, so that your iniquity bring not upon you an eternity of misery, for I take no pleasure in the endless sufferings of immortal creatures.”

¹ The sight of the serpent restored physical life to the dying Israelites ; so, too, the diseased soul that contemplates Jesus on the cross is reanimated, is healed, is immortalized. The notions of holiness and happiness are quite in the background.

² Φρόνημα, *cogitatio* ; *item desiderium*. Schleusner.—A.V. to be carnally minded, to be spiritually minded. The words might be translated : a *preoccupation with the things* of the flesh, of the spirit, or a *carnal tendency*, etc.

³ The apostle seems here to have in view the premature deaths of libertines and drunkards ; but the death which is the final extinction of all the faculties is not excluded.

⁴ Φθοράν, the contrary of ἀφθαρσία ; while, according to the traditional dogma, the wicked would enjoy a sort of *imperishability*.

We are not of them that shrink back unto perdition, but of them that believe unto the preservation of the soul.¹ *Heb.* x. 39.

Our God is a consuming fire.² *Heb.* xii. 29.

Beloved, I beseech you . . . to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.³ 1 *Pet.* ii. 11.

Our witness is this : that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life, he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life. 1 *John* v. 11, 12.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life. *Rev.* ii. 7.

He that overcometh shall be arrayed in white garments, and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life. *Rev.* iii. 5.

IV. THE SINNER IS THREATENED WITH DEATH ; THAT IS, A GRADUAL DESTRUCTION OF BODY AND SOUL.

Unto Adam God said : "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou return unto the ground, out of which thou wast taken ; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."⁴ *Gen.* iii. 19.

If ye shall still do wickedly ye shall be consumed, ye and your king. 1 *Sam.* xii. 25.

Evil shall slay the wicked. *Psa.* xxxiv. 21 ; see, too, ix. 5 ; xxi. 9, 10.

The Lord shall cut off the wicked by their own wickedness. The Lord our God shall cut them off. *Psa.* xciv. 23.

He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul ; all they that hate me love death. *Prov.* viii. 36 ; see, too, xxiv. 20.

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. *Matt.* vii. 19.

Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ; but rather fear him which is able to destroy⁵ both soul and body in Gehenna. *Matt.* x. 28.

What shall a man be profited if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his life, or what shall a man give in exchange for his life ?⁶ *Matt.* xvi. 26.

¹ Therefore without faith the soul will not be *preserved*.

² Cf. *Deut.* iv. 24 ; ix. 3.

³ Lusts not only defile the soul, they can kill it ; that is their tendency.

⁴ There is no question of eternal torments in this sentence, any more than in the previous threat. It may be understood that the divine goodness mitigates the penalty incurred by the first man, by allowing him to prolong his earthly existence ; but it is incomprehensible that the divine judge should add endless torments to the *death* with which he had threatened the guilty.

⁵ Ἀπολείσαι, the same word used to designate perishable food, *John* vi. 27.

⁶ See *ante* a commentary on this favourite maxim of Jesus Christ, Chap. IV. sect. vi.

From him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away.¹ *Matt.* xxv. 29.

Those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, think ye that they were sinners [lit. *debtors*] above all the dwellers in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay, but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.² *Luke* xiii. 4, 5.

He that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. *John* iii. 36; see, too, v. 40.

If a man abide not in union with me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, gathered up, cast into the fire, and burned.³ *John* xv. 6.

Even as they cared not to have the knowledge of God, God gave them over to their reprobate mind, to do things that are infamous. . . . And knowing the ordinance of God, that they which practise such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also consent with them that practise them. *Rom.* i. 28, 32.

After thy hardness and impenitent heart thou treasurest up for thyself wrath for the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of God, who will render to every man according to his works: to those who by patience in well doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life; but unto them that are factious and obey not the truth but obey unrighteousness shall be wrath and indignation. *Rom.* ii. 5-8.

Death passed unto all men, for that all have sinned.⁴ *Rom.* v. 12.

What fruit then had ye? Things whereof ye are now ashamed, and the end of which is death.⁵ For the wages of sin is death. *Rom.* vi. 21, 23.

When we lived according to the flesh, our bodies were under the dominion of sinful passions, . . . the fruit whereof is death. *Rom.* vii. 5.

Ye are a temple of God. . . . If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy.⁶ . . . Your body is a temple of the holy Spirit. *1 Cor.* iii. 16, 17; vi. 19.

¹ Man *is* only by that which he *has*: memory, imagination, will, various faculties, etc. If the man *had* absolutely nothing, he *would be* absolutely nothing.

² Cf. *Matt.* xxi. 41. What can be the meaning of this "likewise," if not a spiritual fate analogous to the tragic fate of the victims referred to, a *suppression of life*.

³ Before being burnt and reduced to ashes he is withered, that is, he loses *even the unproductive sap* by which he lived although barren.

⁴ If by *death* we are to understand an eternal life in torments, this passage would imply endless suffering for all little children who have died. Contemporary orthodoxy recoils from this logical consequence of the system.

⁵ Sin is not death, but leads to it. See also *Rom.* vii. 5; *Phil.* iii. 19; *James* i. 15; *1 John* v. 16, 17. What is the death here referred to? Not bodily death, for that comes upon the righteous themselves; not spiritual death, for the practice of sin is itself an effect of that kind of death. There remains, then, the second death, which kills and suppresses the soul as well as the body. Bodily death is, however, not excluded.

⁶ *Φθερῇ τοῦτον ὁ θεός*, God will destroy him who destroys his own body. Nothing will in the end survive this double destruction.

If our Gospel be veiled, it is veiled in them that are perishing.¹
² *Cor.* iv. 3.

I tell you even weeping : the conduct of many among you is that of enemies of the cross of Christ. Minding earthly things, they make their god of their belly and their glory of their shame ; whose end is destruction.² *Phil.* iii. 18, 19.

They that desire to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts such as drown men in destruction and perdition. *1 Tim.* vi. 9.

If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgement and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries. *Heb.* x. 26, 27.

Lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin, and the sin when it is full grown, bringeth forth death.³ *James* i. 15.

He that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death. *James.* v. 20.

If the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?⁴ *1 Pet.* iv. 18.

Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.⁵ *1 Pet.* v. 8.

These as creatures without reason, made to be taken and destroyed, in their own corruption shall surely be destroyed.⁶ *2 Pet.* ii. 12.

No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. *1 John* iii. 15.

V. PARTIAL LOSSES OF THE GUILTY, EVEN THOUGH PENITENT.

The Lord said : "I have pardoned . . . but your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness." *Num.* xiv. 20, 32.

Nathan said to David : "The Lord hath pardoned thy sin, thou shalt

¹ According to the apostle, to "perish" or "die" in the absolute sense is to be plunged into a sleep from which there is no awaking, into a night which has no morrow. Cf. *1 Cor.* xv. 18, 32.

² The end of such men is destruction. What can there be for them after *the end*?

³ Sin is not yet death ; it brings that forth when it has attained complete development, has reached adult age, so to speak.

⁴ The implied answer is "Nowhere !" because he will exist no more. *Prorsus exterminabitur*, he will be entirely destroyed. J. J. Hottinger, Commentary, *in loco Perit*, Wilke and Grimm.

⁵ Literally *swallow up*. Souls can be swallowed up. What can this mean but a definitive destruction ? The lion that devours does not give back the souls.

⁶ *Φαθήσονται*. "Like brute beasts, born for a purely physical life, to be taken and killed . . . they will perish in the same way. . . . The ruin of those who are perverse is represented as exactly similar to the death of the beasts that perish without any ulterior hope." Reuss, *Épîtres catholiques*, p. 249.

not die ; nevertheless, . . . the child that is born unto thee shall surely die."¹ 2 *Sam.* xii. 13, 14.

After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great guilt, seeing that thou, our God, hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such a remnant, shall we again break thy commandments ? . . . Wouldest not thou be angry with us until thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor any to escape ? *Ezra* ix. 13-15.

Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their doings. *Psa.* xcix. 8.

The Lord hath chastened me sore, but he hath not given me over unto death. *Psa.* cxviii. 18.

Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, we should have been like unto Gomorrah. *Isa.* i. 9.

For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold . . . I will put thee into the furnace of affliction. *Isa.* xlviii. 9, 10.

O Lord, chasten me, but with judgement ; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. *Jer.* x. 24.

Fear thou not, O Jacob, my servant, saith the Lord, for I am with thee. For I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee. I will chasten thee with judgement, but I will in no wise treat thee as guiltless.² *Jer.* xlv. 28.

This I recall to mind, therefore have I hope : it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.³ *Lam.* iii. 21, 22.

I have overthrown you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a brand plucked out of the burning. *Amos* iv. 11.

It is better for thee to enter into life having only one eye than to have two eyes and to be cast into the fire of Gehenna. *Matt.* xviii. 9.

What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and destroy or forfeit himself ?⁴ *Luke* ix. 25.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-dresser ; he cutteth off every branch in me that beareth not fruit, and every branch that beareth fruit he pruneth, that it may bring forth more fruit. *John* xv. 1, 2.

Ye should have hearkened unto me . . . it would have spared you

¹ Not only so, but the terrible threatenings of 2 *Sam.* xii. 10 *sq.* did not fail of their accomplishment.

² This admirable passage contains a sort of epitome of the biblical teaching on the subject. Cf. *Neh.* ix. 30, 31 ; *Psa.* lxxviii. 37, 38 ; *Jer.* iv. 27 ; v. 10, 18 ; xxx. 11 ; and *Micah* vii. 7-10.

³ *Dass wir nicht vernichtet sind.* De Wette and Perret-Gentil, *versus* Segond.

⁴ It is in man's power to *damage* and even to *destroy* his body, his soul, *himself*.

this harm and loss. But now I exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. *Acts* xxvii. 21, 22.

If Christ is in you, the body truly is dead because of sin, but the spirit lives because of righteousness.¹ *Rom.* viii. 10.

The fire shall prove each man's work. . . . If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss ; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire. *1 Cor.* iii. 13, 15.

When we are judged of the Lord we are chastened that we may not be condemned with the world. *1 Cor.* xi. 32.

He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. *2 Cor.* ix. 6.

Exercise discrimination, having mercy for some with tenderness and for others with salutary fear, snatching them out of the fire. *Jude* 22, 23.

VI. GOD TAKES NO PLEASURE IN PUNISHING, AND HIS CHASTISEMENTS, WHICH ARE ALWAYS PROPORTIONED TO THE GUILT, ARE CHIEFLY THE WITHDRAWAL OF HIS FAVOURS.

God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them : " Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." ² *Gen.* ix. 1.

The Lord [is] a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth, keeping mercy for thousands [of generations], forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, but without leaving the guilty unpunished.³ *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7.

The Lord's anger is but for a moment. . . . He will not keep his anger for ever. *Ps.* xxx. 5 [6] ; ciii. 9 ; cf. *Isa.* lvii. 16.

The Lord is . . . gracious in all his works. *Ps.* cxlv. 17.

¹ "The body is dead," a prolepsis in the thought. The apostle speaks by anticipation of the death of the body, which is necessarily in prospect for all men. *Tout est er, so gut wie nicht mehr vorhanden.* H. A. W. Meyer.

² This blessing, accorded to sinners, would be a mockery if the majority of the children of men were destined, after this short life, to an eternity of torments. With such a prospect marriage would become a crime. "We should like to make the champions of the dogma in question feel that they ought never to marry, for in doing so they run a great risk of bringing into existence beings who will be damned to all eternity ! But, after all, the dogma of eternal torments has had so little practical influence over men's conduct in life, that it has never, even in the most flourishing days of orthodoxy, arrested the incessant increase of the species, nor prevented the aspirations of humanity after the future. With or without reflection, and swayed by the secret power of the truth, the human soul has always looked in the direction indicated by hope, and without paying attention to the threats of a dismal superstition, it has never hesitated to accept, as dictated by God, that instinctive law given to his creatures : 'Increase and multiply !' "—*Alliance liberale*, Dec. 3, 1870.

³ "But to absolve . . . he absolves not." *The Pentateuch*, by L. Wogue, professor of theology in the Jewish Seminary in Paris. Although he pardons, God does not leave unpunished ; there is always partial punishment. These two declarations, far from contradicting, complete each other. The unpardoned sin would require the complete suppression of the sinner. For the true notion of pardon see *ante*, chap. v., sect. ix. and x.

Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish and wine unto the bitter in soul; let him drink, and forget his misery, and lose the remembrance of his trouble.¹ *Prov.* xxxi. 6, 7.

In that day thou shalt say: "I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." *Isa.* xii. 1.

The Lord . . . doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. *Lam.* iii. 33.

The Lord . . . is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy, and repenteth him of the evil; who knoweth whether he will not turn and repent? *Joel* ii. 13, 14.

Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the age to come.² *Matt.* xii. 32.

He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen.³ *Matt.* xxi. 41.

Woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had not been born.⁴ *Matt.* xxvi. 24.

Whosoever shall blaspheme against the holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.⁵ *Mark* iii. 29.

Love ye your enemies and do good, and lend without expecting return, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High, for he is kind toward the unthankful and the evil.⁶ *Luke* vi. 35.

¹ The divine mercy would have the torments of the death agony attenuated as much as possible. Hence, no doubt, the custom admitted among the Israelites of offering an intoxicating drink to those condemned to death. See the posthumous work of Dr. Simpson on *Anæsthesia*. And is it possible to conceive that this same God would reserve endless torments for these same sinners?

² Jesus here implicitly teaches that some sinners may be pardoned in the future life. We shall presently see that Jesus also teaches a gradation in future punishments as well as rewards.

³ This declaration, in order to be in accord with the traditional hypothesis, would need to be modified thus: "He will inflict a multitude of torments upon those miserable men, and their subsequent life will be only one endless torture."

⁴ For those less guilty it is then good to have been born; this legitimate inference does not, however, accord with the hypothesis of eternal torments inflicted upon all the impenitent without distinction.—This same verse is opposed to Origenism. It would have been good for Judas to have been born if he were destined finally to be among the saved, the present life being but an hour or a minute in relation to eternity.

⁵ A *sin eternal* in its consequences since it will remain unpardoned and unpardonable. The adjective eternal sometimes bears the meaning of irreparable, ineffaceable, irrevocable, irremediable, definitive. *Heb.* vi. 2; *Mat.* xxv. 41, 46; *2 Thess.* ii. 16; *Jude* 7, etc.

⁶ "If God loves his enemies, will he punish them otherwise than for their good? Can an eternal torment contribute to the benefit of the sinner?" Th. Scott. *Questions proposées à l'orthodoxie*.—As for irreconcilable sinners, they punish themselves, but Providence has placed merciful limits to this power of self chastisement. As they fail to renew their life at the eternal fountain, the wicked being exhausted will end by re-

That servant who knew his Lord's will and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not and did things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required, and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.¹ *Luke* xii. 47, 48.

It is not with the free gift as with the trespass . . . where sin abounded grace abounded more exceedingly.² *Rom.* v. 15, 20.

VII. FINAL DESTRUCTION OF THE IMPENITENT.

Thou destroyest the wicked, thou blottest out their name for ever and ever. The enemies of come to an end . . . their very memorial is perished. *Ps.* ix. 5, 6 [6, 7].

Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and he shall not be. . . . The wicked shall perish . . . as the excellency of the pastures, in smoke shall they consume away. *Ps.* xxxvii. 10, 20; see, too, ver. 36.

They are utterly consumed. . . . As a dream when one awaketh, so, O Lord, when thou awakest thou shalt despise their image. *Ps.* lxxiii. 19, 20.

When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of

turning to the nothingness which preceded their creation. After a long and painful death-process, during which the heavenly Father's compassion will never be falsified, the peace of a dreamless sleep from which there is no awaking will be their portion. Woe to the senseless and thankless coward who would envy such a fate! He would deserve to share it. To utter such a desire would be blasphemy against the holy Spirit, who, being love, desires to communicate to us his life and happiness. Free as we are, shall we reproach him for not forcing the door of our hearts? What are we waiting for before opening the door to him? Shall we allow it to rust on its hinges?

¹ These words, "few stripes," can scarcely be reconciled with the idea of eternal sufferings. Even though the sufferer were to receive only one stroke each thousand years, eternity would multiply them to infinity. From the conditionalist point of view, on the other hand, the chastisement consisting in a loss of faculties or capacities, the correlation between the fault and its punishment is always easily and mathematically established. If he who has *received much* loses all, his chastisement will be *ipso facto* much greater than that of the man who loses little because he had received little.

² There is a multitude of those not invited, and a multitude of those invited but not chosen. The number of those chosen is small in comparison. If all the non-chosen souls were to live for ever in sufferings, would it not be mockery to affirm that the effects of grace were greater than those of sin? The apostle's declaration here can only seem true if regarded from our point of view. The salvation of the small number of the chosen is the harvest which is abundant in spite of the frost and the hail, it is the net profit of the banker when he has made up his balance sheet.

From the conditionalist stand-point death will have only a limited effect, inasmuch as after having killed its victims it can do no more. The day will come when its work will be over, while the objects of grace will for ever subsist. The monuments of death will disappear, death itself "will be no more," while the grace of Jesus Christ will remain always operative. Thus will it superabound. Otherwise it would be necessary to have recourse to the universalist interpretation, which we have seen cannot be maintained.

iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever. *Ps.* xcii. 7 [8]; see, too, cxv. 8.

The Lord preserveth all them that love him, but all the wicked will he destroy. *Ps.* cxlv. 20.

There will be no future to the evil man; the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.¹ *Prov.* xxiv. 20; xiii. 9.

The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool.² *Isa.* li. 8.

The cup that ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, of it shall all the nations drink continually; they shall drink it to the dregs, and shall be as though they had never been. *Obad.* 16.

Behold the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace, and all the proud and all that work wickedness shall be stubble. The day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.³ But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his beams, and ye shall leap for joy. And ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet. *Mal.* iv. 1-3.

Gather up first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up, but gather the wheat into my barn. . . . As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be in the end of the age. *Matt.* xiii. 30, 40.

When the net is filled, it is drawn up on the beach; they sit down and gather the good into vessels, but they cast away the bad.⁴ So shall it be in the end of this age, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. *Matt.* xiii. 48, 49.

He that falleth on this stone shall be broken to pieces, but on whomsoever it shall fall it will scatter him as dust.⁵ *Matt.* xxi. 44; see, too, ver. 41.

When they are saying, "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction cometh upon them. *1 Thess.* v. 3.

They shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction.⁶ *2 Thess.* i. 9.

If we sin wilfully after having received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful

¹ In biblical phraseology the *lamp* often designates the *life*.

² "The image here employed (cf. ver. 6 and l. 9) expresses the idea of a slow destruction of the world and of the wicked." *Bible annotée de Neuchâtel*.

³ Symbol of a truly *radical* annihilation.

⁴ Literally *rotten, spoilt*.

⁵ As Mr. White has pointed out, this figure, like many others, seems to imply that the punishment of the wicked will consist in a destruction of their being.

⁶ See chap. xi. of this work, and the *Classified List of Objections* in *Supplement*, No. xvii.

expectation of judgement and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries. *Heb.* x. 26, 27; see, too, ver. 29.

I saw a great white throne . . . and the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. And books were opened, and then another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged according to their works, out of the things written in the books. . . . Those who were not found written in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire . . . which is the second death.¹ *Rev.* xx. 11-15.

VIII. END OF SATAN AND OF THE REIGN OF EVIL.

The Lord God said unto the serpent. . . . "The seed of the woman . . . shall crush thy head." *Gen.* iii. 14, 15.

The Lord of hosts shall swallow up death for ever. *Isa.* xxv. 8.

The beast was slain and his body destroyed, and he was given to be burned with fire. *Dan.* vii. 11; see, too, ver. 26.

The God of peace shall crush Satan under your feet shortly. *Rom.* xvi. 20.

The last enemy that shall be abolished is death . . . that God may be all in all.² *1 Cor.* xv. 26, 28.

He in whom is all fulness was pleased to dwell in him, and by him to reconcile all things.³ *Col.* i. 19, 20.

The Lord Jesus shall slay the lawless one by the breath of his mouth and bring him to nought by the brightness of his coming. *2 Thess.* ii. 8.

Our Saviour Christ Jesus hath abolished death. *2 Tim.* i. 10.

He also partook of flesh and blood, that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.⁴ *Heb.* ii. 14, 15.

¹ Cf. *Rev.* xiii. 8, xxii. 19; *Ex.* xxxii. 32; *Ezek.* xiii. 9; *Dan.* xii. 1; *Phil.* iv. 3, and *ante* chap. iv., sect. vii., p. 136, and that which has been said about the book of life, p. 461, note 4.

² In all those who by faith and earnest endeavour will have overcome the deleterious effects of sin, and will have finally survived. It has been said that God would be all "in the lost as powerful justice, and in the saved as pardoning grace" (*Erbkam*). In that case God would be even now *all in all*, for he pardons and punishes even here below.

³ *Tà πάντα*, "the whole creation," mentioned *Col.* i. 16 and *1 Cor.* xv. 28. This reconciliation of all things created cannot be made to agree with the existence of an eternal hell. In this passage the *restitutionists* have seen the final salvation of all men without exception. But, alas! many souls will have utterly perished before the day in which the work of universal reconciliation will be consummated.

⁴ If he had wished to speak the language of traditional orthodoxy, would not the sacred writer have here substituted for "fear of death" that of hell and eternal torments? "Bring to nought," *καταργεῖν*, is an emphatic expression used by the apostle Paul in the sense of *abolition*. See p. 347 *sq.*

He hath been manifested for the putting away of sin.¹ *Heb.* ix. 26.

To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.² *1 John* iii. 8.

Death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said: "Behold, I make all things new." *Rev.* xxi. 4, 5; cf. v. 13.

Nothing shall be cursed any more.³ *Rev.* xxii. 3.

SUPPLEMENT No. X.

EPITOME OF CONDITIONALIST DOCTRINE BY AN AMERICAN PASTOR.⁴

(See page 143.)

I HAVE spoken thus far of Jesus Christ as the Mediator, and of the Scriptures as the Record of God's Revelation. What now is the Content of Revelation? What that eternal purpose which is purposed toward us in Christ Jesus?

I believe that man is a spiritual organism of whom life and death are predicable. I do not believe in the natural and necessary immortality of man but in his potential immortality;—to coin a word—in his *immortality*. "This is the record: that God hath given to us everlasting life, and this life is in his Son. Whoso hath the Son hath the life; and whoso hath not the Son hath not the life." They who have not the Son have *a* life, but that life is probationary and perishable. "The life which is life indeed" is a life "hid with Christ in God." I believe the indispensable condition of eternal life to be conscious communion with, and obedience to God. All our springs are in him. In

¹ Sin would not be entirely "put away" if it were going to be committed through eternity, especially as, according to all appearance, hell would be far more populous than heaven.

² Sin, suffering and death. As shown in the preceding note, if the traditional theory were true, the purpose of the incarnation would not be attained.

³ Where? In the whole universe. The word *there*, in Paradise, which appears in some versions, is not in the original text. This gloss, moreover, would be in flagrant contradiction with the words *οὐκ ἔτι, no more*, since nothing accursed has ever been allowed to enter the new Jerusalem that is here in question. See in the Hebrew text and in the LXX. the parallel passage in Zech. xiv. 11. The same remark is applicable to the preceding quotation. Cf. Isa. xxv. 6-8.

⁴ Extract from a pamphlet entitled, *A Statement of theological opinion*, by Rev. Charles H. Oliphant, Pastor of the first Congregational Church, Methuen, Mass., 1885.

him we live—if we live—and move and have our being. To say that spiritual death is but disordered life is, it seems to me, to assume a heavy burden of proof. If life mean something other than conscious existence, and eternal life the everlasting fulness of that existence, it is not apparent to me. If death in one literature mean something other than disorganization and the loss of personal integrity, while in all other writings it has the simpler significance, it is not yet manifest to me. Every analogue with which observation acquaints us bears testimony to the fact that disobedience to the laws of organic life involves the penalty, first, of disease, and then of dissolution. So I think that “sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death.” Any doctrine, at least, upon this awful subject, which could be preached entirely in Scripture language, has seemed to me to possess great antecedent probability. And when to this is superadded the confirmation derived from the observation of all natural law and order, the objector must show, in the first place, that “invisible things are not clearly seen, neither understood, by the things that are made,” and, secondly, that Scripture language on this subject cannot have its literal values. With regard to the effect of this doctrine upon my own heart, I can humbly affirm that when, after years of perplexity, my mind fell upon so simple, and to me, unutterably profound a theodicy, the gospel of my Saviour asserted for the first time, to my understanding, its divine coherence; the goodness and severity of God ceased their warring: “truth sprang out of the ground and righteousness looked down from Heaven.”

Sin being spiritual disease, the gospel is the “saving health” of God. “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Retribution is the inevitable portion of those who sin, and of this retribution, always painful, the event sooner or later will be everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. I know not through what cycles of time the conscious torment of the sinner may continue, but trust I honour God by the reverent hope that it may not survive that far off and final catastrophe when “the last enemy shall be destroyed.”¹

¹ The view here set forth involves, it is to be noticed, neither the doctrine of arbitrary, judicial “annihilation,” nor that of “the materiality of the soul,” nor that of “the resurrection of the physical body”; doctrines by which the simple, and, in my humble judgement, entirely irrefutable teaching of *Immortality through Christ only* has been sadly retarded and obscured.

SUPPLEMENT No. XI.

SPIRITUAL GENERATION ACCORDING TO M. CÉSAR MALAN, JUN.¹

(See page 147.)

ONE of those branches of natural history that have given rise to the most brilliant discoveries in our days is that of embryology, or the observation of the earliest manifestations of organic life in the plant or the animal. I cannot here expatiate upon facts of which the least complete exposition would require great detail and more knowledge than I possess.² It may suffice to remind any of you who are acquainted with the results of those researches of one fact which modern microscopists have brought to light in their studies of the eggs of animals of the kinds called "inferior," eggs which, on account of their transparency, allow of the direct observation of the first manifestations of life in the germ.

That fact is the presence, even in the egg that has not been fecundated, of actual animal life. This phenomenon of life, which is shown by an irregular, unequal, intermittent pulsation, is destined to cease if fecundation does not take place. This "life" is in that case gradually extinguished, and the work of decomposition soon begins, which might be called in relation to the organism in question an inverted evolution, or a life progressing towards death. On the other hand, from the moment when the egg is brought into contact with the fecundating element, this earliest movement of life becomes regular. The germ, which was already living, but with a life proceeding directly towards decomposition, begins at once to assimilate the surrounding matter with a sustained and progressive energy, and a new individuality has inaugurated the series of its manifestations in our universe.

Here, then, we recognize in the beginnings of a single life the successive appearance of two very distinct facts :

The first is one that we may be content to call a fact of *existence*, wherein that which is to become an individual life manifests itself already by an effort which is irregular, intermittent, and soon powerless. This is the initial fact. Left to itself, this form of life is destined

¹ *Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, May, 1879. See also, by the same author, *La Conscience morale*, three essays read before a few friends, with an appreciative philosophic introduction by Professor Ernest Naville, a foreign associate of the Institute of France. Geneva, Paris, 1886.

² That which follows has been suggested to me by an expression of Ebrard in his *Apologetik*. I take this opportunity of introducing that incomparable work to those of my readers who are not acquainted with it. I refer specially to the first volume.

speedily to give place to that which will be its cessation and even its direct negation.

The second of these facts is that same life asserting itself and becoming the principle of a new activity, thus inaugurating a sustained progress by assimilating to its organs the elements of its environment; while without this process those elements would have been devoted to decomposition. It is further the passage from the first to the second of these two forms of the same life: a passage due to the intervention of an agent similar but superior to that wherein resided the initial life, which left to itself would have had no power of persistence.

May we not look upon these facts of the genesis of animal life as a living parable of the spiritual facts that we have been considering together? It is difficult to avoid noticing here the unanimity and persistence with which the witnesses of the living God and of his work always, when it is a question of the relation between God and man, in the Old Testament as well as in the New, place before us the image of a *connubium*, a personal, mystic union, wherein the human soul is called to become the "spouse" of its God. You will recollect Paul's words on this subject when he speaks of the "mystery," of which he says he had a special knowledge, words at which we are always seized afresh with involuntary astonishment.¹

This is not the place in which to touch upon the emotional side of these images. On that side they have become familiar to the language of devotion. I only refer to them for the sake of the metaphysical truth implied in them. From this special point of view, I must call your attention to the answer which they give to our question: How are we to conceive of an eternal life; of a life produced by *the breath of God*, which, if not subsequently submitted to the action of the fecundating and creative Spirit, is destined to extinction, involving, if not the immediate cessation, yet at least the gradual suppression of the human existence?

SUPPLEMENT No. XII.

SALVATION BY THE BLOOD OF EXPIATION.²

(See page 153.)

THE author begins by calling attention to the fact that the traditional doctrine of expiation, so far from winning over to the Gospel the leaders

¹ Eph. v. 32. Cf. iii. 3-5, and ch. ii.

² Extract from the minutes of the Theological Society of the Canton de Vaud, record of an essay presented by Dr. Petavel at the meeting of that Society on 25 March, 1889.

of modern thought, seems rather to be a scandal to them ; it is looked upon as both absurd and immoral. These thinkers declare themselves unable to understand "this notion of a God who, being innocent, is immolated by a God who is just, in order to satisfy a God who is good." Christian philosophers themselves reject, as contrary to the religious consciousness the substitution of the innocent for the guilty. M. Charles Secrétan, whose religious sentiments are well known, goes so far as to call such a substitution *a monstrous idea, a blasphemous theory*. According to the venerable Lausanne philosopher, Jesus Christ died to *give an example to the world, he sacrificed himself to the spirit of sacrifice*.¹ But to accept this definition would be, as it seems to us, to put aside altogether the true notion of expiation.

The task of the theologian is to take up the question at the point where it is left by the philosophers. We have already had before us an exposition of the views of Professor Gess, which are very nearly those of the illustrious Dorner and of Professor Frederick Godet. One of our members, Pastor Schröder, has pointed out the dangers of this theory.² We are therefore obliged to seek a somewhat different solution.

The title of our essay requires a reply to these four questions :

I. What is to be understood by the word *salvation* ?

II. What is to be understood by the word *expiation* ?

III. Do *the Old and the New Testament* teach salvation through the blood of expiation ?

IV. Can the *religious consciousness* understand and sanction the doctrine of salvation through the expiatory blood ?

I. *Salvation*.—Σωτηρία, the New Testament word, comes from the

¹ *La Civilisation et la croyance*, op. cit. Pages 365-385.

² *Objections made by Pastor Schröder to the theory of Expiation set forth by Professor Gess* :

"We feel it necessary to put a note of interrogation at the end of our author's fundamental thesis. It reduces the atonement to a mere demonstration of God's justice, having for its only object to lead men to condemn themselves. The result would be that if we should condemn ourselves, if we should acknowledge our sin, expiation would cease to be necessary. Is this conception satisfactory ?

"Is it certain that punishment has in itself no value, and that all its value lies in the sentiments of him who undergoes it ? No doubt human punishments ought always to have an educational and moralizing aim, because human justice is relative ; but does not our conscience demand an absolute retribution from the eternal justice ? Is there not in us a sentiment which requires that every fault should entail its punishment, and which attributes to that punishment, as such, its own proper value ?

"Our conscience demands that our fault should be atoned for, that reparation should be made for the wrong ; and, on the other hand, the conscience could not admit that the reparation should be made by any other than the culprit. It discards the idea that, in the suffering of the penalty incurred, an innocent person should take the place of the guilty. Vinet expressed such a conviction when he wrote : 'The transference of the guilt from one person to another is decidedly contradicted by our notions of morality.'

"Such are the two postulates of the religious conscience. Apparently irreconcilable, they render the problem of expiation difficult, if not insoluble."

root σῶσις, which signifies *subsisting, surviving*. Salvation is synonymous with *conservation* or *preservation*;¹ σῶζω, *to save*, signifies in the first place to preserve from imminent destruction. According to the biblical teaching the obstinate sinner is marching on towards death, θάνατος, and towards physical and moral decomposition, φθορά; he is a being not capable of prolonged life. John the Baptist and Jesus Christ compare him to a barren tree, soon to be destroyed by the axe and the fire. Jesus threatens *both soul and body* with complete destruction in the fires of Gehenna, ἀπολέσαι.²

Furthermore, Christian psychology reveals great disorder among the human faculties; it demonstrates incontestably that in a thousand more or less subtle ways the spirit is brought into subjection to the sinful appetites of that which in Scripture is called *the flesh*. According to all analogy this disorder must logically result in a final arrest of all the functions of the soul. It is true that the absolute imperishability of individual souls was decreed by Pope Leo X. in 1513, and again by the Convention in 1794 at the instigation of Robespierre; but it must be admitted that these two warranties are not quite sufficient.

II. *The notion of expiation* from the standpoint of the ordinary usage of the language.³

III. *Salvation by the blood of expiation according to the Bible.*

A. *In the Old Testament.* Expiation by blood is at the very centre of the Levitical institutions of the Old Testament. The Hebrew verb כִּפֶּה, *kipper*, the *Pihel* of כִּפֶּה (the *Kal* form of which is not used in this sense), designates expiation with the meaning that we have attributed to the word. In fact, *kipper* is to *cover*, and as used in relation to an offence, means to divert the attention of the offended person by the offer of a compensation which so to speak *covers, hides* from his eyes both the offence and the offender; but this compensation (which is in fact an expiation) always supposes a *loss borne* by the offender or by him who takes his place.⁴

¹ The Latin word *salvus* designates the *conservation* or *preservation* of existence, root *salvus*; *salva epistola*, a letter not destroyed. Freund and Theil's *Dictionary*, and Doederlein's *Synonymik*. "The Greek ὅλος is rightly identified with the Sanscrit *sarva* and the Latin words *salvus* and *sollus*. *Sollum Oscè totum et solidum significat*. Festus."—Max Müller, *Nouvelles leçons sur la science du langage*. Vol. i., p. 358. Paris, 1867. So also in German *heil*, whole, from Goth. *hails*.

When the impenitent malefactor said to Jesus on the cross: "Save thyself and us," it was evidently the *conservation of life*, the *prolongation of earthly existence*, that he sought, not a mystic happiness.

² Matt. x. 28.

³ See the definition given in chap. v., sects. iii. and iv., pp. 148-150.

⁴ The meaning of *kipper* (*Pihel*) is established at its first appearance in the Pentateuch: *Akappelah*, Gen. xxxii. 20 [21], the identical verb, tense and person, of Exod. xxxii. 30. Lange thus comments on this passage: "Jacob's *expiatory* presents

It is true that God is often said himself to make the expiation, but it is important to note that he usually does so *at the expense of the sinner*, who provides the victim.¹

The great day of atonement, or expiation, is for the Israelite the most solemn in the whole year. The covering of the ark called *kapporeth*,² the mercy-seat that receives the blood sprinkled by the high priest, is that which is most sacred in the holy of holies; the *shekinah*, the very presence of God, was revealed above the mercy-seat. These details indicate the supreme importance attributed in the Old Testament to the expiation by blood.³

B. *Expiation in the New Testament*.—The New Testament borrows from the LXX. the terms that correspond with the Hebrew כִּפֶּר and its derivatives, ἱλάσκειν, ἱλασμός, ἱλαστήριον, λύτρον, etc. Various declarations of Jesus Christ and of his apostles inform us that the work of propitiation was the main purpose of Jesus Christ's coming into the world. Jesus himself said: "The Son of man came not to be ministered

are to *cover* Esau's angry eyes and to *prevent* them from *seeing* henceforth his brother's offences. Jacob, who had usurped Esau's birthright, restores it to him in some measure; these presents are a homage, the tribute of a vassal to his suzerain. This is his expiation. The verb *kipper* occurs here for the first time in the Scripture; its meaning is to *appease* and *expiate*." The LXX. rendering is ἐξιλάσκειν, and that of a somewhat similar passage is εἰς τιμὴν (Gen. xx. 16), which amounts to the same. Cf. Exod. xxx. 16.—It is then not difficult to follow the line of filiation of the meanings of the verb *kaphar*. It means first to *cover*, *overlay*, then in its various forms successively to *hide*, *efface* (the remembrance of an offence by means of a satisfaction), *expiate*; sometimes to *cause to disappear*, to *annul*.

¹ A live coal taken from the altar *burns* Isaiah's lips, wherein there is a symbol of expiation; it is at that cost that the prophet's iniquity is expiated, תִּכַּפֶּר Isa. vi. 7.

² כַּפֶּרֶת, the mercy-seat, is in the French versions *propitiatoire*, the place of propitiation.

³ When it is seen what a large place the idea of expiation occupied in the Hebrew's worship, and how everything in that worship was directed towards the reconciliation of the sinful man with the holiness of God, it is easy to understand that the great *day of atonement*, or of *expiation*, would be looked upon as the very centre and core of the Levitical ceremonial. On that day was made a general expiation, for the people, for the priests, and for the sanctuary; it was therefore the most solemn of all the days in the year to the Israelite; it was called *the day of atonement*, or simply *the day*. It was, moreover, the only day in the year on which fasting was obligatory, the mortification of the flesh being required to accompany penitence; all work was to cease as on the Sabbath. The feast was kept on the 10th Tisri, on the *tenth* day of the *seventh* month, and the choice of that day had certainly some relation to the symbolic value of the numbers 7 and 10, one the symbol of *alliance* and the other of *perfection*. It was necessarily the high priest who officiated; on this occasion he put aside his splendid priestly robes and wore a simple white tunic. This costume was undoubtedly a symbol of *purity* and *abnegation*. The high priest began by offering a young bullock; taking in his hand a bowl filled with the blood of this bullock, he went into the most holy place, which he had no right to do except on that day, and there seven times he sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat. . . . It is important to note that it was this entrance of the high priest into the most holy place that was the essential part of the celebration. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. ix.) teaches us to consider this ceremony in its entirety as a type of the propitiatory work of Jesus Christ.—See J. A. Bost, *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, p. 325.

unto but to minister, and to give his life a *ransom*¹ for many. The propitiation, the highest purpose, crowns the ministry.²

The Saviour's conduct is diametrically opposed to that of the sinner. When the deleterious results of the fault committed are felt by the sinner, he often commits another fault by telling a lie in the fallacious hope of avoiding chastisement. This brings in reality only an aggravation of the punishment. Often, too, the sinner beseeches God to deliver him from the consequences of his fault, forgetting that God neither will nor can prevent a bad action from producing a baneful result. At bottom such a prayer implies, on the sinner's part, either ignorance or contempt of the true divine laws.

The Saviour, on the contrary, asks that he may bear the punishment of the sins of others. As a good son of the heavenly Father, he is so grieved to see God's law treated with contempt that he proposes to undergo that punishment which is the sanction of the law, which is itself indeed a law, the most hated, the most misunderstood of all laws. By thus acting, Jesus re-establishes the honour of the violated law ; to the contempt of which it had been the object, he opposes a superabundant respect.

But the law cannot be distinguished from God himself, of whom it is a vivid manifestation. By glorifying the law Jesus restores to God upon earth the glory which man's sin had obscured. As chief and representative of repentant humanity, at the cost of his own blood he renders a solemn homage to the supreme law-giver. By his act he makes public acknowledgement not only of the culpability of the race, but also of the justice of the doom of death pronounced upon sinners. *This acknowledgement, made by Jesus at the cost of his most precious life, constitutes in our view the very essence of the expiation.* At the same time this painful sacrifice procures for man the most effectual remedy for his most inveterate malady, the levity which incites him always to hope for personal impunity or else to imagine that sin in general leads to no particular consequences.

IV. *The religious consciousness in presence of the biblical doctrine of salvation by the blood of expiation.*

As we have seen, the felt need of expiation is essentially the desire to make reparation for faults committed against God. This sentiment is eminently honourable, every tender conscience must share it. By

¹ *Λύτρον*, Matt. xx. 28.

² Cremer observes that in Æschylus and Euripides *λύτρον* is synonymous with expiation. See, too, Matt. xxvi. 28 ; John xii. 27 ; Rom. iii. 24, 25 ; Heb. ii. 17 ; ix. 22 ; 1 John ii. 2 ; iv. 10, etc. In Heb. ii. 17 and ix. 12, Jesus is compared to the high priest, and the shedding of his blood to the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy-seat.

voluntarily allowing himself to be put to death, Jesus, who makes himself our surety before God, desired to give absolute satisfaction to the legitimate craving of mankind for an atonement.

We believe that in our day the religious consciousness is still satisfied by the expiatory death of Jesus, for :

1. That voluntary death is a penal sanction given by the representative of penitent humanity to the divine law which humanity has violated. This spontaneous homage offered by a blameless victim is much more impressive than the sanction furnished by the sufferings and enforced death of the guilty.¹ Besides, the value of the sanction furnished by Jesus is so much the greater because he of all men occupied the highest position in respect of personal distinction. The supreme law-giver has accepted with satisfaction this homage, which the apostle Paul says was to him "an odour of a sweet smell."² This is the objective side of expiation, that which in the first epistle of John is called *ἱλασμός*, *propitiation*.³

2. The propitiatory death of the Redeemer, being a manifestation of justice, testifies that there is no such thing as impunity ; it also proves that sin, far from remaining without effect, causes its deleterious consequences to fall upon the innocent one himself, when his love leads him to intervene in favour of sinners. Impunity was the serpent's promise.⁴ The Saviour's blood was the most emphatic contradiction of that deception, of all the devil's deceptions the most pernicious.

3. Sin being the cause of our Saviour's sufferings and death, the spectacle of the cross appeals to our heart ; that spectacle is fitted to inspire us with hatred of the sin which nailed our best friend to the infamous tree.

4. The religious consciousness sees also in the death of Jesus a manifestation of the heavenly Father's love, since Jesus was sent by him, and since God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Man is often inclined to indifference in religious matters and even to a smouldering enmity against God ; the contemplation of the cross of Calvary kindles in the heart the flame of a thankful piety.

5. Thus understood, the death of Jesus Christ banishes fear from the believer's heart, while it prevents pardon from ever degenerating into impunity.

6. The divine justice and love displayed in this death produce in the

¹ It is in fact possible for the sinner to attribute the ills from which he suffers to hazard, or to the fatal concatenation of natural laws, rather than to the sin. Practically he does most frequently fall back upon this explanation ; and so the educational purpose of chastisement, namely, the manifestation of the deleterious effects of sin, is very often not attained.

² Eph. v. 2.

³ 1 John ii. 2 ; iv. 10.

⁴ Gen. iii. 4.

believer's heart a humiliation mixed with gratitude, a compunction which in its turn leads to regeneration. The source of moral evil is dried up and the man receives the holy Spirit, which communicates to him an eternal life. Restored to his normal condition, the man recovers the reason for his existence which he was letting go. He still pays a personal and inevitable tribute to the law of expiation, in a thousand sufferings and finally in physical death, but the resurrection will indemnify him for that temporary loss by endowing him with a spiritual body far superior to the earthly one.

This conception appears not to be open to the objections brought by Prof. Charles Secrétan against the traditional dogma ; for :

1. To suffering in itself we do not attribute any reparative virtue.
2. Jesus is not *punished* in the place of the guilty while these remain *unpunished*. Each of us is or will be punished in proportion to his actual faults. Jesus, the innocent, could not be *punished* ; he *voluntarily submitted* to certain consequences of others' faults, which is a very different thing.
3. Expiation is not a payment made to himself by God, the creditor. It is in his human nature that Jesus, the Chief and the voluntary representative of penitent humanity, renders homage to the divine justice, even unto blood.

4. The faith that saves is not a mere intellectual assent. It includes an implied promise of cordial co-operation in the work of expiation¹ as well as in other works of Jesus Christ.

Moreover the biblical notion of expiation appears to avoid the dangers pointed out by M. Schroeder in the theory of Prof. Gess ; for :

1. The biblical notion allows an *objective value* to the death of Jesus Christ.
2. Also an *objective value* to the chastisement of impenitent sinners. As every cause is necessarily bound to produce its correlative effect, every fault committed in the objective world will result in an objective loss. The deleterious effect will always have an exact correlation with the gravity of the fault committed.
3. The innocent is not *substituted* for the guilty *to the exclusion* of the latter ; it is enough to admit that, in his propitiatory work, Jesus the innocent *voluntarily participates* in the expiation made by the chastisement of the guilty. The obstinate sinner, having to expiate alone, will perish entirely. In the case of the penitent sinner, faith and regeneration limit the deleterious effects of the evil. Jesus, the second Adam, expiates the initial fault of the first Adam. It is never said that he has

¹ We say *expiation*, not *propitiation*. Jesus alone, being sinless, propitiates.

expiated all our faults. The annual sacrifice made by the high priest did not exclude the daily sacrifices of the ordinary priests. More than that, each Israelite made an expiation on his own account every time that he offered an expiatory victim. In the same way each Christian is a priest in the spiritual temple of which Jesus is the high priest; each painful privation endured by the Christian in communion with Jesus Christ is a victim offered by him on the altar of eternal justice.¹ Sufferings and death are so many cases of tribute paid to the law of expiation, a law of moral *continuity*, the divine justice of which is in principle and in fact proclaimed by the Christian, following the example of his Master.

The high priest of the Israelites made expiation for the sins of the nation: and so Jesus, the high priest of humanity, has expiated the generic sin of our race. John the Baptist recognized in him the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.² As head of the body which is the Church, Jesus Christ has suffered on account of the wounds of the body; but that does not prevent the suffering of each individual member on account of his own local sores. In some measure we all *expiate* by bearing the deleterious consequences of sin; Jesus alone was able to join *propitiation* to expiation, because he alone was personally without spot and blameless. Of him, then, we may well sing:

O let us all the love record
Of our resuscitated Lord,
And with the holy angels say:
The Lamb shall have, as his of right,
All worship, honour, strength and might,
All glory, riches, praise for aye.³

¹ Rom. xii. 1. The apostle Paul exhorts the believers to offer their bodies a living sacrifice, *θυσίαν*, the word used in speaking of the *expiatory sacrifice* of Jesus Christ. Cf. Heb. x. 12; Eph. v. 2.

² Whither does this Lamb go, and whither does he carry the sins that he takes upon himself? Isaiah gives the answer: "To the slaughter." And the Gospel adds: "To Golgotha." How John the Baptist was initiated into this mystery we have seen on the occasion of the baptism of Jesus; chap. vi., § 2. Cf. John i. 29, 36; Isa. liii. 7, 10; 1 Pet. i. 19, and the name of the *Lamb slain* given to Jesus some thirty times in the Revelation.

³ Rev. v. 11-15. The French words are:

Célébrons tous la charité
De ce Sauveur resuscité,
Et disons avec les saints anges:
Digne est l'Agneau de recevoir
Hommage, honneur, force, pouvoir,
Gloire, richesses, et louanges!

SUPPLEMENT No. XIII.

PALINGENESIS ACCORDING TO M. RENOUVIER AND M. CHARLES BONNET.¹

(See page 166.)

. . . HUME's point of view, being completed by the concept of a continuity and a harmony of developement of the phenomena distributed and adjusted in space and time, leads the thinker to perceive in that harmony and that continuity the key to the difficult enigma of permanence and identity, a key which metaphysicians persist in seeking in the intangible substances of the soul or of matter.

With regard to the prolongation of the destiny of the individual man, it may be asked whether the future life of the soul, as imagined by the partizans of natural immortality, and the miracle of material and organic reconstruction, as pictured by believers in resurrection, do not at bottom closely correspond to the hypothesis or belief of an adjustment of future phenomena of which the series and functions, being the continuation of the present series and functions, under the law of memory, would constitute the true reality of the permanence and identity of the person. In that case it would suffice to conceive that the same universal law, unknown in its natural foundations, which has produced the existing consciousness, is called to produce, under other conditions, a new consciousness wherein will be contained the former consciousness prolonged. . . .

In order to complete the hypothesis of palingenesis without miracle, it is enough to observe that all nature, to one who should not understand but would have to guess at it, would be just such a miracle, if miracles there were. There is so much obscurity about physiological phenomena and about their connection on one side with the component elements, called material, and on the other side with the phenomena of perception, of memory, and of co-ordination of ideas, that it is no less difficult to understand that such phenomena have been *produced* than to understand how they might be *reproduced* so as to form sequences, and by recurrences and periods to make the permanence and identity real.

The obscurity spoken of, which is equal as regards the past and the future, makes it permissible for us without audacity to imagine, in an

¹ Charles Renouvier. *La grande question. L'immortalité personnelle.* Critique religieuse, July, 1878.

objective form, a concrete something of a kind insensible to our organs and our instruments which is in the individual, has existed before him, will survive him, and henceforth awaits the occurrence of future conditions of environment in which it will become possible to realize *naturally*, in a new organism, the pretended miracle of resurrection. But such an hypothesis is not at all necessary, for it is not necessary to know in what manner nature will work, any more than to know how in fact it has worked in order to give us being. This is said only to satisfy the imagination, to open to it a peep into possibilities. The true and most solid hypothesis is always that of which the terms are as general as possible, because thus it corresponds the better with the generality of the argument. The argument is essentially moral ; it rests entirely upon the universal notion of natural laws. The part that is known of those laws has to be completed by a law and a belief of an order natural and universal, under the inspiration of the moral law, the only one fully known to us, which for that reason ought to supplement all the others.

I will now endeavour to clear up these various points, paying special attention to those parts of the subject which have hitherto been the least popularized and leaving alone those which are best known to all my readers.

On the subject of the doctrines of natural immortality and of resurrection, I observe that the latter has been brilliantly sustained in England by Priestley among other materialist and Christian philosophers. The weakness of his partizans lies in the fact that they claim to establish doctrinally the cessation of all individual thought in the dissolution of the organism, and thus relinquish their position as philosophers and physicists by requiring for the restoration of the body the act of a *deus ex machinâ* of creation's drama. But they have a strong point : their idea is clear, concrete in its object, and they do not need to have recourse to the obscure fiction of an immaterial and abstract support of *that which thinks*. So, too, a philosopher who has some affinity with them, and whose doctrine deserves to be studied in this connection, Hartley, one of the founders of the English Association school of psychologists, attained to the conception of a sort of *natural* resurrection, which is closely related to the palingenesis of which I am expounding the principle.

The believers in immortality, for their part, I mean substantialists and spiritualists, had formerly plenty to do to defend themselves against the opponents of realized abstractions. Experience and the most likely inductions were far from favourable to them. Their cause has become

decidedly worse since the critique of "rational psychology" in Kant's great work, were it only in consequence of the remark (of which Kant was not the first to feel the force) that the existence and the attributes of the soul, as set forth by spiritualism, would not themselves be a guarantee against death. In fact, just as the body perishes by way of decomposition, so the thought and all the psychical faculties, being susceptible of enfeeblement, may perish by extinction. Extinction has the same relation to the intensity of qualities as decomposition has to quantitative agglomerations.

. . . It is enough if the hypothesis of revivification, founded upon the exclusion of substantialist metaphysics and upon a more extended consideration of the natural laws of phenomena, be admitted in its generality, or as a mere working hypothesis, and whatever may be the unknown means by which it is to be realized, in the midst of a nature the profound ways of which are themselves unknown even in respect of the best known facts of actual experience. Nothing more is needed, indeed, to enable philosophical belief and theological faith and hope to obtain a firm footing in an intelligible conception of the universe : the former resting upon moral law and practical reason, the latter invoking revelation in addition. Still the way remains open for speculations as to the cosmic order of things in which such palingenesis would take place, and even as to the physical means that would be fitted to ensure the conservation of consciousness and the return of memory in relation with the bodily phenomena. It is important to observe here, although only in passing, that the immortality thus contemplated, so different from that of the soul-substance (*pure spirit*, in itself immortal) of the spiritualists, is not at all a forced immortality of all persons. It may just as well be a conditional immortality. There is room for conditions of enfeeblement and extinction as well as of continuation, or of the return and aggrandisement of the psychical powers in their adaptation to organisms.

The cosmic order of things in which this kind of palingenesis would take place might be represented in various ways equally acceptable, without any contradiction either of experience or of reason. I will not speak of it, for that would be another subject, and in my opinion the hypothesis remains all the stronger from a purely philosophical point of view the more general are the terms in which it is stated.

As to the physical means, I have already indicated the one which has not failed to present itself to the mind of various philosophers and physiologists, because it attacks the problem directly, by supposing the existence of an imperceptible organism which survives the actual per-

ceptible body and conserves the powers required for the production under new conditions of a form of body similar or superior to that which the individual has already borne. The naturalist Charles Bonnet, of the school of Leibnitz, the physician David Hartley, of the school of Locke, arrived at similar general views. Bonnet's hypothesis might now be presented, if it were a question of reviving it, in a form free from the inconveniences and errors by which it was discredited. And Hartley's ideas of palingenesis would deserve some of the attention which has been too exclusively bestowed upon that philosopher's vicious system of nervous vibrations, or with greater reason upon those of his works which were precursors of contemporary associationism.

The following fragment is also by M. Renouvier. It is taken from his already quoted work, *Esquisse d'une classification systématique des doctrines philosophiques*.¹ The author, as will be seen, quotes the philosopher Charles Bonnet at considerable length.

In order to do justice to the hypothesis, it is desirable to consider only the general part of it; that is to say, the supposition of a body at present imperceptible to the senses and beyond the reach of decomposition by the action of the forces actually in operation in nature. It will be easy to put aside all the rest in the following passages from Charles Bonnet's *Essai sur les facultés de l'âme* :

We can imagine with some approach to verisimilitude that the *callous body* that is known to us is not the true seat of the soul, but an envelope of that seat, whereby it is connected with the whole nervous system, as by this it is connected with the whole organism. . . .

I think myself justified in inferring the possibility that God may have made an organic machine with matter analogous to that of light, the elements of which might be sufficiently varied to provide for the composition of a great number of essentially different parts. . . .

I conceive that it is by this *ethereal* machine that objects act upon the soul, and that the soul acts upon its body. . . .

Whatever may be the manner of this communication, the fibres of the seat of the soul which correspond to the senses receive from them certain determinations which constitute the physics of memory or recollection.

Death breaks this communication between the seat of the soul and the senses, and between the senses and the world that we know.

But the nature of the seat of the soul is such as may preserve it from the action of the causes which produce the dissolution of the grosser body.

In this new state the man may retain his personal identity. His soul remains united to a little organism some fibres of which have retained determinations which are more or less durable.

¹ Paris, 1885. Vol. I., pp. 152-154.

In this organism there may be internal impulses from which may arise dreams which will help to strengthen the determinations originated in the former state.

Nature does not march by leaps and bounds. She prepares long beforehand and in impenetrable darkness the productions that are afterwards to be exposed to the full light of day. If she has placed in the caterpillar the germ of the butterfly, in the seed the germ of the plant that is to spring from it, why should she not have been able to place in the human body the germ of a body that shall succeed it? . . .

The seat of the soul includes, then, a *human body* in miniature very different from the body that we are acquainted with. . . . Our present body is in direct relation with the world in which we now dwell: that which in miniature is enclosed in the seat of the soul is in direct relation with the world that we shall one day inhabit.

The seat of the soul includes, then, organs which are not to be developed on earth: it includes others which already exercise their functions here below; these are those which correspond to our present senses. The almost infinite minuteness that these organs suppose is no real objection: nature works on a scale as minute as she pleases; or, rather, great and little have no relation to nature.¹

Bonnet claims that, by showing that these determinations have an influence over the brain which is one day to be developed, he makes "the resurrection enter into the order of purely natural events." Such is the idea of which the exposition is found in his principal work, of later date than the analytical essay, *La Palingénésie*.²

The sacred dogma of our resurrection is based mainly on the responsibility for our actions, and this again upon their morality. It is in the order of sovereign wisdom that the observance of natural laws leads sooner or later to happiness, and that their non-observance leads sooner or later to misery. . . . The present state of man determines his future state. The memory, which has its seat in the brain, is the foundation of the personality. The secret links that connect the imperishable germ with the perishable brain preserve in man the memory of his past states. He may therefore be rewarded or punished in respect of his past states. He will be able to compare the judgement that is passed upon his actions with the remembrance that he will have retained of those actions.

¹ Charles Bonnet. *Essai analytique sur les facultés de l'âme*, edition of 1770. Chap. xxiv., pp. 477-483.

² *Essai analytique*, p. 476; *Palingénésie*, vol. i., pp. 309-319.

SUPPLEMENT No. XIV.

PHILOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE MEANING OF THE GREEK VERB
ἀπόλλυμι.

(See page 214.)

IN the New Testament the verb *ἀπόλλυμι* is often used to denote the ultimate fate of the impenitent.¹ We maintain that its meaning is always to *destroy*, to *cause to perish*, and in the middle voice to *perish*, to *cease to be*. Our opponents have claimed for it the restricted sense of *taking away* or *losing certain attributes*. In the following letter, of which he has kindly authorized the reproduction, Dr. Weymouth reviews the texts that have been quoted from classic authors in support of this restricted sense, and he shows that although sometimes in poetic style there is hyperbole, the destruction not being always effected, there is yet in view everywhere an *eventual and total suppression of the individual himself*. In the ordinary style, and particularly in the philosophical style, there is no hyperbole in the term that denotes cessation of existence. The same remark applies to the composites and derivatives of the verb *ἀπόλλυμι*. If we are rightly informed, Dr. Weymouth's conclusions have not been contested.

When sending us the authorization requested, our respected correspondent favoured us with some additional remarks, which we add in the form of notes to the original letter.²

To the Editor of the English Independent.

SIR,—While I am compelled to encounter Dr. Alexander as an opponent, I rejoice to see that he is disposed to adopt as his motto: "Speaking the truth in love." Most gladly will I meet him in that spirit, and endeavour to discuss without bitterness or dogmatism the question between us.

What that question is, is fairly stated by Dr. Alexander in the closing paragraph of his letter. Yet I would rather modify it thus: "Is there any evidence that 'the destruction of a man' can signify 'the removal

¹ See *Supplement*, No. VI., and pp. 319, 330.

² As we have before said, Dr. Weymouth, formerly Head Master of Mill Hill School, is author of a critical edition of the New Testament, entitled *The Resulant Greek Testament*; London, Elliot Stock, 1886. We do not know an edition that rests upon a more rational basis, or that seems more worthy of confidence.

from him of all that constitutes the true dignity, worth, and happiness of an intelligent and moral being'?"

I. In dealing with this question, I will first take this word "removal" as referring to something *external* to the man himself; and I maintain the negative position. My impression, opinion, conviction (call it which you will) is very strong—based on more than thirty years' diligent study of the language—that ἀπώλεια or ἀπόλλυμι is utterly incapable of the above definition. But how am I to accomplish the proverbially difficult task of proving the negative? Nothing would be easier than to collect examples by the score or the hundred in which ἀπόλλυμι as applied to persons is clearly our common English *destroy*, or, in its intransitive parts, *perish*, certainly not signifying the "removal from a man" of anything external to him; and yet the induction would be incomplete. All I can do is to examine the passages in which the meaning which I have failed to find is alleged to exist.

Once more, therefore, I examine, at Dr. Alexander's invitation, the familiar opening lines of the "Clouds" of Aristophanes. For Dr. Alexander says: "I can hardly believe that Dr. Weymouth will deny that ἀπόλλυμι occurs in the sense of *ruin, undo, be undone or ruined.*" I do, however, most strenuously deny that these English expressions, which all refer to property and external circumstances, convey the true and proper sense of the verb; and affirm that, applied to a person, it signifies (though, of course, it may be used hyperbolically) to *perish*, or *cause to perish, destroy*, or *be destroyed*. Now let us look at Dr. Alexander's case. Strepsiades, bewailing the mischief done him by his long-haired spendthrift son, exclaims: "He rides on horses and drives his chariot and pair, and his very dreams are of horses; while I [not *am ruined*, but] *am dying* (with terror) when I see the moon in her twenties, for the interest will soon be due;" that is, on the first of next month. Surely my respected opponent will not take the "seeing" here in the sense merely of "since" or "because," as the English "seeing" is often used. The Greek ὁρῶν has no such meaning. It is not the *payment* of the interest as *ruining* him, but the *contemplation of the payment* as *killing* him, which the words express. No commentator, so far as I can ascertain, takes Dr. Alexander's view, nor can I see that it is possible to maintain it.

But in verse 26 Dindorf renders ἀπολώλεκεν by "*miserum reddidit.*" Yes, indeed; just as the English and German and other modern languages will not admit certain grammatical figures (*anacoluthon*, for instance, and *zeugma*), so are they but little tolerant of hyperbole too. Hence it suits our modern modes of thought better to scrape and pare

and rasp down such strong expressions, as Dindorf has done, and as the lexicons commonly do. For all that, the *exact* meaning, I affirm, is "he has killed me outright."

The next passage by which my view is to be disproved is Aristoph. Av. 1113 (which is, I suppose, Dindorf's 1070). But nothing can be plainer than that the bird is here speaking of its eating, slaying, and *killing* worms and noxious insects, not even their ghosts surviving.

The third is Aristoph. Plut. 421. Well, it runs thus. *Poverty* is the speaker: "Why, I will wretchedly destroy you, wretched creatures, for ye are venturing on an audacious deed not to be endured; . . . wherefore ye *are both dead men*" (*ἀπολώλατον*). As to the tense, Hickie quotes a just remark of Fischer's: "Poverty speaks of the future as already past, to indicate that it will certainly happen." (Compare *Φοῖβος ἀπώλεσε* [σε], Eur. Or. 956, and Ion 1228.) The various translations, etc., that I have within reach are all defective. Some rasp down the verb as to its essential notion; some as to the tense, like Droysen, who renders: "Sterben müsst Ihr drum."

But *if*, in this passage or in any other that is or may be quoted, there is room for doubt—though I cannot discern the slightest shade of ambiguity in it—it must be borne in mind that my negative position (which it is most unfair to call a mere assumption, being the settled conclusion at which an inductive process carried on for many years has landed me, and in which as to its affirmative aspect no scholar will deny that hundreds of passages support me) can *only* be overthrown by adducing from all Greek literature at least one passage in which the meaning of *ἀπόλλυμι* shall be clearly, unambiguously, unmistakably what we understand by *ruin*, and not what we understand by *destroy*.

The only passage I know which seems to approach the sense that I reject is Eur. Hec. 947, comp. 1098 and 1103 (Pors.), where privation of the blessings of home and native country is spoken of in the words *ἐπεί με γῆς ἐκ πατρῶας ἀπώλεσιν*. Hickie translates, "Hath destroyed me far from my native land," which mistakes *ἐκ* for *ἔξω*. I should paraphrase thus: "Hath borne me off—which is death to me!—from my native land." But it is important to observe that this is quoted from a tragedy, and we may therefore expect what I have in my former letter designated "the hyperbole of poetry and passion." No such expression do I remember ever to have met with where the word is plainly used in its *proper* sense.

II. But it is not improbable that Dr. Alexander may wish his words "removal, etc.," to be understood so freely as not to be limited to that which is external to the man, nor, on the other hand, to touch the man

himself—what he is essentially—but to include any great deterioration of his mode of being.

Well, I will help his argument by pointing out one instance where the noun *ὄλεθρος* is so used—Hom. *Odys.* x. 250 and 421. Here the magic arts of Circe have changed the companions of Ulysses into swine, and this degradation of form is twice termed “destruction.” I have no difficulty in seeing the use that may be made of this weapon, but to my own apprehension it is sufficient to reply that this again is a poetical, and I believe solitary, use of the word.

III. But, thirdly, is it possible that a man may be “destroyed,” and yet exist? Paradoxical as it seems, this view is suggested by Dr. Alexander’s letter, and yet more distinctly by Mr. Hay’s, and must be maintained by those who hold the “orthodox” opinions as to the eternity of evil.

And, again, I will help my opponents with quotations *from the poets*, which may seem to them weighty. For example, in the *Odyssey* (xi. 197) Ulysses is conversing in the lower world with the ghost of his mother, when she, speaking of her death by the decay of age, says: “Thus I perished” (*ἐγὼν ὀλόμην*). So in *Odys.* xxiv. 186, the ghost of one of the suitors of Penelope says: “We perished” (*ἀπωλόμεθα*). And in many instances in Homer *ἀπόλλυμι* is used where the existence of the departed spirit is expressly recognized. But, in fact, the Greek mind did not reckon the existence of the disembodied spirit as existence at all.

This seems to me to be amply proved by such a passage as I before quoted from the *Hecuba*. And witness the death scene in the “*Alcestis*” of Euripides, line 389: “Farewell, my children,” says the dying Alcestis. Her sorrowing husband speaks: “Look towards them! look!” She replies: “*I am no longer anything.*” “Art thou leaving us?” “Farewell.” The chorus interposes—“She is gone; the wife of Admetus *is no more!*” Dr. Alexander would suggest that these phrases mean: “I am no longer with you,” “she is no longer with us.” I cannot admit it for a moment. Not *εἰμί*, but the compound *πάρειμι*, would be the word to use then; and there is no metrical difficulty, for *οὐ πάρειμ’ ἔτι* and *οὐ πάρεστι δῆ* would scan rightly enough. Besides, the former of these phrases is: “*I am nothing* now.” How can the notion of non-existence be more strongly expressed?

But to return now to Eur. *Hec.* 668, *sq.* (As to my first quoting it, I would observe that I had not seen Dr. Alexander’s letter when I wrote my letter to my friend the Rev. Edward White, which he has printed.) Mr. Hay has evidently not referred to this passage, or he would have

seen that it is not a shade or a ghost, but a living person, who uses the words in question. Hecuba has just received tidings that her daughter Polyxena has been slain as a victim by the Grecian chiefs; and now attendants approach bearing a dead body, that of her only son who had survived the overthrow of Troy. One of them announces the fresh woe thus: "O, all-unhappy mistress, and even more than I say, thou *hast perished, and no longer beholdest the light*, childless, husbandless, citiless, eaten out with corruption."—"But why bring ye here the body of Polyxena?" They uncover the body, and she pours forth her agony of soul: "Woe is me! I behold my son Polydorus dead, whom the Thracian king was protecting in his palace. *I have perished*, hapless being. *No longer do I exist*."¹ Now I appeal to the candid reader whether there is not here just simply a violent hyperbole? Hecuba is addressed as "*all-unhappy*, nay, more than that." Is not that hyperbolic? She is said, so overwhelming is her affliction, to have perished and no longer to see the light, yet she stands living before them. Is not that hyperbole? Then comes the plain, unexaggerated statement that she is without children, husband, or country. Then, again, a violent metaphor to describe her sorrow; she is *ἐξέφθαρμένη*, as it were a dead body in the last stage of decay, corrupted from the centre right out to the surface all over. Let us have no scraping and rasping here. Then again: "I have perished, and do not exist." If to any mind this seems a euphemism, a softened mode of expression, be it so; to me it is hyperbole (like that in Or. 200, also expressive of bitter grief: "We have perished equally with the dead"—wrongly explained by Liddell and Scott, who have confounded *ισο* with *ὅμο*). But call it by what name you will, this passage, taken with that in the "*Alcestis*," shows that the dead were regarded as *perishing* and *existing no longer*. The soul existed, a Greek would tell you, but only "as a shadow or a dream" (Hom. *Odyssey*. xi. 206).

IV. But what if the perishing of the soul itself is spoken of? Why, then not even a shadow or a dream survives. Socrates and Plato—for we must go to the philosophers now—taught both the antecedent and the prospective immortality of the soul, and denied that can either *γίγνεσθαι* or *ἀπόλλυσθαι*, Phædr. 245 D, where *γίγνεσθαι* assuredly means "to come into being," and *ἀπόλλυσθαι* is clearly the opposite—"to go out of being." In the same connexion he denies that it "has cessation of life" (*παῦλαν ἔχει ζωῆς*, *ibid.*, 245 C), and affirms its immortality

¹ Verses 681-683. In Herod. i., 45, *ἀπολωλεκώς = φονεύς (ibid.)*: each being a violent hyperbole to describe the misery brought on a man by the death of his (virtually) only son. Cf. Harpagon's language in Molière's *Avaro*, when he has lost his money-box: "Je suis mort; je suis enterré!" etc. August, 1891.

(ἀθανασία), which he predicates also of the souls of the dead (Apol. 32). But he shows more fully what the destruction of the soul would be in the words of Cebes (Phædo 70 A), who is inclined to think, in opposition to Socrates, that the soul, "when it has departed from the body, *nowhere any longer exists*, but on whatever day a man dies, on that day it is destroyed (διαφθείρηται) and *perishes* (ἀπολλύηται); the moment it departs and goes forth from the body it is dispersed like breath or smoke, and flies abroad, and is gone, and *no longer exists anywhere*." In 77 B another of the interlocutors asks Socrates: "What reason is there why the soul should not be born, be compounded of some elements or others, and exist before it comes into a human body; and when it goes and departs thence, then itself also *come to an end and be destroyed?*" (τελευτᾶν καὶ διαφθείρεσθαι). In 80 D the belief which Socrates condemns is expressed—that the soul "is gone, scattered to the winds, and has perished" (διαπεφύσηται καὶ ἀπόλωλεν). Elsewhere (88 B and 95 B) he contends that the soul is "immortal and *indestructible*"—ἀνώλεθρος—a word which he employs several times in this connexion, so that here we have the sense of ἄλεθρος clearly fixed. And, again (91 D), Cebes supposes that "*this* is really death—the destruction (ὄλεθρος) of the soul." Finally, in 96 A, ἀπόλλυται is the contrary of ἐστί—that is, destruction is the opposite of existence.

With passages such as these before me, I am astonished at Mr. Hay's off-hand and most erroneous assertion that "Plato and other Greeks spoke just as we do of the destruction of a man or of his life when he is killed." Of Homer's poems, as above admitted, that would be true; and Xenophon, though a follower of (Pythagoras and) Socrates, can speak as we do of men "wandering and perishing in the mountains" (Anab. i. 2, 25), referring obviously to the destruction of the body only. In the same passage, and speaking of the same men, Xenophon uses the verb as = *lose*, a sense which I have in my former letter admitted and accounted for.¹ But, in the more exact language of the philosopher, θνήσκειν or ἀποθνήσκειν is to die, τεθνάναι is to be in the state of death; and these words are constantly and accurately distinguished by Plato from ἀπόλλυσθαι and ἀπολωλέναι. Mr. Hay adds: "No one word, such as ὄλεθρος, with simple negatives, expressed fully what they meant when they asserted that the soul itself shall not perish or be destroyed."

¹ I lose = I destroy in relation to myself, so that the thing relatively to me no longer exists. (See 2 John 8.) "The same word is appropriately used of Ulysses' companions and ship *lost* at sea; for to him they were virtually non-existent." Agar Beet in the *Expositor* for January, 1890, p. 28. Professor Beet is an opponent of ours, so it is an amusing slip in his logic that he here reasons from τὸ ἀπολωλέναι = non-existence, which he elsewhere denies!—August, 1891.

What, then, is ἀνώλεστος? Is it not an adjective from ἄλεστος, with the simplest of all negatives, the prefix ἀν-, which is the English *un-*? But more surprising still, Mr. Hay goes on to speak of the "frequent addition" of εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν. Frequent, indeed! So far as I remember or can find, it is unknown to Plato altogether, though it may be in Plutarch, who wrote some 500 years later. In Plato's Greek it would have been utterly superfluous. There to *perish* is to *cease to be*; *destruction* is nothing short of *extinction of being*. And if the classical writers are to be appealed to to throw light on those solemn words which speak of the destruction of "both soul and body in hell," whose usage can be quoted as even approximating in authority to that of Plato?

R. F. WEYMOUTH, D. Lit.

MILL HILL, *March 8th, 1870.*

SUPPLEMENT No. XV.

SYNCHRONICAL TABLE OF CHURCH FATHERS.

(See page 229.)

THE table on the following page reproduces, with some rectifications and additions, the classification adopted by the late Rev. H. Constable in his previously quoted work, *The Duration and Nature of Future Punishment*.

The figures in the first column give the *approximate* dates of the deaths of the Fathers mentioned. An asterisk (*) placed before a name indicates that with respect to that Father some reserve must be made. In several passages Clement of Alexandria seems to incline towards Universalism, which was formulated later on by his successor, Origen. The works of Justin and Tatian contain such contradictions that the question sometimes arises whether the text has not suffered interpolation. The great Athanasius was *à priori* a Conditionalist but *à posteriori* a partizan of eternal torments; see p. 242, note 4. Tertullian admitted, without reserve, that the soul is corporeal. Jerome sometimes approaches very near to the views of Origen, etc.

SYNCHRONICAL TABLE.

Date of Death.	Conditional Immortality.	Native and inalienable Immortality.	
		Eternal Torments.	Universalism.
90	Barnabas.		
100	Clement of Rome.		
115	Ignatius.		
150	The <i>Didachē</i> .		
154	Hermas.		
155	Polycarp.		
164	*Justin.		
172	*Iatian.		
186	Theophilus of Antioch.	Athenagoras.	
197	Irenæus.		
220	*Clement of Alexandria.	Minucius Felix.	
235	—	*Tertullian.	
238	—	Hippolytus.	
254	—	—	Origen.
258	—	Cyprian.	
270	—	—	Gregory Thaumaturgus.
309	—	—	Pamphilus.
310	Arnobius.	—	Theognostus.—Pierius.
330	Lactantius.		
340	—	—	Eusebius of Cæsarea.
373	*Athanasius.	—	Titus of Bostra.
379	—	—	Basil.
394	—	—	Diodorus of Tarsus.
395	—	—	Didymus of Alexandria.
397	—	Ambrose.	*Gregory of Nyssa.
401	Nemesius.		
407	—	Chrysostom.	
420	—	*Jerome.	
428	—	—	Theodore of Mopsuestia.
430	—	Augustine.	

SUPPLEMENT No. XVI.

CONDITIONALISM AND CONDITIONAL UNIVERSALISM.

(See page 278.)

CONDITIONAL Universalism claims to keep the golden mean between Universalism, properly so called, and Conditionalism. An inevitable and forced salvation would seem to be a denial of human freedom, and is therefore rejected on account of conscientious scruples. On the other hand, Conditionalism is rejected as too austere. It is desired, on the one hand, that no one should be saved against his will, and, on the other hand, that the door of heaven should remain perpetually open. Obstinate sinners are to be punished by chastisements which are eternally provisional, and it is expected that the day will arrive when the last rebel will submit. In a word, it is the doctrine of salvation always possible for all.

This would be plausible, and we would willingly adopt a theory so seductive if it did not start from a false premiss, namely, the gratuitous supposition of a native and inalienable immortality. This is not a legitimate factor in the case, for we have duly ascertained and established, until the contrary is proved, that immortality in that sense has no foundation in philosophy. We have also ascertained and demonstrated that this *à priori* is energetically repudiated by biblical theology. As a consequence, this Conditional Universalism falls to the ground along with the forced immortality, as a branch falls when the trunk of the tree that bears it is cut down. It is vain to invoke the eternal love of God, because free creatures who voluntarily and by degrees will have returned to nonentity no longer furnish objects for the manifestation of that love. The liberty of the beloved object must be the supreme object of the supreme love. If, by a culpable and fatal caprice and in spite of all the appeals of grace, the creature obstinately chooses death, the Creator will not use violence in order to impose life upon him. The rebellious creature must therefore come to the end of his individual existence within a period limited by the initial conditions of his life.

These few remarks seem to us sufficient of themselves to condemn this Conditional Universalism, but that which to us seems clear and decisive is far from being so to all. It is possible that we may have been led astray; some error may have slipped into our reasoning. We will therefore put it to the test by submitting it to a fresh examination. Three distinguished advocates have undertaken the defence of Conditional Universalism; we will first allow them to speak, and then consider attentively what they have to say.¹

§ I. PASTOR BERGUER-BRETT.

The first place belongs to Pastor Berguer-Brett, who was the first to employ the term Conditional Universalism in the title of a thesis which dates from 1879.² Since then the author has written in the *Encyclopædia of Religious Sciences*³ in opposition to the point of view that we are defending. The estimate of Conditionalism formulated by M. Berguer bears the character of a noble and rare impartiality. He says: "This dogmatic evolution is certainly the most important and interesting of those which are now in vogue. It is founded upon a very pure idea of human responsibility, and results from a sense of the need of restoring to Christianity its full moral power and efficiency."

The title given to the thesis, however, is open to criticism. The name Conditional Universalism has had a certain success. But is it really suitable? Usually the name that designates a system corresponds to the affirmation which that system maintains; thus optimism affirms that all is for the best in the best of worlds; pessimism, on the contrary, teaches that everything in the universe is in a bad way and getting worse; Conditionalism affirms that there is a condition to be fulfilled in order to the attainment of immortality, and so on. Now, what is the affirmation of Conditional Universalism? The universality of salvation? No, since it will always depend upon the free choice of individuals. At the bottom this condition is found to be the only element of certitude, the only absolute affirmation of the system, which thus, on examination, appears to be but a variety of Conditionalism with universalist hopes.

We shall not analyze an essay which M. Berguer himself no longer

¹ In our replies we also take into account the arguments put forward by the late Rev. J. Baldwin Brown and by Archdeacon Farrar, two eminent champions of Conditional Universalism in England.

² *Le Conditionnalisme et l'universalisme conditionnel*. Geneva, Schuchardt.

³ Article *Conditionnalisme* in the supplement of that work.

defends as it stands. There remains, however, the article in the *Encyclopædia* before mentioned, wherein the author has renewed his attack by setting forth afresh some of his objections against Conditionalism, as we understand it. Most of these objections have been dealt with in our tenth chapter, and as for the rest they will scarcely bear criticism. Two or three examples will suffice.

M. Berguer asserts that "an attentive study of the texts proves that the word death has only two meanings in the New Testament: bodily death, and condemnation in the future life."¹ On this statement our first observation is that the distinction between the two meanings indicated does not depend upon any definition; there is no link of connection between them. In his thesis the author tried to show such a link in a common notion of pain or anguish; but, as we pointed out to him, that notion is only accessory; there is often great anguish without death, and there are many deaths without anguish. We may add that the writers of the New Testament had in their vocabulary a plentiful variety of terms for designating *pain* or a *state of misery*. We are forced to believe that they knew and meant what they said when they spoke of *death*. In good lexicology a word has indeed only one meaning with extensions of that single meaning.² Everywhere and always death must be the *arrest of the functions of life, or of that which resembles life*. This single meaning will cover the twenty-five accepted uses of the word *die* (*mourir*) in Littré's dictionary, for example, and all those in the New Testament, which is the book with which we are specially concerned. There are then not "two meanings" but one meaning with several accepted uses.

The distinction set up by M. Berguer is, moreover, evidently incomplete, for the apostles exhort us often to "mortify" or cause to die the sins of the flesh.³ There is here no question of "bodily death" nor of "future condemnation." But the death thus indicated comes perfectly within the definition that we have given. As Professor Reuss has said, it means "the annihilation of the evil element in man, of sin, and of the flesh."⁴ It is the end, the complete cessation of a guilty activity or life.

If it should be objected that sin is never entirely annihilated here below, we admit the fact, but we say that the precept naturally contemplates the ideal. Elsewhere Paul says: "Be perfected."⁵ Absolute

¹ Page 590.

² See Preface to Littré's "Dictionary," p ix. *sq.*

³ Rom. viii. 13; Gal. v. 24; Col. iii. 5, etc.

⁴ *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, 1852. Vol. ii., p. 163.

⁵ 2 Cor. xiii. 11, R.V.

perfection can never be attained in this world, yet no one would dream of reducing the value of the ideal term chosen by the apostle.

According to M. Berguer, the notion of annihilation "appears to be absent in the great Greek philosophy." Without going far to seek it, this notion is to be found in the fourteenth chapter of the *Phædo*, where Cebes says: "But in what relates to the soul men are apt to be incredulous; they fear that when she leaves the body her place may be nowhere, and that on the very day of death she may be destroyed and perish."¹ Is not this the passage from existence to non-existence? is it not annihilation?

M. Berguer ends his article by saying: "The free being, as we believe, cannot use his freedom to destroy his life (it is not here a question of his earthly life), for life is the initial gift which dominates all the rest." With the best possible will, we cannot succeed in perceiving the force of this argument. Why should an initial gift be necessarily inalienable? M. Berguer does not explain. The earthly life is surely an initial gift. Jesus, whose authority he will not contest, speaks of a man who "destroys himself," and in another place of a destruction of "both soul and body in Gehenna."²

M. Berguer's reasoning is altogether vitiated by the erroneous assumption with which he starts; the antiquated doctrine of the old spiritualism that the soul is "indestructible; that every conscient life belongs to the domain of the infinite and bears, in relation to its future duration, the character of the absolute." These utterances show to what an extent pantheism has permeated the traditional scholasticism. It is now long since Rothe sounded the knell of these *petitiones principii*, saying: "It is no longer maintained that the human soul possesses immortality by virtue of a supposed simplicity of substance."³ It has been acknowledged that "the ontological argument is powerless to demonstrate the persistence of the personality."⁴ The clock of some French-speaking theologians is decidedly a good deal behind the time.

Kant and the school of duty; Ulrici, William von Humboldt, the Chevalier Bunsen, Weisse, Baader, Rothe, Julius Müller, Twisten, Hagenbach, Superintendent Gess, Ritschl, Hermann Schultz, Lotze, in Germany; Archbishop Whately, Bishop Perowne, Revs. Edward White, J. B. Heard, W. H. M. Hay Aitken, W. T. Hobson, S. Minton-Senhouse, H. Constable, Professors Stokes, Adams, Bonney, Tait, Drs.

¹ Jowett's translation, p. 414. Οὐδεν οὐδαπου, literally = "Nothing nowhere."

² Luke ix. 25; Matt. x. 28.

³ *Dogmatik*, Heidelberg, 1870, 2nd part, p. 158.

⁴ A. Matter, *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, at the word *Immortalité*. This admission is all the more valuable, considering that M. Matter himself is a Universalist.

Dale, Weymouth, Mortimer, in England ; Dr. Bushnell, Professor Hudson, Dr. Bacon, Revs. J. H. Pettingell, C. H. Oliphant, L. Abbott, in America ; Pastors Decoppet in Paris, Gerold and Ad. Schaeffer in Alsace, Cocorda in Italy, Dr. Jonker in Holland ; in France Messrs. Renouvier and Pillon, chiefs of the school of neo-criticism, Charles Lambert, Dupont-White, Edgar Quinet, Ott, Victor Hugo, Professor Armand Sabatier, of Montpellier, and among other theologians Messrs Bois, late dean of the Faculty at Montauban, and Matter, honorary professor in Paris ; in Switzerland the philosopher Henry de May, A. Bost, Vinet (towards the end of his life), Professors Charles Secrétan Ernest Naville, L. Gaussen, Gretillat, and Emery, Pastors P. Vallotton, Choisy, Byse, and César Malan, jun. : all these thinkers belonging to so many different camps, all these religious minds have closely examined the traditional ontology and have declared it fallacious, something like the old astrology which also was a tissue of truth and fiction. The reasoned judgements of these men will naturally have greater weight than the opinions of those, however otherwise eminent, who have accepted the inheritance of the past without close examination.¹

If M. Berguer should one day, as he has led us to hope, at his leisure resume the subject that he has thus touched upon, we shall read with special interest any answer that he may make to the three masterly studies of M. Renouvier.² It is well known that the late Professor Lotze deserves to be placed along with M. Renouvier among the number of the metaphysicians of highest repute in our time. We therefore beg M. Berguer also to tell us what he thinks of a page taken from the German philosopher which seemed to us worthy to figure in this debate.³ It is impossible to be more decidedly conditionalist.

¹ The opponents of Platonism are reproached with a fondness for counting heads ; in so doing, however, they only imitate the first disciples, of whom Luke reports that they were "about a hundred and twenty."

² The doctrine of *Conditional Immortality*.—*Crit. relig.*, 19th January, 2nd and 23rd February, 1884. In his third article (p. 57), M. Renouvier repudiates thus the hypothesis of M. Berguer, who had made the mistake of supposing M. Renouvier's opinion to be like his own :

"M. Berguer-Brett has fairly well mastered the principle of phenomenism (pp. 59-61), but not so well its consequences, and especially he has failed to recognize the moral repugnance of neo-criticism for doctrines that tend to represent the universe as an endless development. The 'Conditional Universalism' proposed by this author admits both the possibility of universal salvation and the possibility of eternal torments for sinners who will eternally make a rebellious use of their liberty (p. 85). It does not admit an end of evil, nor does it furnish a definitive solution to the problem of salvation, the problem of the moral life.

"I will add a word in reply to a criticism of detail which M. Berguer has devoted to an expression that I seem to have used, which he calls (p. 67) *logomachy*: 'An irreparable progressive annihilation.' That the annihilation of any quality may come to pass progressively, by degrees, must I think be understood by every one ; and I call it irreparable when it reaches a point where all possibility of return and restoration is lost."

³ See page 70.

Speaking of the method of the neo-criticism, M. Renouvier concluded as follows :

If it be a question of the moral judgement that ought to be formed by it upon speculations of a more extended order, and if it be necessary to compare the doctrine that fixes a definite limit to the tests of liberty and gives a definitive solution to the problem of moral evil, with those systems which contemplate an interminable succession of good or bad determinations of the will, with an infinite continuance of happy or unhappy conditions of life attaching thereto, the comparison does not result to the advantage of these latter, especially if they are examined along with their consequences in the region where they are fully developed, in the history of Oriental philosophies and religions.

On the ground of Christianity the question seems to me to be still clearer: the "end of the world," the "*last* judgment," the retribution in accordance with works are the very essence of *eschatology*. The condition of the "good" is absolutely and definitively determined: it is "life in Christ," it is "salvation." How, then, should the condition of the others, whatever their number, remain for ever uncertain? Such lack of symmetry is incompatible with a truly divine economy: it throws us back upon those systems of evolution wherein nothing ever comes to an end and all the affinities of which are with pantheism.

Thus the doctrine called universalist, that of the eternity of sufferings, and that of the destruction of the "wicked," are those which alone satisfy the condition of a settlement of destinies, which alone can be rightly called *definite solutions* of the problem of evil. But in the first of these there is an irremediable moral vice: in the definitive result it equalizes good and bad actions, and consequently has a tendency to make us look upon the present life as mere sport and upon crime and virtue as things of no serious import, the good and the wicked being destined to come together at last. The second makes evil eternal, by making eternal the wicked and their sufferings; it is suited only to an epoch in which the existence of a hell could pass for being necessary to the final satisfaction of the righteous; but it sins deeply against charity and is out of all relation with justice. The third, the annihilation of the wicked, is the only one which, making goodness the condition of immortality, is in complete accord with that identification of Good with Life, of Evil with Death, in which a meeting-point is found for the dominant idea of the eschatological texts of Scripture and the most acceptable speculative development of the postulate of immortality in the criticist doctrine of practical reason.¹

¹ *Crit. relig.* Feb. 23, 1884, p. 58 sq. M. Renouvier's "identification of Good

§ 2. M. AMÉDÉE ROGET.

The late M. Amédée Roget, of Geneva, was an excellent patriot and a conscientious publicist. He was president of the Association for promoting Proportional Representation. He was the author of a remarkable *History of the People of Geneva*; he also wrote on religious questions, and he broke several lances in favour of Conditional Universalism. We will reproduce his attacks and our replies. The first article by our lamented opponent appeared in the *Alliance Libérale* of 24th June, 1882, under the heading:

SOCIETY FOR THEOLOGICAL SCIENCES.

The last session of the season was occupied with a second plea by M. P. in favour of Conditional Immortality.

M. P. is a doughty champion; when he has taken up with an idea he presses his adversaries very closely, he follows them from one entrenchment to another, and leaves them hardly the smallest opening through which to retreat. Thus M. P. gives no quarter to the doctrine of natural immortality; his view, and that of the somewhat numerous school to which he belongs, is that the notion of the immortality of the soul was taught neither by the Old Testament, nor by the Talmud, nor by Jesus Christ, nor by the apostles, nor by the Fathers, and that the Scriptural texts as a whole, properly understood, lead only to one conclusion: the annihilation of the wicked; that the natural immortality of the soul is a Platonic idea which the current of Greek civilization at a comparatively late epoch introduced into the doctrinal system of the Christian Church, which originally knew nothing of it, and that this idea has exerted a baneful influence.

The opinion of M. P. is deduced by him from the texts with incontestable force, and when he eloquently opposes it to the revolting doctrine of the eternity of sufferings there can be no hesitation in agreeing with him. But this thesis of the annihilation of the wicked which M. P. would impose upon us in the name of the texts, is it really satisfactory to the religious consciousness and of a nature to inspire us with a lively enthusiasm? These *wicked* men devoted to destruction are our brothers, and considering the moral infirmity common to all, it is not so easy to conceive for what possible intervening reason our

with Life" must mean a *final* identification, for the two notions belong to distinct categories. See our reservations at p. 357.

companions in existence should be destined some to life and others to annihilation. The idea of the infinite love of God does not unite very harmoniously with the conception of the annihilation of one section of his creatures. By the side of the hypothesis of annihilation there is that of universal restoration which can invoke in its favour some of the texts and especially the spirit of the Gospel. As Professor Bouvier has very pertinently observed, Jesus Christ said: "God is not the God of the dead but of the living;" this saying implies the continuity of life. If the immortality of the soul is one of Plato's doctrines, we may be thankful that humanity has been inoculated by that great mind with a belief that has fortified the morals of so many of our kind, and has helped them to confront the trials of life.

Whatever we may think of the question in itself, the controversy raised by the champions of Conditional Immortality is very instructive in its bearing upon the further question of the weight to be attributed to dogmatic authority. For here is a doctrine, that of natural immortality, which during centuries has formed part of the teaching of the Christian Churches, Catholic and Protestant, and here are accredited theologians who boast of having succeeded in demonstrating that this doctrine is foreign to primitive Christianity and represents only a parasitic vegetation grafted upon the Gospel.

A. ROGET.

We replied in the *Alliance Libérale* of 1st July :

GENEVA, 29th June, 1882.

MR. EDITOR,—

When a cause is very good and the judge impartial that cause ought to prevail. The impartiality of M. Roget being as we may say proverbial, the believers in Conditional Immortality fully appreciate the judgement that he has delivered in your last number.

Their satisfaction is not however unmixed. If our claims on the grounds of exegesis and history are admitted, that is a great point gained ; but that after all is nothing, or next to nothing, for the large class of minds who place their religious sentiment above the texts : and we desire also to win these.

Independently of the texts, Conditional Immortality can accept the discussion on the ground of "the religious consciousness," which is that chosen by M. Roget.

"The wicked are our brothers," says he, and he cannot bear the prospect of their annihilation. We deeply sympathize with these sentiments, which are worthy of a truly humble and loving soul. God forbid

that candidates for immortality should set up any arrogant pretensions ; by so doing they would place themselves among the number of those doomed to eternal death. But even charity cannot go so far as to deny the tragic and inevitable law of responsibility. The most compassionate of judges will condemn the parricide to death or perpetual imprisonment. And the supreme Judge, will he not punish ? It is evident that he does punish. It is said that his chastisements have for their object the salvation of the guilty. Supposing that to be their sole object, we will ask whether as a matter of fact it is always attained.

Here comes in human freedom, which with M. Charles Secrétan we feel obliged to take seriously into account, as no doubt M. Roget does too. From this point of view it may be perceived that voluntary sin leads to the aberration and gradually to the complete disorganization of the faculties of the impenitent sinner, who has no inalienable title to immortality. God does not directly annihilate any one, as we are accused of asserting, but he has too much respect for human liberty to force to live for ever those beings who obstinately court death, according to an expression of the book of *Wisdom*, or whose existence would involve moral impossibilities. The father of the prodigal goes out to meet the returning wanderer, he will not fetch him back against his will, nor receive him without conditions expressed or understood ; death in exile would be the punishment of final impenitence.

The Bible lays down as a condition of immortality personal communion with God in Jesus Christ. This communion, if mystical, is none the less a source of life ; philosophically, it is conformity to the normal type, the highest healthfulness of the soul, the true return to nature, of which Rousseau had only a glimpse, the reasonable condition of the perpetuation of the individual. From a scientific point of view, Conditionalism in relation to liberty is the graft of the Gospel upon the sturdy but wild tree of evolutionism. This doctrine is indeed of a nature to provoke "a lively enthusiasm," the enthusiasm of the deliverers who use their utmost endeavour to snatch men from imminent destruction.

Let us now ward off, or rather send back again a last arrow that comes to us from the side of the texts. M. Roget opposes to us this saying of Jesus Christ : "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."¹ Just so, we say, God is not the God of the dead, then there

¹ Matt. xxii. 32 ; Cf. Mark xii. 27 ; Luke xx. 38. Jesus adds : "For all live unto him" ; but this word *all* should not be allowed to mislead : Jesus here speaks only of the *faithful* under the old Covenant, ver. 35. The expression "live unto God" signifies to live in moral communion with God (Rom. vi. 10, 11 ; xiv. 8. Cf. Gal. ii. 19 ; 2 Cor. v. 15 ; 1 Pet. ii. 24). "This is further proved by certain texts of the fourth book of the Maccabees, in which it is said that 'those who die for God's

are some who are "the dead." In the same context God is called "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," the God of the faithful patriarchs, but not in the same sense the God of such as Cain, Lamech, and Pharaoh, who have rejected him and upon whom he will not impose himself as their God; those only will live of whom the Eternal is the God. Except from a dualist point of view, the transitory character of a life that is no longer nourished from its source must be admitted. Being sinful creatures, we exist only as an effect of the divine mercy; what will be the result if we deliberately cut the cord that holds us suspended above the abyss of nonentity? The sinner who will not submit must perish. . . . This principle has been implicitly admitted even by some of those who are called Rationalists or Liberal Protestants, witness M. Gerold, director of the *Progrès religieux*, who wrote last year: "This doctrine has a grand moral aspect. . . . From this solution of the problem let us retain this incontestable truth, that those only can be sure of immortality who here on earth have laid hold on eternal life. . . . Life eternal is no other than spiritual life, the life in and with God. It is only to be laid hold of by main force and earnest struggle. If we are brave men we shall not allow any obstacle to arrest us."¹

"If!" I stop at this solemn reserve, this *sine quâ non*, begging you, Mr. Editor, to accept the assurance of my high esteem.

E. P.

M. Roget in his turn replied in the *Alliance Libérale* of 8th July:

Proceeding at full speed along the road of Conditional Immortality, M. P. does not think it needful to halt before the objection that we put before him on the subject of the annihilation reserved for the wicked, which seems to us to be but little in harmony with the notion of the divine mercy.

Our courteous opponent answers us that "charity cannot go so far as to deny the tragic and inevitable law of responsibility. The most compassionate of judges will condemn the parricide to death or perpetual imprisonment. And the supreme Judge, will he not punish?"

Undoubtedly the law of responsibility exists; it is indeed the corner stone of moral order; but wherein does that law imply, as a necessary consequence, the annihilation of the wicked and the impossibility for

cause live unto God, like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the patriarchs,' xvi, 25, cf. vii. 9." C. Bruston, *Rev. théol.*, 1885, p. 514. Whether this apocryphal book dates from the first century before or the first century after our era, it serves equally well to throw light upon the meaning and use of the phrase in question.

¹ *Progrès religieux*, 27th August, 1881. See *ante*, p. 33.

them to rehabilitate themselves in another economy. This it is that we cannot see. Conscience does no more than tell us that good alone is conformable to the divine will and that evil produces baneful consequences for him who commits it persistently. It is not in the name of conscience, it is in the name of a very contestable theological deduction that the doctrine of the sinner's annihilation is established. Evil necessarily involves an *expiation*, this is the common teaching of the Gospel, of the spiritualist philosophers, and of the heathen religions which have risen above the worship of nature ; but expiation does not of necessity involve destruction.¹

Why insist upon comparing to a *human judge*, who punishes because he can neither know nor do otherwise, the *heavenly Father* who can hold in reserve various means for bringing back the wanderers into the right way? God's judgement is exercised in a very real manner, but it does not necessarily manifest itself in sentences of *absolution* or of *condemnation*. Besides, human judges are scrupulously careful to graduate their punishments, and the divine judge would have only two alternatives : *annihilation* for some, *immortality* for others !²

The declarations of the Bible on this matter are largely open to discussion ; for it uses in different senses the terms *life* and *death*, the meaning of the word *life* being often confounded with that of *spirituality*, that of *death* with the idea of *absence of spirituality*. Moreover, for those who, whether by instinct or through a reasoned conviction, believe firmly in the indefinite continuity of personal existence *death* can have only the meaning of *passage*.³

Again, M. P. says : " God has too much respect for human liberty to force to live for ever those beings who obstinately court death." This obstinate disposition to court death needs to be explained and proved. Further : " The Bible lays down as a condition of immortality personal communion with God in Jesus Christ." Is that quite certain, and does it convey a very clear meaning to the mind? Must we then look upon the numerous generations both before and since Jesus Christ who have never heard of the work of Christ as all devoted to destruction ?⁴

Let us note that M. P. represents annihilation as indifferent to, if not desired by, Buddhists and the followers of Epicurus or of Hartmann ; in that case it would not have the character of punishment and would not satisfy the idea of justice.⁵

¹ In chapter v. we have seen that *expiation* involves partial or total suppression of life or of certain vital faculties. E.P.

² See our answer to this objection, p. 382 sq. E.P.

³ We have already had occasion to show that, in the Bible, *death* is always a *cessation* of functions. See chapter vii., section vi. and p. 499. E.P.

⁴ We do not. See p. 285 sq. E.P.

⁵ A culprit may have reasons for desiring prison or even death, but his desire does

No doubt M. P.'s thesis is relatively consoling when compared with the doctrine of eternal sufferings, but it keeps us still enclosed within an horizon which the Gospel does not forbid us to enlarge. The solidarity of all men in evil and in good is revealed to our conscience in a manner too striking for us to accept without repugnance a distinction so absolute as that which would devote one section of our fellows to destruction and the other to eternal happiness.

In our opinion, it is by considering *salvation* as a state of the soul making progress towards the good, and not as the counterpart of a supposed perdition, that the Christian thinker will raise himself above the uncertainties attending the eschatological problem and will contemplate it with complete serenity.

A. R.

The discussion was resumed and brought to an end in the number of 29th July :

CHÈNE-BOUGERIES, 10th July, 1882.

MR. EDITOR,—

I should abuse your hospitality if I were to continue a controversy the length of which would exceed the limits of your space.

Allow me simply to thank M. Roget, not this time for his concessions but for his criticisms, which bring the debate to a clear issue. In an early number of the *Critique religieuse* I will take care to fill up certain gaps that were unavoidable in my last letter.¹ It is true that while the eschatological problem is approaching its solution on the ground of exegesis there are several points still to be elucidated from the psychological point of view ; this is the reason why I made my appeal to all Christian thinkers. If, then, among your readers there should be some future theological graduate in search of a subject for his thesis,² I would indicate to him that which is raised by the observations of my respected opponent : a psychological study of moral corruption and its ontologically deleterious effects upon the individual who yields to its domination. Such an analysis would add an important chapter to Professor Ernest Naville's admirable book on the *Problem of Evil*, unless indeed in a new edition the author should himself complete his work, which would be far preferable.

not take away from these punishments their penal character, which "satisfies the idea of justice." No one would think of abolishing them on the pretext that they sometimes answer to strange aspirations. E.P.

¹ In April, 1884, and January, 1885, the *Critique religieuse* published two articles the substance of which has been incorporated in chapters vii. to xii. of this work. A complete reply to M. Roget would not have been admitted in a hostile periodical, hence the necessity for additional notes and references here.

² On the Continent each candidate for the ministry is required to write and publish an essay or "thesis" in order to be received as a Bachelor of Divinity.

In any case I have no fear of the result of the inquiry in respect of Conditional Immortality. M. Roget has already mentioned the baneful (*funestes*) consequences of sin; this adjective evokes along with the notion of the *funeral* that of the extinction of the sinner's life.

Happy to have had the opportunity of making your personal acquaintance, I beg you, Mr. Editor, to accept my respectful salutations.

E. P.

M. Roget subjoined the following remarks :

The term baneful (*funestes*) which I used to characterize the consequences of *evil* has not at all in my mind the scope attributed to it by your correspondent, it means nothing more than *grave*.

As to the inquiry that M. Petavel proposes to pursue on the ground of psychology, we can only encourage him in its pursuit; but we very much doubt his success in proving by means of psychological considerations that evil involves as its only possible consequence the destruction of the sinner's personality.

A. R.

One word as to the former of the two foregoing paragraphs. According to Littré's dictionary a *grave* evil is a "dangerous" evil, a dangerous evil "compromises the existence of a person or of a thing." We are perforce brought back to the deleterious, literally destructive, effects of sin.

In his last paragraph M. Roget beat a retreat: he admitted implicitly that the destruction of the personality is *one of the possible* consequences of sin, an enormous concession. We were on the point of an agreement.

With respect to the psychological inquiry of which M. Roget was good enough to think us capable, we will renew our appeal to others more competent, as, for example, Messrs. Ernest Naville, Renouvier, Charles Secrétan, Pastor Choisy, or Professor Bouvier-Monod. If we are not greatly mistaken, it is probable that a closely pressed discussion would prove that man is a being morally diseased, that the disease may be so aggravated as to become mortal, that in a finite being extreme moral corruption must result in the end of the moral personality, and that in a being in whom all the master-faculties are closely connected, moral corruption must at last carry the disorder even to the mental faculties. Every organ that is not exercised becomes atrophied, and has a tendency to disappear; the conscience itself is an organ, it may

be cauterized.¹ Enslavement to the passions may result in the suppression of the freedom of choice which is the chief distinction between man and the animals. Man animalized would be but a headless monster. Monsters have short lives. As Amiel has said : "Nature kills whatever is ill-born."² The being that is too defective is unfit to live. The living being that degenerates may one day become unfit to live. Universalists reckon upon a possible progress beyond the tomb. They imagine that by virtue of the law of progress all sinners will necessarily attain to conversion and salvation. They forget that the glorious law of progress has for its converse a gradual decline, which can bring down the man to the condition of the brute, the conscient individual to the inconscient state, the free being to the mere machine which left to itself becomes dislocated and broken. In every domain disorder tends to disorganize, and the disorganization which goes on increasing causes in the end the arrest of all functions. The wretch who, sinking in the slough, rejects the hand held out to save him, can only sink deeper and perish in the slime. His loss will be irremediable. We seek in vain the warrant for an immunity of human souls, or even of angels, which would put their existence beyond the reach of all real peril.

Constant repetition of an act tends to produce a habit, which becomes a feature of the character. Character, perpetuating itself, tends to become indelible.³ When moral depravity has reached the stage of indelibility, the sinner is incorrigible ; and if the depravity is complete, there is no longer any reason for the sinner's existence.

The righteous and the regenerated sinner alone have the right and the capacity to become immortal. Beings that are atrophied, degenerate, disfigured, neither deserve nor desire immortality ; no one will desire or demand it for them. A wise and good God will not impose it upon them ; they will not be the objects of an abnormal miracle, but the memory of their terrible end will remain for the survivors as a barrier across the way to the abyss. For this reason their fleeting apparition upon the stage of the universe will not be absolutely useless.

Since the foregoing lines were written, we have had the satisfaction of meeting with the following paragraph from the pen of Professor Auguste Sabatier, which seems to us to contain an admirable answer to the question stated above :

God has given to man the moral consciousness as the keystone of the arch of the human edifice. If that falls, the edifice will collapse. Or,

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 2.

² *Fragments d'un journal intime*, Paris, 1883, vol. i., p. 55.

³ See E. Naville, *Le libre arbitre*, article xxii.

to adopt another comparison, conscience is the invisible queen who reigns over and keeps in order all the other faculties. When its supreme authority is lacking, the several other faculties fall into a condition of exasperating anarchy. For this reason, respect for the conscience is not merely a duty, it is the guarantee against a state of folly. This cannot be too often insisted upon, especially in the case of young people when the moral and physical crisis of their twentieth year sets in. The cry of the loyal Spaniards in all their political crises was, "No meddling with the queen!" They considered that everything might be restored so long as the queen was there and was still sovereign. So it is with the conscience: while that is still alive, there is no occasion for despair; that once dead, the very light of reason ceases to shine steadily, and very soon gives place to darkness.¹

Again, still more recently, the same keen writer has returned to the subject. In pungent terms he describes the ultimate results of religious indifference:

In the present day it is not only faith that has disappeared; that which is disappearing, melting away, in our literary life and elsewhere, is the power of reason itself. Practical reason and theoretical reason alike are being carried away by the force of the current, and the man makes shipwreck, sinking into the lower sphere of sentiment and sensation; these imperceptibly lead and govern him by unreasoned and unreasonable impulses. We seem to be losing the faculty of reasoning as to our acts, of perceiving the consequence that results from a principle, of formulating the truth that may be supposed to underlie any particular sentiment. Sentiment alone does not suffice, still less does sensation, to guide and raise a people; reason, too, is needed. Now it is reason which is disappearing. That is why we are beginning to think everything possible, everything credible, everything of equal value; while we fail to perceive that night is falling, in which the forms of real objects become dim and phantoms appear.²

§ 3. M. GUSTAVE STEINHEIL.

M. G. Steinheil, a former representative of the Vosges in the French National Assembly, and the head of several manufactures at Rothau, in Lorraine, is a philanthropist well known for his great services to working people. He also belongs to the too restricted group of lay theologians,

¹ *Journal de Genève*, 29th Sept., 1889.

² *Idem*, 17th May, 1891.

being author of several interesting religious publications. With his permission we publish portions of the letters that have passed between us on the subject of Conditional Universalism.

FIRST CORRESPONDENCE.

ROTHAU, 5th Sept., 1882.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—

I have read with the deepest interest your study of Conditional Immortality, and am anxious not to be behindhand in thanking you for it. At the same time, I have been pained to find therein a judgement thus formulated: "As for Universalism, it appears to us as a doctrine that is esoteric, relatively novel, antiphilosophical, antibiblical, dangerous. We say it with grief, thinking of the fine souls that have gone astray into this system, which to us seems like a morbid relaxation of theology."

If there are universalist systems that deserve such blame, it is important to avoid confounding them with biblical Universalism; for by not distinguishing a doctrine of divine origin from its counterfeit an injustice is committed at the same time that an error is propagated.

I must be careful to avoid this mistake in speaking of the doctrine of which you are among us the learned and indefatigable advocate. Others may reproach you with playing into the hands of materialism by rejecting, as it does, a native and inalienable immortality; but I am not disposed to look upon you as an ally of that enemy.

Man, created in the image of God to the end that he might be united to him by faith and glorify him by holy and free obedience, *lives* in that communion; and, on the contrary, by giving himself up to sin and persisting in impenitence, he becomes subject to the wrath of God, to condemnation and death. It is not I who will blame you for having said and said again that our immortality is conditional, and that those who refuse to fulfil the indispensable condition of a free return to God will at last be destroyed.

I thank you for your powerful and persevering affirmation of the end of evil. The hideous leprosy of sin has had a beginning, and it will have an end. The deplorable discord of rebellion and condemnation will not to all eternity interrupt the harmony of God's creation. After the destruction of death, God will be all in all. I shall have to come back to this word *all*, to ascertain whether it includes all men who are involved in Adam's fall, or may be restricted to the survivors only.

I repeat what I have elsewhere said, that Conditionalism is a very great progress as compared with the traditional doctrine of the eternity

of sufferings, according to which a life smitten by an incurable disease would yet last for ever. No issue, no deliverance, torments without end ! By asserting the final cessation of these accursed lives you preach a more humane doctrine, and one more likely to be true than the traditional doctrine which sets forth a God eternally displaying his power by the maintenance in life of beings that are irremediably corrupt and under a condemnation from which there is no appeal. In place of this doctrine, which implies the negation of the eternity of the divine mercy, you affirm a survival in torments ending in final extinction, that extinction being at the same time a terrible chastisement inflicted upon obstinate sinners, and a deliverance accorded by a compassionate God to the most miserable creatures.

In order to sum up my thoughts, allow me to reproduce a passage from the article that I devoted to Mr. White's book :

"Willingly do I say with Mr. White : *Happily* there is an end of evil, and sin and damnation have not an infinite duration ! But if, instead of the end of evil by means of the destruction of the sinner, we should dare to look forward to the end of evil through his restoration at last, tell me, I pray you, if that end would not be much happier. For the patient and for those who love him it would be deliverance by healing instead of deliverance by death, and the creating and redeeming God would have the glory of bringing back to the fold at last all the wandering sheep, and the joy of the free return of all the prodigal sons, instead of feeling the grief of their utter abandonment.

"I grant willingly to Mr. White that his notion of future punishment is in every respect superior to that of the traditional doctrine. It constitutes such a progress that I, who am a Universalist, seize the hand of so valiant an ally, and here express my hope that his admirable book may find numerous and attentive readers. But I take the liberty of inviting him to a more attentive study of Christian Universalism, and I specially desire that he should be happier in the prospect of a final destruction of sin and death than in that of the annihilation of the sinner's person."

And my wish is the same for you, my dear brother and ally. See with what sympathetic attention I have tried to understand your view, in order to bring out at the same time its superiority over the old doctrine and its many points of contact with biblical Universalism. I beg you to act in the same way towards me and the doctrine that I advocate. You can do so, for Christian Universalism is Conditional Universalism, and the condition to be fulfilled is this : Repent ye ! Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Christian Universalism affirms most strongly that the holy God can never make truce with sin ; but it rejects with equal energy every notion of God that would imply the imperfection of his love as regards either its eternal duration or its universal extent. In fact, the words of blessing, of pardon, and of restoration form a long chain reaching from Genesis to Revelation, and this testimony proclaims that God loves us with an eternal love, and that his mercy endureth for ever. And, on the other hand, a long series of curses, of words of wrath and vengeance, are mercilessly fulminated against injustice and rebellion. It is upon these words that you rest your affirmation of the destruction of the wicked, thus ascribing great importance to God's law which is holy, just, and good.

But do you ascribe equal importance to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which superabounds where sin has abounded? Do you give place enough to this central truth, solemnly attested by God's oath, that he willeth not the death of the sinner, but rather that he should return and live? Have you fully understood that Christ seeks his lost sheep *until he find it*? You grant to me the merciful thoughts of God towards all men, but it seems to me that you are too easily convinced of the powerlessness of those intentions and of the final failure of that search so far as relates to the impenitent. Yet we read in St. Paul's epistles :

"For as through the one man's disobedience *all* (Eng. R.V., *the many*) were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall *all* (Eng. R.V., *the many*) be made righteous" (Rom. v. 19).

"In him were *all things* created, in the heavens and upon the earth. . . . It was the good pleasure of the Father . . . through him to reconcile *all things* unto himself . . . whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens" (Col. i. 16, 19, 20).

St. Paul thus views effective redemption as running parallel not only with the extent of the fall, but also with the vast extent of the creation. He admires this "mystery of God's will" this scheme of love that God has formed, the realization of which is one day hereafter "to sum up *all things* in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth" (Eph. i. 9, 10).

He sees that "God highly exalted Jesus and gave unto him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11).

Beyond the veil of the yet future ages the apostle's eye, enlightened by the holy Spirit, sees Christ abolishing "all rule and all authority

and power. For he must reign till the Father hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. . . . And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject *all things* unto him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 26, 28).

This is God's pantheism. This is the prospect of the end, at the sight of which Paul's heart, which had been filled with the deepest sadness by the hardness of heart of unbelieving Israel, dilates, expands, and bursts forth in thanksgiving. This is the great hope of the man who unflinchingly fulfils his apostleship for Christ from the day of his conversion to the hour of his martyrdom.

These passages, along with many others, constitute, as I think, the solid basis of the universalist hope. You have read them as well as I. Why do you not draw from them the same conclusions? From age to age these declarations have been read, meditated upon, and expounded by faithful Christians, who nevertheless did not abandon the doctrine of the absolute eternity of sufferings.

A theologian whose impartial understanding and sincere piety are incontestable, M. Ménégos, has lately published a study of *Sin and redemption according to Saint Paul*, and he makes out that Paul's real view was not Universalism but Conditional Immortality. How can that be so? Does not St. Paul speak very clearly of *all* men who, being made sinners by the disobedience of one, will be made righteous by the obedience of one; of *all* those who, dead in Adam, will live again in Christ; of God summing up *all things* in Christ; of God becoming in the end all in *all*? By what right is the *all*, so often repeated, transformed into *some*?

The fact is that those who do this cannot forget the very numerous declarations that proclaim the condemnation and the death of the wicked, and not to abstract anything from the wrath that strikes impiety, they have restricted to the small number of the elect this glorious and consoling prospect of the final restoration of all.

In this formidable question more than in any other the apparent contradictions of the biblical testimonies abound. What should be done in order to find agreement in the midst of these appearances of discord? We should subordinate the accessory to the essential. That is just what we both do, but with this difference, that what I take to be essential you treat as accessory, and what seems to me temporary is in your view definitive and irrevocable.

In full agreement with you I affirm that the holy God is for ever the irreconcilable foe of sin. Our agreement ceases when I, resting upon

innumerable promises of grace and love, affirm that God remains for ever the faithful friend of his creature.

Divine love victorious all along the line, life everywhere triumphing over death, sin annihilated by its separation from the sinner, death destroyed by the very fact of the destruction of sin, God at last recovering all the wanderers and becoming all in all : that is the prospect opened up before me by the faithful promises of God. And because that is so, I can only attribute a temporary character to sin with all its hideous aberrations and with its baneful consequences called outer darkness, Gehenna, the second death, the lake of fire. Hell is not a mere bugbear, but a fearful reality. Yet I am assured that the judgement which destroys the sin is at the same time a chastisement having for its object the conversion of the sinner.

Can a soul, hardening itself in sin, become absolutely incorrigible, so thoroughly rooted in evil that all the resources of God's holy discipline would be powerless to bring it back to that which is good? In this question is summed up our disagreement. I point out to you the answer as I understand it, the reasons for which I have given in my pamphlet entitled, *Are eternal punishments endless torments?* I recognize the force of your objections, but it seems to me that there is greater force in that which favours my hope than in that which contradicts it. I touch upon this difficult question with reserve, being very conscious that my knowledge is imperfect, because the darkness produced by sin so easily interferes with the light that is the gift of God.

That which I do know is that our heavenly Father is for ever our unfailing friend, and that our Lord Jesus saves us completely from our sins. United with you in a like faith, I hold out to you a fraternal hand. If our thoughts differ on some points, God will enlighten us. Still, at the point to which we have attained let us walk according to the same rule and have the same sentiments ; now we see dimly, but then we shall see face to face. Now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known, and that which we shall see and know will infinitely exceed our expectation and our hope.

Believe me, my dear brother, yours with cordial affection,

G. STEINHEIL.

CHÊNE-BOUGERIES, GENEVA, 6th Sept., 1882.

DEAR AND HONOURED BROTHER,

I respond without delay to your lines of yesterday, which have deeply touched me. They seem to me to be the very model of courteous and kindly controversy.

Allow me, however, to fall back upon the very judicious principle that you have yourself laid down, which consists in making preliminary reference to writings already published on the subject treated. We shall thus avoid beginning always *ab ovo*, tramping without advancing.

I have read attentively, pencil in hand, your sympathetic pamphlet. I also recently called the attention of Mr. White to it; but he is unfortunately almost overdone by his pastorate and by a correspondence extending over the whole Anglo-Saxon world.

Perhaps on your side you will be so good as to take cognizance of the pamphlet that I now send you.¹ In it you will see that our two principal expositors, Messrs. Reuss and Godet, declare formally that Paul did not teach Universalism. Certainly their verdict is not absolutely decisive, but it is worth noting that they represent rival schools, and that neither of them is a supporter of Conditionalism, so that their agreement on the question of exegesis has all the greater weight. Messrs. Auguste Sabatier, Babut, and Ménégos are of the same opinion. You will see, too, various concessions that I make in favour of your point of view.

Along with other passages, I quote most of those brought forward by you, but then I endeavour to show the true meaning that is often borne by the word *all* in Scripture. It sometimes means a plurality or a majority, sometimes a collectivity; when salvation is in question, the final result depends upon the reception by individuals of the appeal that is extended to each one of them. In these cases, *all* corresponds to our generic expressions *the human race, the human family, humanity*, expressions which did not form part of the apostle's vocabulary. He predicts the salvation of the human family when he speaks of the final salvation of all.² But in a family the stillborn do not count. In the day of eternity the wicked will be as though they had never been. So, too, when in autumn *all* the produce of an orchard is spoken of, no account is taken of the multitude of green or shrivelled fruits that have fallen before coming to maturity.

Grace superabounds because it produces effects which *abide*, while evil ends in nonentity. There is a large net advantage on the side of grace. "Doth not nature teach us?" says the apostle. In every business there is the account of profit and loss, and the balance-sheet of assets and liabilities. Grace triumphs and superabounds. The

¹ *Universal Salvation*, the substance of which has been incorporated in our tenth chapter.

² More correctly *the generality, the many, οἱ πολλοί*. See *ἀποστολική*. "The expression in the original designates the plurality of the *me*. . . *the race* as opposed to a single member." Bersier, *La Solidarité*, p. 24. C. *laïcité*. xxiv. 12; 1 Cor. x. 23.

triumphs of evil are transitory, those of grace have a substantial reality which lasts for ever.¹

Believe me, it is with deep regret that I have concluded as I have done against Universalism ; believe also that I have long and carefully studied the important books of Messrs. Jukes, Brown, Cox, Farrar, etc., who have advocated the theory in England. My articles will prove to you that at least I have endeavoured to take account of all the arguments that have come to my knowledge. . . .

I should have been glad not to be obliged to maintain all my conclusions against certain notions of so sympathetic an *ally* as you are, but *ich kann nicht anders* ; happily we love each other and shall always love each other nevertheless.

Tuus in Nostro.

E. P.

ROTHAU, 16th Sept., 1882.

DEAR AND HONOURED BROTHER,—

. . . Salvation through conversion, salvation through return to God, heaven *under the condition* of sanctification without which none will see the Lord, salvation for all *on condition* that, finally saved from sin, they attain the purity of heart to which the vision of God is promised ; that is *Conditional* Universalism, biblical and Christian Universalism. It is that of Bengel, Œtinger, Lavater, Oberlin, Kapff, and many others. . . .

At the very centre of the conviction that I have expounded is found the *idea of God*, for every theology that has not God for its centre does not deserve to be called theology. And how have I summed up the character of God? I see in him at the same time the faithful friend of his creature and the irreconcilable enemy of sin.

Why do we reach such divergent conclusions? Can you have discovered in my writings a page or a line or a single word indicating that in the end God will compound with or tolerate sin? Have I taught a native and indestructible immortality? Have I refused to admit that in case of a complete incorrigibility there would be annihilation? Is it not one of my strongest arguments against unending suffering, to show the monstrous character of the notion of a God whose mercy is extinct but whose power keeps in perpetual existence lives that are burning in the fire and gnawed by the worm?

¹ For the biblical meaning of the word *all* it is important to examine passages such as those in Mark i. 37 ; xi. 32 ; John iii. 26 ; Acts x. 38 ; xvii. 30 ; 2 Cor. iii. 2 ; Titus ii. 11 ; 1 Kings xviii. 19 ; 1 Chron. xv. 28 ; Dan. v. 19. I have taken these promiscuously from the Concordance ; many more might be found.

One cause of my disagreement with you is that your God *lets go* the man more easily than mine. No doubt, yours is a good God, who has given his only Son, and who publishes this Gospel: "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." But your God accepts much more readily than mine the alternative of the suppression of the person of the wicked. "The fruits that reach maturity alone count; the term 'all' belongs only to the 'fittest who survive.'"

Well! this God who *lets go* is not the God of the Bible:

Was Er liebt, das liebt Er ewig,
Was Er hat, das haelt Er fest.¹

On this point of capital importance you have against you not only the Christian Universalists but also that great theology of Augustine and Calvin towards which I consider that you, Mr. White, and M. G. Godet are alike deeply unjust. In that theology there is undoubtedly a terrible and disheartening element, and you tell me that "Calvin himself was obliged to admit that God's decree in relation to the wicked appeared to him horrible."

But this theology admits, rightly as I think, that those whom God *wills* to save must in the end be saved; and for this reason, by an extraordinary exegetical feat it restricted to the elect only the apostolic declaration that God wills that all men should be saved. This theology rejects the idea of a changeable God. It does not admit that those whom God *loves* will be finally lost, nor that those whose ransom has been paid by Christ on the cross will go into hell. You have made a sincere effort to bring to light the elements of truth that you have found in Universalism; make a further effort to discover those which are included in Calvinism, that is to say in the Augustinian theology, which more than any other has sought to give to God alone the glory of the work of salvation.

Here is another very serious cause of our divergence. You say: "Evil left to itself tends to increase, to aggravate and perpetuate itself. This is a weak point of Universalism. The experience of this world goes against the idea of an amelioration and final salvation of all men."

I reply: Evil *left to itself* does certainly tend to increase and to perpetuate itself. Happily, God does not leave evil to itself. God, who is ever a consuming fire in relation to evil, contends against it while at the same time he smites his child with the rod in order to save him. Evil is not left to itself, and when through obstinate impenitence it

¹ What he loves, he loves for ever,
What he has, he holds it fast.

increases and takes deep root, repression is intensified in the same measure, so much so that the terrestrial repression is but a feeble beginning of the chastisement to come. . . .

I maintain : 1st, The judgement which finally destroys sin and death is at the same time a chastisement having for its purpose the restoration of the sinner. 2nd, God respects man's liberty even in his most persistent aberrations, while at the same time he maintains his own will and his own holy liberty to save in Christ not the first only but also the last. 3rd, Election is the portion of the first-born sons, but there is also a prospect, even though distant, of salvation for the last so that God may in the end be all in all.

You are witness that so far as I am concerned Universalism is not an esoteric doctrine that is ashamed of itself. But a nurse who should give meat instead of milk to newborn babes would kill rather than nourish them. You, a *Conditionalist*, do well to ask that my Universalism should be *conditional*, and I have granted you that to a large extent beforehand. Why should you not grant to me, a universalist, a *Conditionalism possibly universal*?

That might be the meeting-point of our fraternal alliance.

Very heartily yours,

G. S.

CHÊNE-BOUGERIES, GENEVA, 14th Oct., 1882.

HONOURED AND DEAR BROTHER,—

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From an exegetical point of view, Universalism whether absolute or conditional occupies an untenable position. You have yourself admitted that the most esteemed commentators, such as Reuss, Godet, Sabatier, Ménégos, to mention only those in the French language, reject it formally and explicitly. Tholuck acknowledged this exegetical weakness of the system; M. Bouvier at Geneva has also recognized it. No doubt he still has the resource of setting the *Christian sentiment* above the text of Scripture, but are you disposed to fall back upon that resource? Surely not. In fact, to do so seems to me to be forsaking confessional Protestantism, and quitting a safe port to wander in search of adventures on the boundless sea of purely human opinions. Within historic Protestantism doctrines which appeal to the Scriptures will always have the advantage over those which leave the records aside. . . .

Notwithstanding the almost unanimous verdict of the most competent judges, you hold to your view, clinging to half-a-dozen passages which, as you say, speak of the salvation of *all*. It is thus that our common opponents the traditionalists cling to the hyperbole that speaks of *un-*

quenchable fire. As regards biblical theology, universalists and traditionalists are in the eddies of the stream; conditionalists follow the main current.

You admit that the passages upon which you lay stress seem to be in contradiction with the numerous declarations which proclaim the final death of the obstinate wicked. By your own avowal, there is a majority of the biblical declarations against your view. As a general rule a sound interpretation is that which harmonizes the texts by restricting the meaning of the few by that of the many. But besides that, in the special case before us it happens that the word *all* often and *undoubtedly* bears a restricted meaning in Scripture. I have pointed out to you several examples of this limited meaning, among others John iii. 26: Jesus baptizeth "and all men come to him;" it was very far from being all the Jews who came to Jesus. The word *all* may then have a limited meaning when it relates to salvation (see note on p. 518).

Moreover, Paul declares that certain individuals "shall suffer eternal destruction." We read that "a consuming fire shall devour the adversaries;" not their sins only, be it observed, but their persons. There is to be a "second death," but a third life is never mentioned. For Judas "it would have been better if he had not been born," etc. The usage of the New Testament language does not authorize the restriction of the scope of these passages, while it does authorize the restriction of the meaning of the word *all*.

The time is approaching when it will be clearly seen that Universalism has really no domicile in Scripture. I recognize that among the partizans of that doctrine there have been men of excellent disposition and eminent in many respects; but very few, or none, distinguished in respect of exegesis in the precise sense of the term, nor any logicians faithful to the governing principle of the *historico-grammatical* interpretation, that Ariadne's clue of our controversies.

As a loyal disciple of the holy Scriptures, I feel bound to forego the profession of a hope such as you cherish; it would seem to me prevarication to take at less than their full meaning the sentences pronounced against certain categories of sinners. I will not imitate the benevolent but presumptuous apostle who exclaimed, "Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall never be unto thee;" and to whom the Lord replied, "Thou mindest the things of men."

Even supposing that the final salvation of all were in God's plan, it would be forcing the texts to endeavour to draw from them that which they deny. If, by an impossibility, the future beyond the tomb has in reserve for us a surprise in this matter, I am debarred from counting

upon it or discounting it. I have said by an impossibility, because to me this hope appears as much opposed to reason as to the Bible.

You, too, are sensible of it ; you dare not deny the complete incorrigibility of certain sinners. Then admit as well that you are not a universalist. To say Conditional Universalism is much like saying a perhaps partial whole. You and I agree in recognizing that there is a doubt as to the salvation of some. This doubt is an indisputable fact ; it therefore does away with the certainty of the universality, and it gives the name of *Conditionalism* to the doctrine which unites us. You would have me add to that name the adjective universalist. Excuse me, it is impossible. The adjective would be either superfluous or erroneous. If it refers to a salvation *possible for all*, it is superfluous ; I do not deny that a conditional salvation is offered to all. But if this adjective is to signify that the final salvation of all is certain, the adjective annuls the substantive, and the phrase becomes contradictory.

If the salvation of all is inevitable, the conversion of all will be forced, and the notion of freedom is an illusion. If, on the contrary, the salvation of some remains doubtful, Universalism itself becomes doubtful ; in other words, it no longer has the right to assert itself by giving its name to a system.

You tell me that you deny native immortality ; but you unconsciously imply it when you say that God remains *eternally* faithful to his creature, even though rebellious. Denying inherent immortality, you ought surely rather to say, as I do, that God pities his rebellious creature, and remains faithful to him *during the whole period of that creature's existence*, so long as the decay which begins with sin has not come to an end in final death, called in Scripture the second death. You seem to forget that the sinner's destruction is progressive, and may be completed while he persists in rejecting salvation.

It is true that the apostle says, "God abideth faithful"; but he has just previously said, "If we shall deny him, he also will deny us."¹ He will even cut off the vine or olive-branch that has been grafted into the good stock, if that branch fails to bring forth good fruit (Rom. xi. 22).

This will show you that I reject the predestination which would imply the final and infallible perseverance of specified individuals. There is no respect of persons with God. He predestines to salvation the individuals, names in blank, so to speak, whoever they may be, who will fulfil the conditions of salvation, who will lay hold on the life eternal. Jesus died contingently for all men, but believers only will actually share in the benefits of his death.² Not that there is any merit in accepting

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 12 ; cf. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

² Rom. v. 19. The apostle does not say that every individual *will* be justified,

the gift of the divine bounty, but the result of the act is salvation. Those who will have persevered unto the end *will find themselves to be* the elect. In the meantime we have, as the earnest and evidence of our election, the testimony and the fruits of the Spirit within us (Rom. viii. 15, 16; 1 John iii. 14). These are powerful encouragements, not guarantees against voluntary deviation, which is always possible (Heb. vi. 4-6). Besides this contingent or conditional predestination to eternal life, there is a positive predestination to the accessory gifts, God disposing freely of that which is his own (Matt. xx. 15. Cf. Jer. xviii. 1-10; Jonah iii. 4, 10).

Predestination to final salvation being *conditional*, God maintains his respect for his creature's freedom while multiplying the appeals of his grace; the creature therefore has power finally and definitively to choose perdition. The creature is the brand that burns, and will soon be burnt up if he keeps away from the only power capable of extinguishing the fire that is consuming him. He is not the fiery bush that burned *without being consumed*, which was a symbol of God himself; he is *consumed* (John xv. 6).

By the denial of a native and indefeasible immortality you have cut the ground from under the feet of Universalism, for you do not admit that by a continual and shocking miracle God would maintain the existence of a perishable and thoroughly corrupt being. Universal analogy serves to show that any given individual may become thoroughly and finally corrupt; why should the human being form the single exception? Some human beings, then, must, or at least may, cease to exist. . . .

Jesus was conditionalist when he said to the apostles, "Ye shall sit upon *twelve* thrones." The promise was evidently conditional, since Judas, one of the twelve, by his own fault made it void so far as it related to him. The loving work of Jesus himself failed in the case of Judas.

There is a tragic sense in which man, endowed with a freedom that is truly serious, may be stronger than God, stronger than his Saviour. "How often," exclaims Jesus, weeping, "would I have gathered you, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" A lamentable and ephemeral victory, to bury himself in the night of nothingness; while the elect, as trophies of divine love, subsist for ever.

but he declares that by virtue of the one sentence that has been pronounced all *may* be justified on the condition of faith. "The totality must here be restricted to those of whom in verse 17 Paul has spoken as *receiving* the grace." F. Godet, *Comment. sur l'Épître aux Rom. I.*, p. 491; cf. p. 480.

Universalism, while it is antibiblical, has no solid metaphysical basis ; it is not psychological, and to me it appears practically dangerous. Such, too, was the feeling of Origen himself and of his disciples. You, too, recognize that it provides a kind of nourishment that would be harmful to neophytes. You would therefore not preach it to them ; but if it should come to their knowledge, and they should perceive that you have kept back certain important truths, what a shock it would be to them ! Do what you will, your secret doctrine will come out. Coming out, its effect will be the postponement of conversion and the paralyzing of missionary zeal ; for according to that doctrine there is no mortal peril to be dreaded, and God will do later on that which we fail to do on this side of the tomb. Our natural sloth will send us to sleep on that pillow.

You ask me how I can reconcile such an estimate with my "profound respect" for your point of view. My first answer is that there may be respect without acceptance. You write to me yourself, "I understand and respect your point of view"; yet you do not subscribe to it, or at least not entirely. I respect your view as I do that of every estimable man ; I respect it highly because I have a high esteem for you personally, and also because it has been a noble and sometimes courageous reaction against the traditional dogma ; but I respectfully oppose it as an illusion and as a danger for individuals and for Churches.

It is known that in Unitarian Churches there is little missionary spirit. Universalism seems to be a blind alley into which many a noble soul has wandered, like Petitpierre of Neuchâtel, who sacrificed himself to that cause without founding anything durable. All that zeal and talent and piety spent in the propagation of a doctrine so sterile ! Sterile ? No ; the Universalism of such as Thomas Newton, Œtinger, Bengel, Lavater, Oberlin, Petitpierre, has not been altogether sterile : it has solaced these noble souls ; it has held the tiger of tradition in check ; it has prepared the way for the biblical dogma that is at last restored to the light. Having no longer any reason for its existence, Universalism will disappear, but not without transmitting a precious inheritance to its legitimate successor.

Your reserves make you fundamentally a conditionalist. Hoist, then, the flag of our little phalanx, and bring over to us your arms ; widen our views. Show to us that salvation is not limited to a few ; that many men will be evangelized after this life ; that the elect are only an advanced guard, the first fruits of an abundant harvest beyond the tomb. I send you my article on the *Preaching of Jesus Christ to the Dead*.¹ It

¹ *Chrétien évangélique*, March, 1881.

will show you that we can assimilate many elements of the doctrine that you have hitherto defended.

To suppose Conditionalism to be without tenderness would be to deal very unfairly with us, and to attribute to us sentiments that we do not cherish. Where can you have read that we "readily accept" the perdition of the wicked, that we easily accommodate ourselves to it? Our God is not one who "lets go," as you seem to imagine. On the contrary, we groan over the peril of our brothers, and this groaning is the motive that urges us to do all we can to save them, a motive all the more powerful because, in our view, when once perdition is reached it is definitive. Our God does not "let go"; he goes to seek the erring son, but he does not impose his love upon him. He allows the prodigal son to depart; he will even allow him to die in a strange land if, in spite of all appeals, that son persists in his rebellion. He abandons even the elder son when that pitiless paragon refuses to enter the paternal home.

It is thus that man, when he abuses his liberty, finds our God to be "a consuming fire," a God who "is not to be mocked," as the God of Universalism might be. There is no lack of profane spirits among men. The Epistle to the Hebrews supposes the existence of some who will tread under foot the blood of the new covenant. "A fierceness of fire shall devour the adversaries," says the sacred writer, *themselves*, I repeat, not their sin only. Indeed, how are men to be saved who deliberately tread the Gospel under foot?

Yes; come over and help us. Our struggle is not now mainly against the old traditional dogma; its present defenders have blunted its teeth and claws to such an extent that it is now almost a tame tiger. Our foe is not so much a doctrine as the absence of a doctrine, or the unstable doctrine of those who say, "In order to reconcile black with white, we will choose gray." In fact, the element of a salutary fear is banished, and preaching, evangelization, and missions languish.

I remain, honoured and dear sir, your devoted servant and brother,
E. P.

ROTHAU, 23rd Oct., 1882.

DEAR AND HONOURED BROTHER,

The powerful reasons that can be opposed to the traditional dogma have no force, or very little, against Conditionalism. Firmly convinced so long as I am attacking the doctrine that still prevails as orthodox, I am very reserved in my attitude towards your teaching. My Universalism has ceased to be an absolute affirmation, and has become

transformed into a universalist hope. I have frankly avowed this hesitation.

I do not forbid you to consider me as the partizan of a Conditionalism which I hope to see result in the final restoration of all.

I very willingly recognize that the term *all* often bears a restricted sense. Evidently not "all" the Israelites went out to Jesus. The familiar expression "all the world" usually has a limited meaning, and it is not in the absolute sense of the words that it is said "all Paris" was present at a theatrical representation or at a horse-race. Yet there are many passages in which *all* cannot be translated by the elect or the survivors, but clearly signifies all men. Yes, God "willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." "As through one sin condemnation has come upon all men, even so through one act of righteousness all men shall receive justification of life." It seems clear that the "all men" who are justified by one act of righteousness are identically the same as the "all men" who are condemned through one sin. . . .

Do not be too ready to attribute to Universalism consequences unfavourable to Church life. When the floods of the rationalistic inundation covered Germany and submerged even Wittenberg and Halle, there were two lofty peaks that stood out above the deluge: the Moravian Church and Wurtemberg pietism. And since the beginning of this century the Moravian Church and Wurtemberg pietism (largely Universalist) have furnished the greatest number of missionaries from the Continent of Europe.

G. S.

CHÈNE-BOUGERIES, 28th Oct., 1882.

DEAR AND HIGHLY-HONOURED BROTHER,

The week shall not close without an acknowledgement from me of the receipt of your kind letter of last Monday and the accompanying pamphlets.

I have already read with interest and profit your reflections in the little volume entitled *Theology of the heart*, and, thanks to the concessions of your last letter, I feel that we are together arriving at a consolatory synthesis.¹

Since you tell me that your Universalism "has ceased to be an absolute affirmation," that the incorrigibility of the wicked "might become complete and irremediable," in a word, that you are a *Conditionalist* with universalist *hopes* merely, I will not only cease to oppose

¹ We have since read with very deep interest the same author's *Gott Alles in Allen*.

you, but will go to your school in order to extend my views in the light that God gives to you.

Already in my latest writings I have struck the note of hope which is by no means absent from the admirable book of Mr. White, and I have been delighted to perceive that he, that valiant and amiable apostle of the truth, has not disavowed nor contradicted me. There is room for you too in the ranks of our little band of Conditionalists, and your voice will enrich the concert of praise to the God of holiness and love that we would fain cause to resound here below. . . .

Allow me to close with some little corrections. You translate Rom. v. 18, "All shall receive justification," but "shall receive" is not in the text; it is an *offer* that is spoken of. God may wish that "all men should be saved," but any particular individual may prevent the fulfilment of that wish, so far as he himself is concerned.¹

Then you oppose to me the universalist and missionary pietists of Wurtemberg. I spoke of universalist *Churches*, not *individuals*. Do you know any universalist Churches that have a missionary spirit?²

E. P.

SECOND CORRESPONDENCE WITH M. STEINHEIL.

The controversy seemed thus to have produced a definite result. Our venerable opponent had allowed us to count him in the number of Conditionalists. He repudiated Conditional Universalism, for according to that doctrine evil may last for ever; while M. Steinheil believes in the end of evil, and says: "Sin is not eternal, for it is not a plant that our heavenly Father has planted, but a poisonous plant that shall be rooted up." Nevertheless, M. Steinheil still held to some universalist hopes. He issued another pamphlet on the subject,³ after which he addressed to us five more letters.⁴ Touched by so much zeal, but not at all convinced, we again replied in three letters entitled, *Some difficulties of Christian Universalism*.⁵

¹ Luke vii. 30. See also *ante*, p. 517, note 2, and p. 522, note 2.

² M. Steinheil seems to imply that the Moravian Church (called also the United Brethren) is universalist, but for good reasons he avoids asserting it. We believe the surmise has no real foundation.

³ *Du caractère de Dieu*. Paris, Fischbacher, 1884. Reprinted from the *Revue chrétienne* of October, 1884.

⁴ These letters were published in the *Revue théologique* for July, 1885.

⁵ These three letters appeared in the *Revue théologique*, October, 1885.

I.

CHÊNE-BOUGERIES, GENEVA, 24th March, 1885.

DEAR AND VENERATED BROTHER,

Your lines of the 20th inst. have come to hand, together with your five letters. . . .

I have been deeply touched by your brotherly and courteous tone in this controversy, but I am not convinced by your arguments.

For example, you accuse Conditionalism of not having sufficient terror in its threatenings, but is it possible that your Christian Universalism would be more efficacious? It predicts prolonged suffering to the rebellious soul; but what is there to prevent Conditionalism from employing that weapon of which you appear to claim a monopoly?

Is it not quite allowable to suppose that an agony as long and as painful as the punishment that you speak of precedes final extinction? You seek to alarm the sinner by threatening him with suffering in the future. But we use this threatening as well as you; and if it should be ineffectual, we have, in addition, a resource in reserve that you have not. We announce a greater danger when we raise the truly fearful spectre of that second death, after which there remains not a single gleam of hope. You say *a*, we say *a* plus *b*. So much for the motive of fear. With regard to love, it ought not to impose its benefits. In the case of the suicide, God respects the liberty of the dying who persist in the wish to die, while you would force beings who reject life to live on indefinitely. Yet you had admitted in principle that sinners are diseased beings, who must succumb in death within a limited time if they persist in rejecting the offered remedy. For you, as for me, the second death is surely the final end of the activity of all the human faculties. You do not desire either magic or violence on the part of the physician; it would then be possible for the dying sinner to use his last powers in rejecting the medicine presented to him. That being so, it seems to me that the affirmation of Christian Universalism rests upon no solid basis.

Accept, etc.

II.

6th April, 1885.

By returning to the charge you make it my duty to resume the pen.

You admit—1st, that the human soul is not by nature imperishable; 2nd, that it is affected by the disease of sin; 3rd, that this disease, if left to itself, would become mortal; 4th, that the death of the soul would be the final end of its individual existence; 5th, that God will

always respect man's native liberty ; 6th, that therefore the human soul will always be free to reject the salvation offered to it. From these premisses it logically follows that the unyielding sinner will at last become the prey of a death that will be the end of his individual existence. The natural course of things will sooner or later bring about the disappearance of the diseased being who, as you have said, does not enjoy an indestructible immortality.¹ The precise moment of that disappearance might be determined by two factors, which are : first, the degree of natural vitality assigned at its creation to the particular soul, and second, the more or less violent passion of that soul in the accomplishment of its culpable suicide.

You suppose that "God's respect for the liberty of man does not go so far as to sacrifice to the criminal abuse of that liberty his own good and holy will," which desires the sinner's salvation. But the fact is that every day, under our very eyes, the sinner does acts which are evidently in opposition to the divine will. God allows these foolish and fatal acts, and his permission extends to the most unheard-of and unbridled abuses. To his love, which desires to make of man a seriously free being, God sacrifices his desire for immediate obedience. The liberty of doing evil being thus unlimited, the chastisement will be proportionate. If the case should require it, the punishment will extend even to the total destruction of a perishable soul that voluntarily and unreservedly gives itself over to the corrosive action of sin. I fail to see where you could set bounds to these deleterious consequences. By your premisses you are a Conditionalist. If you still cherish a universalist hope it can only be a feeble one, for it is contrary to all calculation of psychological probabilities, and the Scripture constantly speaks of a category of obstinate sinners who will be definitively lost.

You tell me that "by a continual miracle of his patient love God maintains in life existences that have gone astray," awaiting the hour of their return. For lack of argument you fall back upon the supposition of a miracle *in extremis*. A soul is in the death agony, at the last extremity ; God infuses into it, in some way unknown, a fresh dose of vitality, then makes a fresh appeal. Remaining free, the dying soul may once more refuse to listen. Would you perpetuate the miracle to eternity ? The resistance might be equally perpetuated, and you would be exposed to the blame that you have yourself expressed in your letter of 5 Sept., 1882, in which you reproach the traditional doctrine with perpetuating the wicked to all eternity. Besides, this future miracle, of which the Bible tells us absolutely nothing, is what may be called a

¹ *Revue théologique*, 1885, p. 624.

deus ex machinâ, an imaginary and unlikely issue from a tragical situation.

As you observe, it is doubtless written that God "*taketh no pleasure* in the death of the wicked"; yet it is added that he will none the less cause to perish not only the wicked, but also the righteous if he turns away from his righteousness (Ezek. xxxiii. 11, 13). A judge may condemn with grief and regret; yet he condemns the guilty, and more especially the guilty who is impenitent. God attests by his oath that he punishes with reluctance, that is true; but, oath for oath, he elsewhere says: "I have sworn in my wrath that they shall not enter into my rest."

This Old Testament declaration is ratified by the New Testament, where it is made to relate to eternity (Heb. iv. 3, 5, 10). More than that, it is written that God "will rejoice over, to cause to perish and to destroy," the rebels who should despise his threatenings (Deut. xxviii. 63). The eternal wisdom goes so far as to rejoice when "the resistance of the stupid shall slay them" (Prov. i. 26, 32): a terrible but sublime hyperbole, the despairing cry of outraged love.

Vainly do you invoke St. Paul; he is against you. Must I remind you that expositors belonging to the most diverse schools agree in recognizing that Paul was not a universalist? Messrs. Reuss, Godet, Auguste Sabatier, Ménégos, Babut, etc., have declared the fact. The declaration of these experts has all the more force because it is not dictated by their dogmatic convictions, which are more or less divergent. Can you legitimately hope that a less scientifically founded interpretation will prevail against theirs?

Before a verdict which you set aside I bow, not without having made a careful and particular personal examination. The prospect of the final loss of a great number of men afflicts me, I regret not to be able to share your hopes. I regret too that you should hold to an opinion which, as it seems, was not that of the apostle Paul; but I console myself with the thought that truth is your friend as much as my own, that one day it will surely persuade you, and by pruning the branch of your faith it will cause it to bring forth more fruit, which is saying a great deal.

Accept, etc.

III.

10th Dec., 1885.

The publication of your five letters in the last number of the *Revue théologique* is a new challenge to me; it proves that in your opinion I

have not fully established a point of view which is different from your own ; I must therefore make a fresh attempt, inspired by the example that you give me of steadfast perseverance in the service of that which is believed to be the truth.

The more I read over your letters, the more do objections multiply in my mind, the more do I regret that on the point in question the agreement ceases which unites us on so many others, the social question, for example, or that of baptism.

Still your *first* letter warrants the hope of a complete agreement even on the ground of eschatology. You say : "The creature becomes immortal only by uniting himself to his Creator in the free obedience of faith and love. Annihilation would be the final end of an existence separated from God." You admit "neither an immortality that cannot be lost, nor the notion of a God who would maintain in life existences that have gone irremediably astray." You say that "the central point of our disagreement is the manner in which each of us represents to himself the eternal mercy of God, and the greater or less persistence of his love."

Might we not put an end to this divergence of opinion by supposing an eternal mercy of which the creature is the object as long as he exists, as long as a voluntary death does not entirely remove him from the manifestations of that faithful love? The sinner's destruction is a gradual process and may be completed while he persists in rejecting salvation.¹ If he breaks, one after another, all the bonds which have united him to his heavenly Father, that Father, who has made him really free, could not prevent him from falling back into nonentity. Many millions of irresponsible creatures, objects to some extent of God's love, have for ever disappeared ; a sinful creature might share their fate with even greater reason.

In your *second* letter you affirm "a final victory of redeeming love in all souls," but I seek in vain for proofs in support of such an affirmation. You add that God for ever destroys the rebellion of the wicked ; but as the rebellion is incarnate in the rebels, I do not understand how they will be able to survive that destruction.²

¹ The dying and irreconcilable sinner perishes "in the way." Psalms ii. 12.

² M. Steinheil slips into the fallacious reasoning of Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, who has argued "that the threatening of *destruction* in the Bible always stands for the idea of 'annihilation,' only he affirms that it is the sinner's *sin* which is to be destroyed in hell, not himself. 'There is a divine and blessed way of destroying sinners by destroying sin.' There is no need for encumbering our pages with an argument in reply to this notion, borrowed from Origen and the Universalists." It is sufficient to observe that with this interpretation all the Scripture threatenings against sinners would be transformed into promises. Our Lord's awful warning to his generation as thus interpreted would read, "Except ye repent, *your sins* shall all like-

I pass on to your *third* letter wherein you ask me whether the prospect of a universal salvation would not make me very happy ; I answer of course in the affirmative, on condition that the prospect should not be chimerical. If it were assured, my happiness would still be imperfect in presence of so many atrocities committed in the past and in the present, both near and far off, by the disciples of Mahomet in the heart of Africa, by Englishmen in London, and by Frenchmen in Paris, in a word, in presence of the evil that breaks out within and around us. You groan over it as much as anyone, if not more : there are then limits to your optimism ; it remains to be seen whether they are the right limits. It seems to me that in the parable of the sower Jesus teaches us how far our hopes may go. The harvest shall be abundant, although so many grains and ears perish ; it will fill the heavenly garner, and no one will be able to call it a "half success." Still less will it be possible to call the suicide of the wicked a "victory" obtained over the Creator. The sick man who dies does not *triumph over* the physician whose aid he has rejected. So far from that his death shows that the physician was right who had charitably warned him, and who, on the other hand, heals all the sick who obey his prescriptions.

Perhaps you are still unconsciously under the influence of the traditional opinion that every human soul has an infinite value, while in truth it is God alone who has an infinite value. Jesus said : "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." One day in a trial sermon a theological student declared that we are worth more than the whole race of sparrows ; he was reminded that his quotation was not textual. Under the influence of pagan philosophy man has been overrated. No man is indispensable, we exist only by the good pleasure of God, who can produce from the stones of the desert beings of greater value than ourselves. While, with the apostle Paul, I hope for a glorious epoch when death will make no more victims, and when God will be all, in all those who will have survived the deleterious action of sin, I cannot help noticing that the same apostle predicts more than a score of times the irremediable destruction of the rebels (2 Thess. i. 9, etc.).

Your *fourth* letter expresses the fear that this prospect is not of a nature to restrain the sinner in descending the slope of vice. I acknowledge at once that I do not know any absolutely irresistible moral restraint ; still the fear of nonentity will have all the force of the strongest instinct of human nature, namely the instinct of self-preservation. You

wise perish" (Luke xiii. 3). And one of St. Paul's most striking declarations would be changed into this absurdity : "The wages of sin is *the death of sin*" (Rom. vi. 23). See E. White, *Life in Christ*, 3rd edition, p. 367, note.

attribute greater efficacy to the terror inspired by imprisonment and prolonged sufferings. Once more I repeat that Conditionalism employs the same means but without admitting, as you do, the infallible success of this process of conversion. Human will can triumph over the greatest torments. It often happens that the more an impious man suffers the more he blasphemes. You cannot admit a torture beyond the natural power of resistance, for that would crush the liberty which you wish at all cost to maintain. Will you prolong the time given for repentance? We will do so too, but you could not prolong it indefinitely without making hell eternal. Universalism has, then, no advantage over the doctrine that you oppose, and your objection will be seen to return against yourself.

It is indeed to be feared that Universalism is demoralizing to numerous sinners who yet cling to existence. You promise them final salvation; they will be satisfied to accept your word, and there are some among them who will say to themselves: "Let us yield to the attractions of pleasure; there is time enough, and if not, there is eternity, which will suffice for attending to things less agreeable. Meanwhile our security is complete, since the divine mercy reserves for us at last a complete and general amnesty."¹

It is now my turn to beg you to consider the dangers into which your doctrine may lead many souls that might be alarmed unto salvation by Conditionalism. As for the sinners who are so thoroughly corrupt that eternal death has no terror for them, what will you say to them that we cannot say as well? Absolutely nothing. Conditionalism is, then, more strongly armed for the struggle against sin than even the most religious Universalism. I do not speak of the traditional dogma, which we agree in setting aside and which seems altogether out of date.

You reproach us with opening up the prospect of nonentity, but if that prospect really exists is it not our sacred duty to direct our attention and that of our brothers both to the danger and to the only bridge suspended across the abyss? According to you, it would seem as though Conditionalism were of a nature to seduce the sinner by the promise of a final deliverance. Deliverance! the second death scarcely deserves such a name: the dead cannot be delivered. You might as well accuse the penal code of encouraging crime because the execution of the criminal is followed for him by the dismal peace of the cemetery.

As a proof that none are threatened with nonentity you quote Psalm cvii., the second verse of which should have arrested you. This Psalm is the song of the "redeemed of the Lord;" but by the side of

¹ See *ante*, pp. 218 and 308.

these faithful penitents there has been the "adversary," those wicked men whom the Psalmist supposes to be crushed and destroyed. This Psalm is, then, far from proclaiming universal salvation.

The parable of the prodigal son does not prevent us from supposing a rebellious child who will not come to himself. The same shepherd who seeks the lost sheep will at last separate the sheep from the goats. God will not save the sinner in spite of himself. As you very well say, there exists "no means of irresistible coercion or magical transformation, which would be a violation of moral liberty"; consequently the sinner can resist even to the end and never be saved. The wrath of God, of which you speak in your *fifth* letter, is impending over him; it may burst forth at last and consume its victim. It is nowhere said that the prison of the insolvent debtor is for him a guarantee of immortality; he will die there sooner or later, if he will not take advantage of the ransom paid on his behalf.

You suppose the future intervention of some unknown miracle of love, as though the sacrifice of the Son of God were not the climax of the manifestations of supreme love. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews foresees the possibility of treading under foot the blood of the new covenant, and he holds out no hope of salvation to those who so profane it.¹ Jesus and his apostles speak of a sin that is unpardonable, while for you there is in reality no unpardonable sin.

For my humble part, it is in vain that I wish to pass over to Universalism; exegesis stops the way. Psychological analysis also restrains me. Along with Lotze, Kant, Messrs. Renouvier, Pillon, and Charles Secrétan, you yourself admit that the soul may come to an end by way of gradual enfeeblement. Natural analogies also threaten with extinction such individuals and even species as forsake the conditions of their existence. This correlation of the laws of the visible with those of the invisible world has been set forth with scientific freshness in a book by Professor Drummond, of Glasgow, and in a remarkable lecture by M. Babut.²

You entrench yourself in the argument drawn from sentiment; but sentiment, when isolated, is in danger of degenerating into a mystic sentimentality.

Can we be astonished at the doubts with which Universalists are troubled? The pious Bengel did not wish that which he believed to

¹ Heb. x. 29; cf. vi. 4-8.

² *De l'application des lois de la nature au monde spirituel*, Nîmes, Lavagne-Peyrot, 1885. M. Babut says: "Thus it is not for the natural man as produced by his carnal birth that we claim immortality, it is for the new man, the regenerated man, the Christ formed in us, as we just now defined him" (p. 114).

be publicly preached. You admit that Universalism would be poison for neophytes.¹ This character of esoterism is an unfavourable symptom. It is not found in the doctrine of the apostles, who published upon the housetops that which had been told them in the ear. Paul declared the whole counsel of God without hiding anything. He made the Procurator of Judea tremble on his curule chair by speaking to him, not of inevitable salvation, but of the fire which should consume the rebels.

How, indeed, is it possible to keep back or to veil from the multitudes the secret of a doctrine of which the formula is so clear: "Inevitable salvation; none can help being saved"?

The moment has arrived for me to conclude by answering your questions.

1. Universalism is antibiblical. Perhaps that is the reason why Pastor Ducros, who shares your view, has not yet published the clever report that he read last spring at the pastoral conferences in Paris. Moreover, so far as I am aware, neither M. Ducros nor anyone else has dared to controvert, in the name of exegesis, the arguments set forth by M. Byse at the same conferences.²

2. A docile disciple of the letter and the spirit of the Scripture will refuse to be led away by the fallacious hope of universal salvation, a hope so likely to cool his missionary ardour.

3. This same hope will be yet more dangerous for the impenitent sinner. Being sure of attaining at last to the eternal and blessed life, he will take no more trouble to flee from the wrath to come.

4. Universalism is derogatory to the character of God, by making the Creator, so to speak, the sport of his creature. It pictures to us an imaginary God who is not the God of the Bible, nor the God of nature, nor the God of the religious consciousness, but an indulgent God who has resolved never to execute his most solemn threatenings. In Conditionalism, on the contrary, the sinner, even though pardoned, is punished for his faults in a certain and proportionate measure; and as for the impenitent, if he definitively rejects the offered grace, nothing less than his whole person will serve as an adequate satisfaction of the demands of eternal justice. . . .

E. P.

THIRD CORRESPONDENCE WITH M. STEINHEIL.

After the publication of these three letters, M. Steinheil seemed at last to recognize that we have established a right to our opinion. He wrote :

¹ See *ante*, p. 520.

² *Notre durée. Que dit la Bible sur l'immortalité conditionnelle?* Paris, Fischbacher, 1885.

You will be able to respect the very serious motives that determine my choice, as on my side I hold the conviction that it is with all sincerity you have decided in an opposite sense.

These lines were dated 5 January, 1887, and we responded on the 26th of the same month :

. . . . As is always the case, I have been touched and edified by the spirit of piety that animates your pages, but, like M. Babut, I cannot but think that logic is against you.

So, too, notwithstanding the sympathy of many of the French pastors with your views, there is not one of them who is able or who dares to give you categorical support.

You will have observed that M. Babut opposes you with the same arguments that I have submitted to you, yet there has been absolutely no understanding between him and myself. . . .

M. Babut has not replied to your last lines, fearing, perhaps, that you might continue to turn in a vicious circle. . . .

Accept the expression of my respectful attachment.

E. P.

M. Steinheil replied almost immediately :

ROTHAU, 29th Jan., 1887.

DEAR AND HIGHLY-HONOURED BROTHER,

. . . The day before yesterday I received your affectionate letter.

M. Babut has not yet replied, and knowing how fully he is occupied, I am not at all surprised at his silence.

Here followed a copy of a letter from M. Ernest Naville, which we do not feel at liberty to reproduce. But our readers are already acquainted with the views of the Geneva philosopher.¹ M. Steinheil concluded by saying :

You and I have settled with logic, in this sense, that our deductions are correct. Our divergence does not lie in the way in which we each understand human liberty. Our divergence is altogether in the way in which you on one hand and I on the other understand the character of God.

The time will come when we shall see God as he is ; meanwhile let us love and bear with each other as brothers.

G. S.

¹ See pp. 53, 198, 247.

Did not the interests of truth take precedence of other considerations, it would be a real pleasure to us thus to leave the last word to our courteous opponent ; but we do not feel ourselves free to admit that he has "settled with logic."

M. Steinheil having admitted that man is a contingent being of perishable nature, logic seems to us to require the further admission that the sinner must perish, within a certain limit of time, if he remains voluntarily separated from the source of life. Divine charity would never impose eternal existence in impossible conditions upon beings that abuse their liberty by rejecting the normal conditions of existence. As these beings are entirely mortal, the struggle being prolonged in the absence of anything that could give them immortality, it logically follows that an hour must come, known to God only, when these rebels will be no more.

Very forcible as against the traditional dogma, which may be said to rend asunder the divine attributes, M. Steinheil's reasoning does not touch Conditionalism. Sooner or later this ardent lover of truth will bow before an impersonal exegesis, the decisions of which command ever-increasing respect. Jesus Christ and his apostles were Conditionalists. In presence of this fact, which is day by day becoming more incontestable, the most recalcitrant expositor must eventually give in or give up.¹

On the other hand, Professor Charles Secrétan's prefatory letter and M. Ch. Renouvier's declarations prove that the Christian consciousness can come to conditionalist conclusions even while maintaining complete independence in respect of the Scripture records. Thus do exegesis and philosophy meet upon common ground ; and by the free concurrence of these two factors the doctrine that we are defending is found to be confirmed by a sort of counter-proof.

¹ See for example *Le Christianisme du Christ*, by D. H. Meyer, Paris, Fischbacher, 1883, p. 307 ; the thesis of M. P. Poincenot, entitled *Essai sur l'immortalité*, presented at Paris the 20th July, 1884 ; and the avowal of M. Causse in the *Revue théologique*, 1883, p. 624.

SUPPLEMENT No. XVII.

CLASSIFIED LIST AND REFUTATION OF OBJECTIONS RAISED BY
TRADITIONALISTS AND AGNOSTICS.¹

(See page 314.)

THESE objections have for the most part been taken from French publications ; but, in order to make the list more complete, we have also taken account of writings against Conditionalism published in other languages.

Our present purpose is to complete the examination of traditionalist and agnostic objections. This subsidiary study is necessitated by the fact that in Chapter XI. we could only touch upon the objections raised by Professor F. Godet. With regard to Universalism, we have already reviewed the objections that have been put forth by several recognized representatives of that tendency.²

As far as possible, in the presentation of the following objections, we have adopted the form in which they have been stated by our opponents. When the quotations are textual, they are placed between inverted commas.

SECTION I.

TRADITIONALIST OBJECTIONS.³

§ I. OBJECTIONS BASED UPON TRADITIONAL PHILOSOPHY.

Objection I.—Conditionalism is a doctrine opposed to spiritualism.

Reply.—Because an American Conditionalist had opposed *spiritualism* in the sense of necromancy, one of our respected opponents imagined that we were opposed to *spiritualism* in the philosophic sense, as though we did not distinguish God from the world, and spirit from matter.

This accusation was so well refuted by M. Chaponnière that we cannot do better than insert his reply :⁴

GENEVA, 5th Feb., 1883.

MR. EDITOR AND DEAR COLLEAGUE,

Allow me to point out a slight error that has slipped into the last article of your contributor, M. Luigi, on the question of the future

¹ For replies to objections the Table of Contents may also be consulted.

² See Chap. X. and *Supplement* No. XVI.

³ It may be observed that almost all these objections are, in fact, chargeable with a *petitio principii*. If only the *πρῶτον ψεύδος*, the false and dualist *a priori* of a native and indefeasible immortality, be suppressed, they will be seen at once to be baseless.

⁴ This letter appeared in the *Église libre* of 9th February, 1883.

life. The English word *spiritualism* in the case referred to does not at all correspond to the same word in French, but to our noun *spiritism*, so that the work entitled *Spiritualism Unveiled* attributes to the influence of "demons" not at all the doctrine of the immateriality of the soul, but only the practice of seeking to the dead, which you will admit is quite another thing.

Since I am writing, may I be allowed to add that M. Luigi's articles, and some of those which have accompanied or preceded them in your journal, have seemed to me very severe upon those poor Conditionalists, who, after all, are not quite so narrow and so dangerous as they may appear to those who have not had opportunity to devote much time and thought to this special portion of Christian dogmatics? That the thesis of Conditional Immortality has been sometimes defended, in English-speaking countries or under English influences, by Judaizing arguments which have a more or less *sectarian* tinge, or by the help of Darwinian propositions which savour of *materialism*, I would be among the first to acknowledge and to regret. But it should not be forgotten that the same theory has been expounded in another form in Germany by very eminent men, among whom it will suffice to mention the illustrious Rothe, the greatest speculative theologian of the second half of our century; and after him Dr. Gess, now General Superintendent of the province of Posen; Dr. Hermann Schultz, now professor in the University of Göttingen. These names, I admit, are not arguments, but they *represent* arguments; and I do not consider it to be fitting to put aside by a reference to the previous question, as a strange and eccentric heresy, an opinion that has been adopted after prolonged examination by theologians of such weight.

For my own part, as I have no pretension to pass for an authority on theological questions, and was very much surprised to see my name quoted as such lately by Rev. Edward White in the columns of the *Christian World*, I could not take my place among those "decided and inveterate Conditionalists" of whom M. Luigi speaks; on the contrary, I wish still to be classed among the "inquiring minds." Like your contributor, I see "that our ignorance is unbounded, that eternity has more than one secret in reserve for us, and that even revelation opens up to us only the verge of the divine ways." Yet, while awaiting our transportation to that world of light in which "we shall know even as we are known," it is incumbent upon us to live, to think, to teach here below, and therefore to make for ourselves, by painful effort, some kind of dogmatics; being at the same time prompt to perceive and confess that our formulas remain incomplete and purely approximative. Thus,

notwithstanding all the objections of those who hold to the doctrine of eternal torments or that of universal restoration, I continue to believe that, of the three great hypotheses that we can formulate as to the eventual fate of impenitent rebels, the hypothesis of their annihilation is the one that best reconciles the diverse and apparently contradictory data furnished by the New Testament with respect to the subject.

This personal opinion, which I have not at present the leisure to develop further, here or elsewhere, is no doubt of very little importance to the readers of your excellent journal. But at a time when such a thoroughly biblical theologian as Pastor Byse, of Brussels, can be accused of mortal heresy for having publicly professed the conditionalist theory, I consider it to be the duty of all evangelical theologians who incline, even though with reserve, towards analogous solutions, to raise their voices and say so. Otherwise they might justly be accused of taking for their motto this saying of a personage in the comedy: "Now is the time to show ourselves. . . . Let us go and hide!"

Accept, etc.,

FRANCIS CHAPONNIÈRE.

II.—Conditionalism is pure materialism, for it teaches that at death all is over.

This is a pure calumny. We believe in a survival, a resurrection, and a final judgement of all men. We also believe that God is a spirit, and that he has given us a measure of his spirit. On the contrary, materialism is "the system of those who think that everything is matter."¹

III.—The *universal consent* of mankind attests the immortality of the soul.

It attests the probability of a survival, not an absolute and inalienable immortality. See Chap. II., Sect. iv., § 1.

IV.—The *metaphysical* proof.

See Chap. II., Sect. iv., § 2, No. 1.

V.—The *ontological* proof.

See Chap. II., Sect. iv., § 2, No. 2.

VI.—The *teleological* proof.

See Chap. II., Sect. iv., § 2, No. 3.

VII.—The *moral* proof.

See Chap. II., Sect. v.

VIII.—The human soul is immortal because it is formed of an imperishable substance.

See Chap. II., Sect. iv., § 2, No. 1.

¹. Dictionaries of the Academy and Littré.

IX.—The human soul being simple in its nature, cannot be the prey of dissolution.

See Chap. II., Sect. iv., § 2, No. 1 and p. 363.

X.—Moral beings cannot be destroyed.

What is the foundation of this assertion? Let us not be satisfied with mere words. What is a moral being? According to etymology, it is a being governed by *habits* which are controlled by a free will. This control gives to the habits of the being such superiority and excellence that it becomes specially worthy of the epithet *moral*. Thus we often use the word *manners* to signify *good manners*. An army becomes *demoralized* when it loses the habits of discipline that are necessary for its preservation; man cannot exist without some degree of morality. We believe that this exhausts the notion of a *moral being*; it does not imply imperishability.

XI.—Conditionalism has made the mistake of signing an offensive and defensive alliance with Darwinist evolutionism.

This is an unfounded accusation. We accept evolutionism only with important amendments, and as covering only a part of the ground. See pp. 48, 49, 63, 391.

XII.—Death is only a transformation of the mode of existence, a mysterious phase of life.

Not so. Death is the cessation of certain vital functions; death complete, or the second death, will be the cessation of all vital functions. To "mortify lust" is to suppress it, not to cause it to live again in a different form.

When death is predicated of inanimate things, it means their destruction. Aristophanes (*Frogs*, 986) calls a broken platter a *dead* platter; it exists *as such* no longer. In French, too, the fundamental meaning of the verb *to die* is to *cease to exist*; witness the saying, *Quand on est mort, on est bien mort*. Etymology in Hebrew, Greek, and French is favourable to this primitive notion.

Plato said, "Life is born of death." That is one of the subtleties with which Mr. White reproaches Plato. Our opponents make use of it to support their definition of death as a mysterious phase of life. It is a vain support. Always life is born from life, although frequently in the midst of death. In our days the materialists have asserted the contrary; M. Pasteur's experiments have silenced them. Plato believed in a sort of metempsychosis; yet even in that system life is born from life by way of generation that is not spontaneous. See in the index the word *death*.

§ 2. OBJECTIONS BASED UPON TRADITIONAL BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

XIII.—Conditionalism is founded upon the Old Testament only ; it is therefore not an evangelical doctrine.

See Chap. IV. and *Supplements* Nos. VI. and IX.

XIV.—The Conditionalists make the mistake of attributing equal authority to all the books of the Bible.

Without placing the Old Testament upon the same level as the New, and while admitting a *progressive revelation*, we call attention to the remarkable fact of the unity of biblical teaching in relation to immortality.

XV.—The native and inalienable immortality of the human soul is implicitly taught in the Scriptures.

See Chap. XI., sect. i.

XVI.—If the Scriptures had spoken of immortal souls, the Conditionalists would very likely have questioned the genuineness of the passages in which the phrase might be found.

This uncourteous objection betrays annoyance at not finding in the Bible the expression in question. It is as though a debtor were to say to his creditor : "I do not let you have any money because I know that you would make a bad use of it." Besides, the sacred writers might easily have obviated the suggested danger by frequent mention of *immortal souls*. See Chap. XI., sect. i.

XVII.—"The New Testament never uses the word *soul* (ψυχή) in speaking of animals."

A mistake. See Rev. viii. 9 ; xvi. 3.

XVIII.—The Bible never says that immortality, in the ontological sense of unending duration, is the portion of the believer only.

See page 135.

XIX.—The words *life* and *death* in the Scripture have not the same meaning as in classical Greek writings.

The New Testament has not falsified the natural meaning of those words. It has not deprived them of their fundamental notion ; it has only enriched that notion.

In the New Testament, love, ἀγάπη, bears an enhanced meaning, and the idea of abasement in ταπεινός can become transformed into humility. These are not contradictory senses, while in the case in question there would be a contradiction in speaking of *death* as a *life*.

XX.—The notions of *life* and *existence* are clearly separated in many passages of holy Scripture.

We ask for the quotation of a single passage in which *life* does not involve the ontological notion of existence.

XXI.—When the portion reserved for the elect is in question, the word “life” designates not only existence, but also, and especially, holiness and happiness. The wicked will be deprived of this superior life, but not of conscious existence.

The statement that the word *life* designates not *only* existence is an admission that it designates that *also*. If, therefore, at the last judgment irreconcilable sinners are to be definitively deprived of life, they will at the same time be deprived of existence.

XXII.—The ancients and the Greeks themselves had not a clear conception of annihilation ; consequently the Bible could not teach the final extermination of the wicked.

Plato and the ancient philosophers had a very clear notion of a cessation of the existence of the soul. See p. 317, note 2.

XXIII.—To say that the soul is dissolved like the body is to suppose it to be material.

We do not say, nor does the Bible, that the soul is *dissolved*. The Bible teaches that certain souls will perish. In what way? Revelation does not tell us, any more than it tells how souls are born and are formed.

XXIV.—In the Bible the word *perish* never signifies to cease to exist, nor does *destroy* mean to cause the cessation of existence.

In reply to this assertion it will suffice to quote 1 Cor. xv. 26, “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” Mr. Darby’s translation, like the English R.V., has “abolished”; that is to say, Death shall be no more (Rev. xxi. 4). “The earthly house of our tabernacle is to be destroyed” (dissolved), it will cease to exist (2 Cor. v. 1). So, too, when “the grace of the fashion” of the flower “perisheth,” it ceases to exist (James i. 11); the food that *perisheth* ceases to be food (John vi. 27); when a reward is *lost* (Matt. x. 42) it is suppressed and has *no existence whatever*.

XXV.—According to the Bible, the soul can *perish*—that is to say, endure endless misery—but it never *dies*.

It is, however, said that there is “a sin unto death,” that “the soul that sinneth it shall die.” Jesus calls Satan a “man-killer”; does he mean nothing more than the death of the body? See *Objections* xxvi. xvii. and the declaration of Delitzsch, p. 317.

XXVI.—In Scripture the death of the soul is an expression that indicates its state of sin.

More correctly, the state of sin leads to death. "Sin reigned in death," that is, by producing death. The apostle says again: "Ye were dead through your trespasses and sins." "Sin, when full grown, bringeth forth death." See Chap. VII., sect. vi.

XXVII.—For a soul, to *perish* is not to be destroyed; it is to *live* in moral separation from God.

See p. 363.

XXVIII.—Sometimes in the Bible the word *perish* has only a relative sense. It may indicate a desolation and a ruin which leave still subsisting the object or person of which it is predicated. This is the sense to be adopted when the perdition of a soul is in question.

In the Bible to *perish* properly signifies to be *suppressed, annihilated*. (See *Supplement* No. VI. and the English-Greek dictionaries at the words *destroy* and *perish*.) The absolute sense ought to prevail everywhere if not limited either explicitly or implicitly. Now it is not limited in respect of the human soul, the Bible never speaking of an unconditional immortality.

XXIX.—Perdition in the Bible designates a ruin of the faculties. The individual lives still, but he no longer possesses anything that can render life desirable.

A ruin is worth preserving when it has an historic interest or even a picturesque character. The ruins thus described have neither use nor beauty. Lamentable wrecks, hideous relics, they have no claim to the perpetuity ascribed to them.

XXX.—Spiritual death.

See Chap. VII., sect. vi., § 1, and Chap. XI., sect. iv., § 2.

XXXI.—"In the texts Rom. v. 12; Philip. iii. 19; James i. 15; v. 20, etc., put forward by the Conditionalists, it is not the annihilation of the wicked that is spoken of, but *physical death*, wages of sin, or *spiritual death* resulting from voluntary severance from God."

If the perdition of the profligates spoken of by the apostle means *physical death*, that is the common lot of all men here below; and there would be no difference in respect of their final destiny between the righteous and the unrighteous, between the believers and the unbelievers, which is inadmissible. If, on the other hand, this destruction designates a *spiritual death*, or, in other words, a state of sin, the offence and its chastisement would become identical. That also is inadmissible.

What would be thought of a judge telling a thief that to go on stealing more and more should be his *only* punishment?

XXXII.—Physical death does not destroy the body, which may be preserved by being embalmed; *à fortiori* the death of the soul will not destroy the soul.

Physical death breaks all the bonds of the organism, decomposes the blood, and, in spite of embalment, prepares the final dissolution of the body; but it is enough to say that physical death puts an end to the vital functions. It may, then, be foreseen by analogy that the death of the soul will, sooner or later, put an end to all the functions of the soul.

XXXIII.—Jesus repeatedly threatens sinners with a terrible chastisement.

That terrible chastisement consists in total destruction preceded by a long and painful death agony.

A venerable octogenarian, who has spent his life in the study of the Scripture, when this view of the case was put before him declared that it was more than any other of a nature to inspire a salutary terror. He added that, say what you will, the traditional opinion will always leave some vague hope of a reduction of the penalty in the end.¹

However guilty he may be, the sinner will always cherish the intimate assurance that the sovereign Judge cannot punish the faults of a short life by endless sufferings; but, as according to the traditional teaching eternal sufferings form the only punishment, the sinner concludes that in the end divine justice will be constrained to pronounce a pure and simple acquittal. When the preachers of the Gospel, putting aside frightful and incredible superstitions, will vigorously set forth the true biblical teaching, that day will see the awakening of a multitude of souls; then the enlightened conscience will no longer sanction the sinner's subterfuges. See Chap. XI., Sect. ii.

XXXIV.—The Lord's parables all teach endless suffering.

We ask for an instance. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus says nothing as to the duration of the fire of *Hades*.

XXXV.—Jesus when speaking of the soul uses the vague term *destroy* instead of *kill* which he employs in speaking of the body.

This is a mistaken distinction, for, according to Dr. Cremer, whose authority will hardly be questioned, *destroy* is a strong synonym of

¹ This lightening of the penalty has formed part of theological instruction, at Neuchâtel for example. According to the manuscript course of lectures long used there, "some of the reprobate will in the end have a tolerable condition" (Mat. xi. 22; Luke xii. 48),

kill, intensifying the notion expressed by that verb. See Chap. XI., Sect. ii., § 1.

XXXVI.—If the apostle Paul does not speak of eternal sufferings it is because the first disciples did not need that teaching.

Those who raise this objection forget certain members of the Church at Philippi "whose God was their belly." Did not they belong precisely to the class of sensualists for whom, according to one of our opponents, the fear of eternal torments is "the last handle by which they can be laid hold of"? Yet the apostle does not lay hold of that handle; he confines himself to asserting with tears that the end of these libertines will be destruction. That was the conditionalist method. The Church had not at that time discovered other modes of procedure.

XXXVII.—The prophecies that speak of eternal sufferings have a limited scope in the Old Testament; but when quoted in the New Testament they predict suffering absolutely without end.

This assertion rests only upon the preconceived idea of the soul's imperishability.

XXXVIII.—"Is there not something humiliating in the thought that our soul is perishable?"

Humiliation is good when it puts us in our proper place. God said to Adam: "Dust thou art." Jesus declares: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" he compares the disciple who falls away to salt without savour, that is "trodden under foot of men;" all this is humiliating. On the other hand, is there not a powerful stimulus in the thought that a being by nature perishable may become imperishable?

§ 3. OBJECTIONS BASED UPON ISOLATED PASSAGES.

1st, Texts of the Old Testament.

XXXIX.—Gen. i. 26, 27; ii. 7. Man created in the image and by the breath of God must be immortal like God.

The image is not the reality. See the word *Man* in the index and p. 577, note 5.

Although created in the image of God, man is not omnipresent, he possesses neither omniscience nor omnipotence; it is, therefore, not necessary to admit that he must always exist. Man has been overrated. God's image in Adam consists especially in the fact that he is the king of animals. (Cf. Gen. i., 26; Ps. viii. 5-8.) There is no immortalization without a new birth.

XL.—Gen. ii. 17. Man survived his disobedience ; therefore *death* does not designate the cessation of life.

See Chap. VII., sect. vi., § 2, particularly p. 213 *sq.* Everywhere and always *death* is the cessation of a life ; the supreme death will be the cessation of every vital function.

XLI.—Gen. v. 24. "Enoch . . . was not, for God took him." The same expression : "He was not" is used in speaking of the wicked. (Psa. xxxvii. 36.) That must prove that the wicked is not really destroyed.

That proves that he will be destroyed ; for our opponent cannot surely accept the idea that the Bible assigns an identical fate to the righteous and to the unrighteous. In order to establish a distinction, it must, then, be supposed that the wicked will *finally* be *totally* destroyed ; while the disappearance of the righteous Enoch requires the admission that an *eternal life* was reserved for him.

XLII.—Isaiah xxxiii. 14 : "Who among us shall dwell with eternal burnings ?"

See pages 192 *sq.*, 324, 327 note 1.

XLIII.—Isaiah lxvi. 24.

See Chap. XI., sect. ii., § 2.

XLIV.—Dan. xii., 2 *sq.* Contempt cannot reach those who no longer exist.

See pages 323 note 2, and 353 note 4.

"With Schürer (*Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, p. 457, note 65) we believe that in Daniel it can only be a question of *life eternal*, for the prophet means to speak of life in the Messianic kingdom, and he knows no other than that."¹

2nd, Texts of the New Testament.

XLV.—Matt. iii. 12. "Unquenchable fire." Cf. Matt. xviii. 8 : "eternal fire."

See Chap. XI., sect. ii., § 2 ; and in the index at the words *fire* and *eternal*.

XLVI.—Matt. viii. 29, cf. Mark i. 24 ; Luke iv. 34, viii. 31. The demons ask Jesus not to *destroy* them (*ἀπολίσσαι*), and also not to *send them into the abyss* ; therefore, so far as they are concerned, there is no question of annihilation.

If the demons ask that they may not be *destroyed*, it is precisely because they fear to be destroyed ; and the *abyss* that they dread must

¹ G. Chastand. *Le quatrième Evangile et le judaïsme*.—*Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, 1887, p. 598, note.

be the sojourn in which they will finally be *destroyed*. The *torment* that is also spoken of precedes the destruction.

XLVII.—Matt. x. 28 : “Him which is able to destroy both soul and body.” To *destroy* a soul is not to *kill* it, and even the body that is killed is not annihilated.

See Chap. XI., sect. ii., § 1 ; also pages 27, 127, 129, 133, 202, 319, 363, and *Supplements* Nos. VI. and IX. ; also *Objections* xxiv.-xxvi., xxxii., and xxxv.

Death truly does not annihilate the atoms of which the body is composed. “Nothing is annihilated,” *nothing* except the *combination of the atoms*, which in reality is *everything*. So it is with a bank-note that is burnt : the ashes and the smoke are all and are nothing ; that which is truly all is the due arrangement of the molecules of the note before the combustion.

XLVIII.—Matt. xii. 32 : The sin that “shall not be forgiven, neither in this age nor in the age to come,” does it not imply eternal suffering ?

The definitive chastisement of the unpardonable sin is the gradual extermination of the sinner, which is consummated beyond the tomb.

XLIX.—Matt. xiii. 42, 50 : “The furnace of fire, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The “weeping and gnashing of teeth” precede the cremation. See p. 330.

L.—Matt. xviii. 34. Cf., Matt. v. 26. The prison from which there is no release is the symbol of eternal suffering.

See p. 138, note 1.

LI.—Matt. viii. 12 ; xxii. 13, etc. Darkness does not prevent perception ; there is often much suffering in darkness.

The “outer darkness” is a symbol of the privation of sensation ; as also, in the expression “bound hand and foot,” the cords and chains are symbols of interrupted activity. These emblems, all brought together, indicate the suppression of the man’s very existence. Sight is in all languages a symbol of sensation and perception generally. Hence the metaphorical expressions : the *eyes of the understanding*, the *look of faith*, etc. A blind man will speak of his pleasure at seeing his friends. In Greek, to *see* is also to *know* (εἶδω, οἶδα). In biblical style, “to see good days” is more than merely to see them ; it is to enjoy them.¹ See *Objection* xlix.

¹ See Glassius, *Philologia sacra*, lib. v., cap. 12.

LII.—Matt. xxv. 46 : “These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” Equal duration of chastisement and recompense.

In order to explain this verse, let us pass from the known to the unknown. The known term is *life*; that calls, by way of contrast, for a notion of *death* in the former member of the phrase. The punishment must therefore consist especially in a privation of life. That privation will be eternal, like the life of the righteous, and that chastisement will be equal in duration to the felicity of the blessed. The apostle Paul calls it an “eternal destruction.” If the privation of life is a penalty, which is incontestable, the eternal privation of life will necessarily be an “eternal punishment” or penalty. It is the *pœna damni*, which may endure even after the culprit has ceased to suffer. The Greek word *κόλασις* used by Jesus does not necessarily always imply the idea of suffering. Thus in the Wisdom of Solomon (xiv. 10) it is said of a wooden idol that it *shall be punished* (*κολασθήσεται*); the notion of sensibility is absent. So, too, that notion may be absent when the word is used of a being that has ceased to live. See pp. 194-197; 324, note 1; 354, note 1; and *Objection* cxiii.

LIII.—Mark iii. 29 : “Is guilty of an eternal sin” (R.V.). That is, a hardening which is ever perpetuated.

The word *ἀμάρτημα*, the reading accepted by the masters of criticism, designates an *act*, not a *state*, of sin. See Cremer's *Lexicon*. It is, then, the effects of the act that are eternal; the reference is to the unpardonable sin. See also the preceding *Objection*.

LIV.—Mark ix. 48 : “Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

See Chap. XI., sect. ii., § 2.

LV.—Luke xv. 24, 32 : “He was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” This death does not kill, and this loss is only a wandering.

See Chap. VII., sect. vi., § 3 : *Putative death*.

LVI.—Luke xvi. 19-31. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

This parable says nothing about the *duration* of Hades; but Revelation xx. 14 tells us that it is to be suppressed.

LVII.—John iii. 36 : “He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

“That is,” says Calvin, “death hangs thus over the head of all unbelievers, so that they will never be able to escape.” The chastisement that threatens them is a sword of Damocles, the thread of which may

break at any moment. This impending wrath may also be compared to the thunder that accompanies the lightning-flash. The text does not say that the wrath abides eternally; it is written, on the contrary, that God "keepeth not his anger for ever."

LVIII.—John v. 24. If here below it is possible to pass out of death into life, that proves that death is not always a cessation of vital functions.

See page 213.

LIX.—John xvii. 3. Life consists in *knowing*, not in *existing*.

There is here metonymy; knowledge is indicated as the means of obtaining a blessed eternity. See p. 120, note.

So little does *knowledge* suffice to give life, that Jesus elsewhere says that the flesh and blood of the Son of man are indispensable for that purpose (John vi. 53).

LX.—Rom. ii. 8, sq.: "In Paul's view, the chastisement of the rebels will consist, not in annihilation, but in privation of the glory of God, that is, of eternal happiness."

Ignominy and suffering accompany the second death, as we understand it, and do not exclude it. Death is a king who has outrunners and followers, but these terrible satellites do not take his place. A guilty officer who is shot is previously degraded; the degradation does not exclude the death. The accessory ought not to cause the principal to be forgotten. Jesus suffered for us "tribulation and anguish"; but besides that he passed through physical death, which presents to the mind an additional idea. So, too, eternal death evokes the dismal vision of the scaffold; but the attributes which fit in so well with it do not prevent it from being essentially an absolute suppression of every vital function.

LXI.—Rom. viii. 6: "The mind of the flesh is death." Then death does not kill; it is a state of soul.

Stapfer translates, "leads to death." The meaning indicated by that paraphrase seems to us obligatory. Ostervald has, "causes death." There is evidently a prolepsis. See pp. 206, 210, note 2.

LXII.—Eph. ii. 1.

See Chap. VII., sect. vi., §§ 1, 2; and Chap. XI., sect. iv. § 2.

LXIII.—2 Thess. i. 9.

See Chap. XI., sect. iv., § 3; and *Supplement* No. XIX.

LXIV.—Heb. xii. 29: "Our God is a consuming fire." We should fear to diminish the force of such a declaration.

This passage is in favour of our thesis. That which God consumes he does not allow to subsist; the miracle of the "burning bush" consisted precisely in this fact, that it burned *without being consumed*; while of the wicked it is written, "Thy wrath it consumeth them as stubble."

LXV.—Jude 7. Sodom and Gomorrah "set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire."

Sodom and Gomorrah no longer exist, but the sacred history gives them as an example; and the fire is called *eternal* on account of the perpetuity of its effects. On this use of the word *eternal*, see the important admission of M. Arnaud quoted on page 194, note 13.

LXVI.—Rev. xiv. 11.

See Chap. XI., sect. viii.

LXVII.—Rev. xx. 10.

See *Supplement* No. XX.

We believe that we have now enumerated almost all the texts brought forward against us by the advocates of the traditional dogma. They are only just over thirty, counting even the least specious. On the other hand, we shall not attempt to count the passages that tell in favour of Conditionalism; they are too numerous. See among others *Supplements* Nos. VI. and IX. This question of numbers is not without its importance; for, in fact, the frequent repetition of a notion in a book usually attests the value set upon that notion by the author.

§ 4. OBJECTIONS BASED UPON TRADITIONAL DOGMATICS.

LXVIII.—Conditionalism is one of the fruits of rationalism.

See Chap. XII., sect. iii, § 3, p. 380.

Against this imputation we protested in a letter which appeared in the *Disciple de la Parole* of 1st April, 1888, as follows:

CHÈNE-BOUGERIES, 8th March, 1888.

MR. EDITOR,

In the number of the *Disciple de la Parole* for the current month I am taken to task in respect of a course of lectures recently delivered at the Academy of Neuchâtel. It is there stated that I expressed myself thus: "Our *reason* refuses to believe that an all-powerful and all-good God can have created men free with the certainty that they would

disobey, and that the result of their rebellion would be an existence eternally miserable," etc.

The word *reason*, italicized in the article, is precisely the word that I am not conscious of having pronounced. I have not found it in the manuscript text of my twelve lectures, and if I should find it there I should replace it by an expression more nearly in conformity with my real thought. I should say that our conscience, enlightened by the teaching of the holy Scriptures, agrees with those Scriptures in rejecting the traditional dogma of the Churches. I believe myself to be also a humble *disciple of the Word*.

Moreover, the writer of the article in question seems to have had an impression that the words attributed to me were not textual, since he took the precaution of introducing them with the verb in the conditional form.

I will not take advantage of this occasion in order to refute in your journal the argumentation of the article in question. If, however, you desire it, I shall consider it a duty to give account of my "hope" (1 Peter iii. 15).¹

Meanwhile it will suffice if, out of respect for the truth of a personal fact, you will be so good as to insert the present rectification.

Accept, etc.,

E. PETAVEL.

Professeur agrégé de l'Académie de Neuchâtel.

LXIX.—"Conditionalism modifies the whole of theology."

That is true; but it need not be greatly regretted, since, as Professor Charles Secrétan has said, the traditional theology "pictures to us a hateful God." By going back to the apostolic age Conditionalism renews theology without letting go any of its vital elements.

LXX.—The Conditionalists attach too much importance to a particular doctrine.

To begin with, that is not the question. The important thing is to know whether the doctrine be true or false. No doubt the Bible does not mention Conditional Immortality; on the other hand, it speaks a great deal about *life eternal*. The Platonic philosophy having falsified the biblical vocabulary, the Conditionalists have found themselves obliged provisionally to have recourse to synonymous terms in order the better to render the meaning of the Bible: *immortality, preserva-*

¹ As might be expected, no notice was taken of this offer. There are some sects which do not discuss, even outside the Church of Rome, which at least has the frankness to declare herself infallible. How many Protestants there are who think they know everything, who learn nothing and forget nothing!

tion, destruction, instead of *life, salvation, death*. In presence of this explanation, will the importance of the doctrine that we are defending be denied? Shall we not be able to maintain that the attainment of a blessed immortality is the very aim of the Christian life? The final suppression of irreconcilable sinners is only a corollary of this doctrine, the most vital of all.

LXXI.—These views will not lead anyone back to the faith.

The assertion is contradicted by the facts. It is incontestable that the traditional doctrine is a stumbling-block to many persons.

LXXII.—The progress made by this doctrine does not prove its truth.

Admitted. Yet that progress may well urge us to examine the evidence invoked in its favour.

LXXIII.—“Conditionalism might be defined as man setting himself up as judge of divine justice; as though God could be unjust when he punishes.”

It is permissible to inquire whether God will punish in the way that has been supposed, and whether the mistaken Church has not misrepresented the primitive teaching as to future punishment. “The Judge of all the earth” will “do right,” but that judge will not be a barbarous God reminding us of the Etruscan divinities.

“Who were the originators of that doctrine of eternal sufferings which we do not share? Men like ourselves, sinners and fallible like us, and worse than that, theologians like us. Under the influence of Platonic ideas, they thought that they could find it in the Gospel; they proclaimed it as being a Christian doctrine. Their assertion found acceptance in the Church and has become the *traditional* doctrine. In our age other men, both enlightened and pious, have been convinced by an attentive study of holy Scripture that the traditional doctrine is neither biblical nor evangelical. These men, being respectful lovers of evangelical truth, holding firmly their conviction, proclaim it frankly, persuaded that they thereby serve the cause of the Gospel. Why refuse to them the right to do so, which for them is a duty? . . . It is not for the truth to bow down before us, but for us to bow down before the truth, even when it runs counter to our received opinions.”¹

LXXIV.—Man would never have invented the eternity of sufferings; such a doctrine must have come by way of revelation.

Even so, it is important to know whence the revelation has come. Adam and Eve would not have discovered that they were imperishable

¹ Professor L. Emery, *Semeur vaudois*, 1891, p. 56.

if one more subtle than they had not said to them, "Ye shall not surely die." In fact, long before the Christians or the Jews, the Greeks had *invented* the endless sufferings of Tartarus; the doctrine of the eternity of sufferings does not then come from the biblical Revelation.

LXXXV.—God has created beings "in order that they might be." We cannot understand a God who creates beings that he may afterwards destroy them.

The same reasoning would apply to Adam's body, which also was created to endure. God specially wills that his human creature should be free; he will not destroy his liberty in order to maintain his existence.

The purpose for which the universe exists would seem to be, not merely its existence, but rather the glorious manifestation of divine love, offering immortality and, in an ever-increasing measure, all the communicable attributes of the Creator to those created spirits who ask for the gift. If some spirits, abusing their native freedom, reject the generous offer made to them, the glory of the divine love will not thereby be dimmed. On the contrary, it will be increased by the fact that in redemption God goes beyond all that it was possible to imagine in order to touch and to bring back to himself his rebellious children.

LXXXVI.—The destruction of the wicked would make it appear that in creating them God had made a mistake.

All the visible objects in creation perish in succession. The divine wisdom has created them for the time of their duration; why should it not be so with the wicked? The invisibility of the soul is no guarantee of its imperishability. That which would appear to be irreconcilable with the wisdom of the Creator would be the eternal duration of evil and of evil doers.

LXXXVII.—To have been in contact with God is a guarantee of immortality.

This assertion should be supported by proof. What being is there in the world who has not some relation with God?

LXXXVIII.—An offence committed against an infinite God deserves an infinite punishment.

In order to endure an infinite punishment, a finite being would need to be imperishable; but man is not naturally immortal, and it cannot be supposed that a fault committed by a man should confer immortality upon him. Nevertheless the punishment of the incorrigible sinner becomes infinite in this sense, that it for ever deprives him of immortality.

LXXIX.—Man has no power to kill his soul ; he only who created the soul has power to destroy it.

Our opponents assert that God has communicated to man his own immortality. Why should they not equally admit that God could communicate to his creature power to destroy himself?

LXXX.—“Just as it is not in man’s power to annihilate himself in the present economy (that is evident for everyone who believes in the survival of the soul), so it is no more in his power to annihilate himself in a future economy.”

In the same way as it is in man’s power to hasten the destruction of his body, so too is it in his power to hasten the destruction of his soul.

LXXXI.—“God might truly destroy the wicked in order to put an end to their torments, but then the words liberty, responsibility, and judgement would lose their meaning.”

On the contrary, *liberty* implies that he who wishes to abandon life should be able to do so. Our view, more than any other, places the emphasis upon *responsibility*, since existence itself is involved, and as for the notion of *judgement*, human systems of legislation are unanimous in treating capital punishment as the gravest of all.

LXXXII.—Conditionalism introduces into hell an element of pity which ought to be banished therefrom, seeing that God himself is absent from hell.

We have always believed that God is everywhere present. The objectors would surely admit that he is in hell by his omniscience ; but God is not to be divided. He would not be God if he were not simultaneously everywhere with all his perfections. See pp. 225, 362, 376 *sq.*

LXXXIII.—“If the thought of human suffering is incompatible with the idea of a good God, it is as much so for one day as for eternity.”

This objection ignores the fact that the *day* may be followed by eternal compensations, while in the case of interminable suffering there cannot be any subsequent compensation. See p. 224.

LXXXIV.—Conditionalism presents to us a cruel God, a father who kills his rebellious children.

Here the representatives of the traditional dogma seek to pull out the mote from another’s eye without noticing the beam in their own. Every one will admit that death, the cessation of life, is infinitely preferable to eternal tortures ; but we must add that by this representation of God as a father who kills his rebellious children the objector misrepresents Conditionalism, or rather the Gospel. So far from killing his children,

God does not cease to offer to them an imperishable life. He cannot without blasphemy be compared to the executioner giving the finishing stroke to his victim. The sinner destroys himself (Luke ix. 25). See pp. 221, 223 *sq.*, 292 *sq.*

LXXXV.—If God destroys man, he takes away from him the possibility of repentance.

If man “destroys himself,” he alone is responsible. See the preceding *Objection*. This one also turns against the traditional dogma.

LXXXVI.—By affirming the irreparability of evil, Conditionalism is in contradiction with the doctrine of grace.

In various passages the Bible tells us of an “unpardonable sin,” which is therefore irreparable. Will that also be said to be in contradiction with the doctrine of grace; and is it consistent for the traditional dogma to condemn the notion of the irreparability of evil?

LXXXVII.—Conditionalism diminishes the value of the fruits of redemption.

For an innumerable multitude of human beings the fruits of redemption are: the preservation of a forfeited existence, the magnificent gift of immortality, and eternal blessedness. Is it possible to imagine any more precious?

LXXXVIII.—The doctrine of eternal torments is not a cause of unbelief, but only a pretext put forward by unbelievers. The real offence is none other than the offence of the cross.

The offence of the cross is an offence taken, to which is added the offence given by the erroneous teaching of the corrupt Church, and woe to him through whom the offence cometh! See pp. 262 *sq.*, 361, 365.

LXXXIX.—“The bodies of the wicked will become incorruptible by the resurrection.”

Wherever can this enormity have been found by the *Disciple of the Word*? In the New Testament incorruptibility is called ἀφθαρσία; it is the exclusive prerogative of the righteous (Rom. ii. 7); the flesh, on the contrary, will inherit corruption, φθορά. Gal. vi. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 50; 2 Peter ii. 12, 19. See p. 345.

XC.—As man’s sin may be perpetuated eternally, so his suffering, the chastisement of sin, must also be equally perpetuated.

This argument supposes an inalienable immortality, which is the very question in dispute. We believe that the obstinate sinner will finally succumb under the deleterious consequences of his sin.

XCI.—A proper understanding of the traditional dogma puts aside the idea that the suffering will be incessant and beyond all imagination.

What, then, becomes of the lake of fire and brimstone into which we are told that all impenitent sinners will be cast? You say it is hyperbole. But when, in the same context, a chastisement is spoken of which continues “to ages of ages,” you declare that there is no hyperbole on that point. The intensity of the suffering would be diminished; its duration would not. Why this inconsistency? Would you have two weights and measures? See *Supplement* No. XX.

XCII.—The perdition of Satan and of the reprobate will consist in a reduction to powerlessness to do harm.

One of two things: either this powerlessness will be partial, or it will be total. If only partial, there will still be power; if absolute, it will be equivalent to nonentity. See in the Index the word *paralysis*.

XCIII.—The wicked will retain all their intelligence, and all their will to do evil; but they will no longer be able to use their faculties to the detriment of the kingdom of God.

Here, again, one of two things: the wicked spoken of curse God or do not curse him. If they do not curse him, they are destroyed or converted; if they still curse him, God is not all in all, and the universe is not truly pacified.

XCIV.—The first death does not annihilate anything; it is only the momentary rupture of the bond that unites the soul to the body, and that bond will be restored at the resurrection. The second death will then not be an annihilation.

Admitting the first death to be only that just described, the second death will be the *rupture of a bond* uniting the constituent parts of the human being; and since no resurrection is to follow the second death, the human being will remain eternally decomposed. To decompose a living being is surely to suppress and to annihilate him *as a living being*.

XCV.—Suffering that has no result but nonentity is not to be understood.

In order to find suffering that infallibly leads to a gratifying result, Universalism must be adopted, and that is rejected by the authors of this objection. In our view, conscious suffering has a salutary purpose so long as it endures; it ceases when it can no longer be useful. It is a grace that God withdraws when not used to profit; he alone can decide the moment in which it becomes definitively sterile.

XCVI.—If annihilation is the final destiny of the wicked, why should they not be annihilated at the moment of their death? There is no reason for their resurrection.

See pp. 224, 363, and *Objection* cxvi.

XCVII.—If man is not immortal, and if there is no life but in Christ, how is it that unbelievers live here below, and are destined to survive beyond the tomb?

The life of the unbeliever is provisional and probationary. Paul and John tell us that all things have been created by the Word and subsist by him: all life, even physical, flows from God through the Word; but man's existence is conditional. Moral beings who refuse to rise by a new birth to a reciprocal, voluntary, and spiritual communion with this Word by whom they are sustained, are condemned to perish. The survival of unbelievers beyond the tomb can only be temporary, except through conversion, which will become ever more difficult.

§ 5. OBJECTIONS BASED UPON TRADITIONAL MORALS.

XCVIII.—The question in debate is purely speculative, and is devoid of practical interest.

The notion of God, that of man, that of salvation, that of future retribution, all depend upon the question in debate. It might as well be said that the whole of religion has no practical importance. See Chap. XII.

XCIX.—There is no relation between the notion of moral goodness and that of existence; nor, therefore, between the notion of moral evil and the suppression of existence.

See Chap. XI., sect. v.

C.—There are sins which do not kill.

See Chap. XI., sect. v.

CI.—It is not seen that the destruction of the proud or the ambitious begins here below.

See the same.

CII.—“The vigour of a people does not depend at all upon moral integrity.”

This is, indeed, an example of the paradoxes to which the adversaries of Conditionalism are driven. We will not occupy our time by refuting this proposition, the error and danger of which are evident.¹

¹ See the recent discourse entitled, *La source de la vraie grandeur d'une nation*, on this text, “Righteousness exalteth a nation” (Prov. xiv. 34), by N. Recolin, *Revue chrétienne*, 1st November, 1891.

CIII.—The long duration of Satan's power proves that sin does not interfere with the sinner's existence, nor even with any of his intellectual faculties.

See p. 357 *sq.*, and pp. 509-511.

CIV.—Pride and the thirst for riches and glory have produced men of genius.

Say, rather, that they have brought into bondage and led astray men of genius who would have found a no less powerful stimulus in the establishment of the kingdom of God. Besides, how many men of genius, in the *folly* of pride and the *intoxication* of ambition, have perished victims of their passions ! It should not be forgotten that our thesis is : All sin kills.

CV.—Personal ambition can attain astonishing success.

We would ask whether success is an assurance of immortality. "The triumphing of the wicked is short," as it is said in the book of Job. Victor Hugo has been mentioned, who in his old age produced works which would never have seen the light if the poet had not been ambitious of an apotheosis. We believe that the same ardour and genius might have been devoted to the service of a less personal ambition, and in that case a certain bombast would not have disfigured magnificent productions. Victor Hugo's egotism, far from increasing, has diminished his glory.

CVI.—Eternal torments are more terrible than final annihilation ; they will inspire a more salutary terror.

A threat terrifies in the measure of the certainty of its execution. Very few sinners really believe that God will inflict upon them endless torments.

CVII.—"Eternal torments have for a corollary the absolute necessity of conversion."

What may this mean ? That this doctrine compels the conversion of everyone ? Yet the unconverted are numerous even in the few churches where eternal torments are still preached. No doctrine is an all-powerful specific ; but Conditionalism has the advantage of presenting a threat which has the conscience of the culprit on its side. Although more terrible, the so-called orthodox sanction is less terrifying because of the doubt in the mind of the culprit ; that threat, passing beyond the mark, misses it.

CVIII.—The suppression of the creature is at the same time the suppression of liberty.

On the contrary, the climax of liberty for a creature consists in the

power to decide whether or not he will continue to exist. An enforced immortality can only restrict liberty. Is not the suicide of the body a symbol of the suicide of the soul? The man who commits suicide inflicts his own punishment; the odium of his chastisement falls entirely upon himself; but in one sense it is still God who chastises, since it is he who has pre-established the correlation between sin and death.

CIX.—Annihilation affects the conscience only to destroy it.

Let us rather say that, the conscience being previously seared and destroyed, there is no more reason for the human being to subsist. See pp. 509-511.

CX.—Annihilation is a deliverance in the prospect of which there is nothing fearful for the wicked. An impenitent sinner will be tempted to give himself over the more fully to evil if he has the hope of ending in nonentity.

Similar objection has been made against the doctrine of justification by faith, which has been accused of immorality. We believe it to be a duty to present to the sinner chiefly grace, heaven, the good things of which he for ever deprives himself, and the possible return to the heavenly Father, whose arms are open to receive him. The preacher's principal aim will be to set forth the certainty and the value of the offered gifts. But if it be needful at the same time to terrify, is not a prolonged agony preceding the final destruction of his being a terrible prospect, and is there no terror in that extermination with which the soul is threatened? Without noticing it, traditional opinion still drags itself along in the ruts of barbarous legislation, it demands endless sufferings; according to it, annihilation does not constitute a chastisement. It might as well be said that capital punishment is no punishment. Nevertheless, law and common-sense consider that to be the most terrible chastisement that ought to be inflicted. It shortens the bodily life by some years, or perhaps only some days; and yet it seems so fearful that many philanthropists declare it to be excessive. How will it be, then, with the extermination which puts an end to the existence of incorrigible souls? The doctrine of the destruction of the impenitent loses none of the legitimate motives of action employed by the traditional doctrine, but it gets rid of one source of weakness and gains an additional strength. Its God is severe without being inhuman, and it appeals to the instinct of self-preservation, one of the most imperious and tenacious in human nature. See Chap. VII., sect. vii.

CXI.—Conditionalism is a doctrine dangerous for morality, while the doctrine of eternal sufferings is well calculated to keep the wicked in check by the fear that it inspires.

"To begin with, let us observe that the preaching of eternal sufferings has hitherto converted very few ; those whom it leads to the Gospel are rare indeed. Secondly, it should be noted that for the fear of eternal torments to prevent the performance of a bad action, they must be believed in, and that involves belief in God as he is revealed to us in Jesus Christ. But the man who has that belief needs no eternal torments to make him turn away from a bad action ; the grateful love that he feels towards his God and Saviour suffices to keep him from it. And when that love is not strong enough in a Christian to enable him to overcome temptation, I very much doubt whether the fear of eternal torments would give him the needed power.

"And then one thing that is almost always forgotten in speaking of Conditionalism is that it does not in any way hinder the course of God's justice, nor does it deny a future life for the wicked, with the expiation of his sins in that future life. Conditionalism does not assert that physical death is for the non-Christian the suppression of all existence. On the contrary, it declares that every man is required to expiate his sins, here below or elsewhere ; no doubt sin is in this view a malady which in the end will kill the sinner if he *will* not be healed ; but this malady makes him suffer, morally and physically. To preach Conditionalism is not at all to preach the absence of expiation for the wicked ; it is to say to him : ' Thy chastisement, the natural and inevitable result of thy disobedience of the divine law, begins here below, but does not come to an end in death. Thou wilt be subjected to trials—in what fashion we know not—until thou change thy conduct ; and if thou persist in resisting God, in living in sin, thou wilt in the end lose thy personality, thy life, in an agony certainly not eternal but in no wise enviable. Repent, then, while there is yet time, before thou shalt be too far gone in the way of perdition ; a day will come in which sin will master thee to such an extent that thou wilt no longer be able to escape from its tenacious and mortal grasp.' "¹

CXII.—"Conditionalism is an encouragement to all disorders."

Indeed? During thirty years we have been in close relations with conditionalists, and have not noticed anything of the sort ; rather the contrary. Without speaking of theologians, the representatives of Conditionalism bear such names as Lotze, Ch. Renouvier, F. Pillon, Ch. Secrétan. We cannot but wonder at the free-and-easy fashion in which some can at once condemn the moral philosophy of men who are rightly considered masters in that domain.

¹ Professor L. Emery, *art. cit.*

CXIII.—The suppression of life is not a chastisement. To annihilate a culprit is to snatch him away from justice.

St. Augustine held a different opinion. He said: "The severity of the death-penalty is not to be measured by the pain that accompanies the brief moment of its execution, but by the eternal duration of the separation caused by death between the victim and the land of the living."¹ Cicero had previously spoken of death as "an eternal evil."² The minister Jurieu, who has been called the Goliath of Protestants, called capital punishment "an eternal chastisement."³ Hermann Witzius,⁴ Dr. R. W. Hamilton,⁵ and other writers of high repute have expressed like sentiments

CXIV.—"If annihilation depended upon the free will of an individual, it would be a mistake to call it chastisement."

When a criminal kills himself it is said that he has executed justice upon himself. Will it be denied that the suicides of Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas did not form part of their chastisement?

CXV.—The notion of chastisement implies suffering always perceived and conscient.

See pp. 198-200, and *Objection* lii.

CXVI.—If there is a final annihilation, what is the good of the previous sufferings of the reprobate?

The previous suffering is an accessory of the chastisement; it is partly vindictory, but has also a salutary purpose. By its essentially premonitory character, it leaves place for repentance and for salvation. See pp. 225, 226, 437.

CXVII.—Conditionalism does not allow of the gradation of future punishment. It assigns to all sinners, great and small, one and the same chastisement, which is annihilation.

This reproach is valid against the traditional dogma, which casts all sinners, great and small, into the one eternal lake of fire and brimstone. Conditionalism, on the contrary, provides for the exact and even mathematical proportion between the chastisement and the offence. See Chap. XII., sect. iii., § 5.

CXVIII.—If the souls that perish are not exposed to eternal torments, it is no longer worth while to endeavour to save them. Conditionalist doctrine is therefore of a nature to cool missionary zeal.

On the contrary, it excites that zeal; the more so as it manifests with greater clearness and certainty the terrible chastisement that awaits the

¹ *De civ. Dei*, xxi. 11.

² *Tusc. Quæst.*, I., 49.

³ *L'Unité de l'Église*, p. 380. "The sentence on one condemned to death, is it not eternal?"

⁴ *Economie des Alliances*, I., 5, § 41.

⁵ *Rewards and Punishments*, p. 444.

impenitent. When it addresses the sinner and awakes him with the cry of "Fire!" it invokes logic and universal laws. See p. 386.

Let our opponents reassure themselves by a study of the facts. If they will read over the names of pastors, professors, evangelists, missionaries who are conditionalists, they will not fail to let go some of their theological prejudices against the doctrine. Those who are well acquainted with Anglo-Saxon countries know that the Churches which favour Conditionalism are distinguished for their missionary ardour. See Chap. I., sect. v., and p. 397.

§ 6. OBJECTIONS BASED UPON THE HISTORY OF DOGMAS.

CXIX.—The great majority of the Rabbis have held the doctrine of native and inalienable immortality.

It should be said, an insignificant minority. See Chap. III., sects. xiii., xv.

CXX.—The Church as a whole could not have erred on such an important point.

The Church as a whole erred as to the equally important point of gratuitous salvation until the time when the Reformers arose to protest against her teaching.

CXXI.—The Church has always admitted the eternity of sufferings.

The eternity of punishment is not the same as the eternity of sufferings. We appeal to the normal authority of the first century of the Church. See Chap. IX.

CXXII.—Conditionalism did not appear in the Church before the elder Arnobius.

This objection ignores the facts. All the apostolic Fathers were conditionalist, as were the apostles themselves. The same may be said of the ancient document entitled *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, so recently recovered. This primitive literature will be searched in vain for the stereotyped phrases of the Platonic dogma, *immortal soul, eternal sufferings*, etc. Athenagoras, towards the end of the second century, is the first ecclesiastical writer who speaks of native immortality. Justin Martyr, Tatian, and Theophilus of Antioch, contemporary with Athenagoras, were still conditionalists. Olshausen states that these have all three maintained the proposition, "of ill repute in our days," that the soul is naturally mortal. So it was with Irenæus. The elder Arnobius wrote a whole century later. See Chap. VIII. and p. 496.

CXXIII.—Conditionalism is a creation of modern theology; no Council has ever admitted that doctrine.

That is to be regretted for the sake of the Councils; but in the matter of doctrine the writings of the apostolic age alone have for us a normal authority, and we think we have proved that the authority of those writings is favourable to Conditionalism.

CXXIV.—All the Churches of the Reformation admitted eternal torments.

All the Churches of the Reformation admitted equally that during more than a thousand years the Church as a whole had erred on more than one point. Shall we ascribe infallibility on other points to the Protestant Churches? See Chap. IX.

CXXV.—None of the Reformers of the sixteenth century were Conditionalists.

None of those Reformers were in favour of liberty of conscience. They all approved Calvin allowing the burning of Servetus, who was a zealous Christian. As to the Reformers, see Chap. IX., sect. vi.

CXXVI.—In our French-speaking countries Conditionalism is only an Anglo-Saxon importation.

See Chap. I., sect. vi.

CXXVII.—The most powerful preachers have preached eternal sufferings.

In the same way as St. Augustine, who anathematized belief in the antipodes. Did not Calvin teach that fire and sword should be employed for the destruction of heretics? Moreover, in the traditional doctrine that we are opposing all is not false: the survival of the soul, future retributions, a final sanction, these are in the evangelico-platonist teaching elements of truth which unhappily have served to promote the triumph of error.

SECTION II.

AGNOSTIC¹ OBJECTIONS.

CXXVIII.—A mystery hangs over future punishment; Conditionalism does not respect this mystery.

Do the traditional dogma and Universalism respect it any more? So far as we are concerned, we declare that it is respect for the biblical

¹ With respect to this word, see p. 43, Chap. IX. Sect. xii. *sq.*, and our observations on philosophical agnosticism in Chap. XII., Sect. iv. § 3. A number of evangelical theologians hold to eschatological agnosticism; renouncing the attempt at a synthesis, they say that they receive simultaneously without understanding them certain biblical declarations that appear to be contradictory.

teaching that dictates our testimony. We believe in a revelation the light of which is intended to pierce various mysteries, and why not also this one of future punishment?

"Certainly the exhortation to meditate upon such grave truths only with seriousness and respect is very legitimate; but has anyone the right to go a step farther, and may anyone, in order to strengthen our humility, demand of us to shut our eyes to the light, not to see that which God in his Gospel reveals to us of his designs?"¹

CXXIX.—"We cannot know anything of the future life, seeing that we cannot know it by experience."

"The logical scope of this argument is that we ought never to speak of the future life, neither to affirm nor to deny it, seeing that we do not know *by experience* that there is one. We believe in the future life for certain reasons of the moral, religious, and intellectual orders, but not by virtue of an experimental cognition. Now the reasons for our belief in the life eternal are the same that cause our belief in the Conditionalist conception of the life eternal."²

CXXX.—The Bible seems to have purposely cast a veil over the end of the wicked. By lifting that veil, we might be committing an indiscretion.

We cannot admit that on the point with which we are dealing the Bible contains a tissue of contradictions; we leave to others the responsibility that they assume when they accuse the holy Scriptures of incoherence. It is asserted that Revelation casts a veil over the fate of the wicked; but this very name of *Revelation* tells us that the purpose of the Bible is not to cast veils, but to put aside those veils at least which hide from our view the justice and the mercy of God. See Deut. xxix. 29, and Chap. XI., sect. vi.

CXXXI.—We ought to believe in eternal sufferings, but at the same time confiding implicitly in the divine mercy. Christian sentiment will find a fully satisfactory solution when the complete revelation of God's plan shall come.

While awaiting that complete revelation, the disciples of the Bible will do well to reject a dogma that contradicts the partial revelation that has been granted to us.

CXXXII.—"I persist in my belief that on this point (the final lot of the reprobate) the Scripture leaves the door open to all fears as to all hopes, that it is opposed only to an exclusive choice between the contrary possibilities. I persist also in thinking that the serious ad-

¹ A. Matter, *Trois essais de théologie*, p. 150.

² Professor L. Emery, *art. cit.*

mission of liberty postulates this ignorance as to the final term of human history, whether individual or collective, and that in preaching powerful use may be made of the possibility of these various terminations, of which the reality depends upon the resolutions of each one."

Does not this amount to saying that all doctrines are good if only a good use be made of them? In the three views taken into account in this objection we see three different notions of God and three different schemes of morality, and we believe that we ought to choose the doctrine that is nearest the truth, which is also the most salutary. See Chap. XII., sect. vi. We may add that the author of this objection seems to us to have no right to raise it, considering his previous declarations: "What necessity is there that we should be immortal?" said he. If there be nothing to prove his immortality, man falls under the operation of the common law which, in accordance with a universal analogy, threatens him with a death without a morrow; and the more so as, being by nature contingent, man is also culpable and consequently unworthy to live for ever. Now we believe that we have demonstrated that the conditionalist solution follows logically from these premisses. See p. 537.

SUPPLEMENT No. XVIII.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE PSALMS.

(See page 328).

ESCHATOLOGY occupies a considerable space in the Psalter. Thus in the first book only, which includes forty-one psalms, we can count twenty-one that speak of the ruin or final suppression of the wicked, and twenty-three that make reference to the preservation of the faithful or of their posterity. The notion of absolute immortality is no doubt absent, but none the less does the whole Psalter point in the direction of Conditionalism. The New Testament has only to prolong the lines beyond the tomb.

A number of the psalms in the second and third books of the collection throw light upon a verse of Isaiah that is often quoted by the supporters of eternal torments:

"And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."¹

We have seen that in this verse there is an allusion to the tragic fate

¹ Isaiah lxvi. 24.

of Sennacherib's army. Its reference is therefore to *absolutely insensible* carcasses, and the alleged *eternal torments* are not here to be found. Various psalms celebrate a deliverance which brought to mind the fate of Pharaoh's army, but the notion of prolonged sufferings is entirely absent from these hymns of triumph.

In support of our assertion we will indicate some of the references with which we have been specially struck. For example, in Psalm xli., which inspired Luther's famous hymn, "The safest fortress is our God." At verse 3 the words, "Though the waters [of the sea] roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof," seem to picture the multitudes of the Assyrian army beating against the walls of Zion. At verse 5, "God shall help her [the city] at the dawn of morning" (R.V. margin), *לפנות בקר* seems to be a reference to the *בקר בבקר*, "when they arose early in the morning," in Isa. xxxvii. 36, and 2 Kings xix. 35.¹ This reference does not at all exclude that to Exod. xiv. 24, 27. At verse 8, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth," we seem to hear the joyful appeal of the sentinel when at daybreak he perceives that the enemy's camp is nothing but a vast cemetery. The following verse tells, as Ezekiel does,² of the arms and chariots that are about to serve as fuel to consume the carcasses.³ Then the Psalmist exclaims in the name of Jehovah: "Be still, and know that I am God"; take your rest, tired soldiers of Jerusalem, the Lord has fought for you!

Psalm xlviii. pictures the astonished kings who contemplate the disaster and take to flight. This reminds us of 2 Chron. xxxii. 21: "So he [king Sennacherib] returned with shame of face to his own land."⁴ The same may be said of Psalm lxviii., which was the war-song of the Huguenots:

Let God arise himself to show,
And in a moment every foe
For aye will quit the place;
His enemies, though widely spread,
Will melt away in fear and dread,
Will flee before his face, etc.⁵

¹ Cf. Ps. cxxx. 6, the sentinels who impatiently watch for the *morning*, and Ps. cxxvii. 2, the uselessness of rising *early* if the Lord withhold his blessing. See also 1 Sam. xxix. 10, David rising up *early* in the morning, before the day.

² Ez. xxxix. 9-20.

³ Ps. xlvii. 9 [10] mentions only the shields.

⁴ The plural of the Psalm ("the kings") may be explained by the fact that the Assyrian monarch was accompanied by various allies or subjects, the *seranim* or vassal emirs. See E. Archinard, *Israel et ses voisins asiatiques*, p. 336. Geneva, 1890.

⁵ The French words are:

Que Dieu se montre seulement,
Et l'on verra, dans un moment,
Abandonner la place!

The narrative of Isaiah may explain verse 14 of this psalm, of which Reuss says: "We despair of finding the sense, and have given a translation merely tentative: 'The Almighty has dispersed the kings. And the brightness of snow replaces the darkness.'"¹ Second's version has: "The earth became white like the snow of Tsalmon;"² the English R.V.: "It was as when it snoweth in Zalmon." Does not this relate to the whiteness of the bones scattered by thousands over the ground?

At the end of the psalm, after the great catastrophe that has destroyed the Lord's enemies, Egypt and Ethiopia bring presents. This may be a reference to 2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23: "Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem . . . and guided them on every side. And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and precious things to Hezekiah, king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from thenceforth." We shall find the same allusion in Psalm lxxvi., but let us first call attention to verses 4 and 5 of Psalm lxxv.: "I said unto the arrogant, Deal not arrogantly; and to the wicked . . . Speak not insolently" (R.V. margin). The reproaches and blasphemies of the rabshakeh are still ringing in the psalmist's ears.³

Psalm lxxvi. ought to be quoted entire; it is a veritable cantata in celebration of the event. Our translation will bring into view the points of contact between the poem and the history:

In Judah is God known,
His name is great in Israel.
In Salem also is his tabernacle,
And in Zion the place of his retreat:
There he brake the arrows of the bow,
The shield and the sword and the battle. [2 Kings xix. 32.]

Thou art resplendent in majesty on the mountains where thou
rendest thine enemies!
The stout-hearted are spoiled, [2 Chron. xxxii. 21.]
They sleep their sleep,
And none of the men of might have found their hands.
At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,
Both chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep. [2 Kings
xix. 23.]

Le camp des ennemis épars,
Epouvanté de toutes parts,
Fuir devant sa face, etc.

¹ *Poésie lyrique*, p. 235.

² Cf. Ps. lxxxiii. 11, and Judges viii. 12-21.

³ Isa. xxxvi. The rabshakeh was the chief cupbearer, the lieutenant-general or marshal of the army. See Archinard, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

Thou, even thou, art terrible,
 And who may stand before thee when once thou art angry?
 Thou didst cause sentence to be heard from heaven,
 The earth feared and was still
 When God arose to judgement
 To save all the oppressed in the earth. [2 Chron. xxxii. 22.]

Surely the wrath of men shall turn to thy glory,
 Their extremest fury shall turn to thy triumph. [2 K. xix. 27-28.]
 Make and fulfil your vows, all ye who surround the Lord your
 God,
 Let presents be brought to this terrible God ! [2 Chron. xxxii. 23.]
 He cutteth off the spirit of princes,
 He is terrible to the kings of the earth ! [2 Chron. xxxii. 21.]¹

SUPPLEMENT No. XIX.

EXEGETICAL NOTE ON 2 THESS. I. 9.

(See page 352.)

They shall suffer their punishment, an eternal destruction, by means of the presence of the Lord and by the glory of his power.

SEVERAL French translations have rendered the ἀπὸ προσώπου in this passage by *loin de la face*, "away from the face." We believe that it is only with verbs expressing *fear, departure, flight, or hiding*, that מפני and ἀπὸ προσώπου signify *away from*. Usually away from is rather rendered in Hebrew by מרחק, רחוק, or מנגד, and in the LXX. by μακρὰν or πῶρῶ.

The attempt has sometimes been made to treat as parallel to 2 Thes. i. 9 the text of Isaiah ii. 10, 19, 21: "Hide thee in the dust . . . in the holes of the earth . . . in the caverns of the rocks from before the terror of the Lord and from the glory of his majesty." But the expression is not exactly the same; instead of the simple מפני, it is there מפני פחד, literally: away from the presence of the terror. With verbs that express an idea of *destruction*, מפני must, on the contrary, signify *by means of*. See among others the *Lexicon* of Wilke and

¹ This quotation and all those relating to this Psalm appear the more striking if attentively studied in the Hebrew text, where the verbal coincidences are seen more distinctly. It is a strange and characteristic fact that Prof. Reuss has not recognized the allusions with which this Psalm abounds. Not to be further tedious, we would refer our readers to the commentary of Bishop Perowne, that of Delitzsch, and the *Annales prophétiques* of H. Gallot, p. 150.

Grimm, which confirms our interpretation by quoting as parallel passages Jer. iv. 26 and Acts iii. 19. According to this lexicon, ἀπὸ in such cases indicates the efficient cause: *perniciem a facie Domini oriundam*. So, too, Winer, in his *Grammar of the New Testament*, sect. xlvii.: With abstract nouns, ἀπὸ indicates the efficient cause, it then signifies *by*, Acts xx. 9; Rev. ix. 18; *because of*, Matt. xviii. 7; Acts xxii. 11; Luke xix. 3; John xxi. 6; Acts xxviii. 3; Judith ii. 20; Gen. xxxvi. 7, xlvii. 13, etc.¹

In Psalm ix. 3 no one has translated "my enemies shall perish far away from thy face."² Delitzsch says that the מ designates the cause. It is here clearly the divine look which is turned with indignation towards the psalmist's enemies and consumes them (Cf. xxi. 9 [10]).

In support of the meaning "away from the face," attributed to ἀπὸ προσώπου, Professor F. Godet refers to Rom. ix. 3: "I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ (ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ) for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites."

This suggestion indicates a misapprehension of two facts: first, there is not here the expression ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου, but ἀπὸ only; second, the *anathema* implied destruction, the victim of the anathema did not *live far away from*, it was to be put to death (Lev. xxvii. 28, 29). The preposition ἀπὸ used by Paul is borrowed from the LXX. in the translation of this same passage in Leviticus; it corresponds to the Hebrew מ. "Vows of devotion . . . involved the destruction of that which had been thus devoted," as stated in a note on that passage in Segond's version. In Rom. ix. 3 Paul repeats the self-devotion of Moses (Ex. xxxii. 32); like Moses, he would have renounced life and even existence if by the sacrifice he could have saved his people; but he did not dream of *living for ever separated from Christ*.

"It is now generally admitted that הָרַם (*ánáθεμα*) signifies devoted to destruction . . . *men* who are הָרַם are to be put to death, but *things* are eventually given to the priests."³ 'Απὸ in Rom. ix. 3 no doubt indicates a separation; by the fact of his death, the man devoted to anathema is separated from the community. Paul was willing to *perish* apart from Jesus Christ and from the community of the faithful; but his thought was utterly foreign to the notion of an eternal hell, an abode into which the wicked would be cast, not there to be destroyed, but there to suffer without intermission and without end the torments

¹ 'Απὸ properly designates the starting-point; hence, the origin, the cause.

² The versions of Lausanne, Bruston, and Segond have: *devant ta face*, "before thy face"; that of Perret-Gentil has: *disparaissent à ta vue*, "disappear at the sight of thee."

³ H. Cremer, *Biblico-theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*.

of unquenchable fire, in the company of the devil and his angels, with rage in the heart and blasphemy on the lips.

¹ Ἀπὸ προσώπου, then, indicates an efficient and present cause. It is a Hebraism which often signifies "by means of" or "because of"; as, for example, in Psa. xxxviii. 5 [6], מִפְּנֵי אֹלֹתַי, "because of my foolishness," literally "away from the face of my foolishness," and in the LXX., ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς ἀφροσύνης μου. In the same Psalm, verse 3 [4], we find two instances of the use of the same phrase in the same sense: "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine indignation," literally "away from the face of thine indignation," "neither is there any health in my bones because of my sin," literally also, "away from the face of my sin." See, too, Gen. vi. 13; Lev. ix. 24; x. 2; Deut. xxviii. 20; Josh. v. 1; Neh. v. 15; Psa. lxviii. 2 [3], "as wax melteth before the fire," not "*away from* the fire;" it might rather be translated "*near to* the fire"; lx. 4 [6], on this verse Delitzsch remarks that מִפְּנֵי indicates the reason and motive; lxxx. 16 [17]; Isa. x. 27; Jer. iv. 26, "the cities were broken down *at the presence* of the Lord and *before* his fierce anger"; *away from* his fierce anger would be a contradiction. Cf. Hos. x. 15.

So, too, in the New Testament: Acts iii. 19, the times of refreshing are to come *from* the Lord *by* his presence; *away from* his face would be absurd. In the verse under discussion the notion of *power* is introduced in view of a work of destruction; it would hardly have been needed if *separation* only had been contemplated, especially seeing that separation is already caused by the fact of the sinner's revolt.

To sum up, 2 Thess. i. 7-9 might be interpreted thus: The rebels shall suffer their punishment; that is to say, absolute and final destruction, caused by the presence of the Lord and by his glorious power when, descending from heaven, he shall appear in the midst of devouring flames.

In further support of this meaning we would refer to the Lexicon of Gesenius, particularly at the word מִן, and to the following passages in the Hebrew text: Ex. viii. 20 [Eng. 24]; Judges. vi. 6; Isa. lxiii. 19; lxiv. 1, 2 [Eng. lxiv. 1, 2, 3]; Jer. ix. 6 [Eng. 7]; xv. 17; Ezek. xiv. 15; cf. Mal. iii. 19 [Eng. iv. 1]. It will thus be seen that in the Old Testament the wicked are often threatened with being *consumed* by the "fire of the face" of the Lord. In the New Testament, too, "our God is a consuming fire"; there is "a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries." In the traditional orthodoxy it is not so: God does not consume that which he consumes, and his adversaries are incombustible.

The conclusion to which we seem to be forced by this examination is that in the passage before us the meaning of ἀπὸ προσώπου must be "by means of."¹

SUPPLEMENT No. XX.

ANOTHER TEXT OF THE APOCALYPSE.

(See page 365.)

They shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. xx. 10).

THIS passage, which Professor F. Godet has not cared to invoke, is the stock argument of many persons upon whose imagination it has made a deep impression. It is unsparingly used and made to bear nearly the whole weight of the controversy. One American opponent reproduces it twenty times in an essay of a hundred pages, reminding us involuntarily of those military commanders who, in order to impress the enemy with the extent of their resources, keep the same troops continually marching around the ramparts of a besieged town.

As it seems to us, this ultimate proof of endless torments invoked *in extremis* loses all force if the following considerations are taken into account :

1. A theologian will not seek the *principal* support of a dogma in a poetical and allegorical book like the Song of Songs or the Apocalypse.²

2. The passage in question relates not to human beings, but to Satan, the Beast, and the false Prophet. The immediately preceding verse states that the men who were rebels had already undergone their punishment : the fire from heaven had "devoured them."

3. The lake of fire and brimstone that receives the reprobate is a symbol of utter destruction. Death and Hades, or the abode of the dead, are cast therein. That symbolizes "their destruction . . . evil is brought to an end in the abyss," as M. L. Bonnet says ;³ the venerable

¹ "We say that there are texts in which the meaning of annihilation attributed to the terms *death* and *perdition* is justified, or perhaps even required. In the first of these categories we should place 2 Thes. i. 9, in which we can hardly agree with Prof. F. Godet in understanding the words, ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ Κυρίου, which are dependent upon ἐλεθρον αἰώνιον, to relate to 'permanent removal from the Lord's face,' and we can only see in them a Hebraism that signifies 'coming from the Lord.'" A. Gretillat, *op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 614.

² See p. 365, note. The Methodists, whose attachment to the traditional dogma amounts sometimes even to fanaticism, have nevertheless recognized the principle here stated. In one of their catechisms they have suppressed several quotations from the Apocalypse. *Christian World*, 23 Feb., 1882.

³ *Op. cit.* See too Güder in Herzog's *Encyclop.* at the word *Hades*, and Reuss, *l'Apocalypse*, p. 142 : "Another very happy thought is that of the *annihilation* of

Nitzsch says much the same. It is not easy to conceive a different explanation. From the standpoint of Conditional Immortality, the meaning is quite clear: After the last judgement, when all obstinate sinners will have perished, death will be abolished; the survivors will live for ever. Thenceforth none will die, and the "abode of the dead" will have no more reason for its existence.¹

4. Complete destruction will also be the fate of the two monsters who are implicitly spoken of in this verse: the Beast with ten horns and the one with two horns. This is apparent from the parallel passages in Daniel: "The beast (with ten horns) was slain, and his body destroyed, and he was given to the burning of fire."² Will it be said that the Bible teaches the immortality of the *soul* of these beasts? Neither in Daniel nor in the Apocypse are they human beings, nor fallen angels, nor even animals. They are usually understood, like the great harlot who sits upon one of them, to symbolize empires, systems of government, or else false religions; in any case they are nothing but creations of the imagination. Eternal torments predicated of these symbolic beasts could therefore hardly mean anything else than the convulsions, divisions, dismemberments of institutions, the decline of which is prolonged through the ages until their complete disappearance. As for Satan who shares their fate, the Scripture teaches expressly that in the end he too shall be "crushed" and "brought to nought."³

5. We have already said something about the "smoke that goeth up

Death and Sheol, which have no longer any reason for their existence." To the fire are added sulphurous vapours, if possible yet more deadly. Fire, smoke, and brimstone *kill* the third part of the inhabitants of the earth (Rev. ix. 18).

¹ See at page 368 the evasion imagined by some traditionalists. One of them when closely pressed even suggested that those two personages, Death and Hades, were two angels, who would be capable of suffering. But the Bible never speaks of these pretended angels, and is it possible to understand an *angel of Hades* who before thus suffering would serve as a receptacle? a *living receptacle* filled with the dead! (Rev. xx. 13). We return to this context because in it we see a thread which might help the traditionalists to get out of their dismal labyrinth; a ray of light which illuminates the darkness of the "second death." If carefully considered, it undeniably proves that the "lake of fire and brimstone" is a symbol of final annihilation.

² Dan. vii. 11, 26, R.V. Oehler, who is usually very correct, here takes a false step. He makes out that the carcass of this beast is to be "tormented," *ut cruciaretur. Vet. Testam. sententia*, p. 53. In the first place, the text does not say so; in the next, it is impossible to make a carcass suffer while being burnt; and the purpose of the burning is only that it may be got rid of as quickly as possible.

³ Gen. iii. 15; Rom. xvi. 20 (*συντρίψει*, cf. Rev. ii. 27; Ps. ii. 9, "dash in pieces"); Heb. ii. 14 (*καταργήσῃ*, cf. 1 Cor. xv. 26; 2 Tim. i. 10, "abolish"), *afin qu'il anéantisse . . . le diable*, Segond. According to the Scriptures, Satan not being of an imperishable nature, the eternity of his torments can only be relative. This solution is the more acceptable because Satan's companions in the lake of fire and brimstone are, as we have just seen, devoted to destruction. To suppose Satan eternal would moreover be Manichæism. See pp. 347, sq. 358.

for ever and ever." The image is borrowed from the book of Isaiah, where we find described the smoke of the land of Edom, which is also perpetual.¹ Fire being a symbol of destruction, the smoke after the burning is like the dismal remembrance of that which is no more and the memorial of a complete ruin. Sometimes a cloud of smoke may be seen resting over the scene of a great conflagration; the persistence of such a cloud of smoke must symbolize the unfading remembrance of an irremediable ruin. Isaiah was himself inspired by the narrative in Genesis relating to Sodom and Gomorrah.²

In the Apocalypse, Babylon, the city of which it is said that "her smoke goeth up for ever and ever," is also said to exist no more: she is to be "found no more at all," a biblical mode of saying that she has ceased to exist.³ The eternal smoke does not then confer an indefeasible immortality upon the enemies of God. The *memory of their chastisement* alone will survive, an immortal witness of the rights of celestial justice. It is also said that the wicked shall be forgotten by God, another mode of saying that they will no longer exist; but, as the *Neuchâtel Annotated Bible* remarks, "there will remain of them something that will never be forgotten, that is, their shame."⁴

In the last chapters of the Apocalypse Death and Hades are burnt and destroyed, "all ills disappear one by one, leaving nothing to subsist in the end except the blessed life. How different is this view of the future from that formed by the false wisdom of men! What treasures of hope and of consolation there are in the prospect opened before us by the word of God!"⁵

6. This interpretation alone harmonizes with the apocalyptic symbolism of which we have already spoken: second or definitive death, tree of life, book of life, water of life; all these images oblige us to set aside the notion of an unconditional immortality which would destroy the unity of the book.

¹ Isa. xxxiv. 10: "The smoke thereof shall go up for ever." The expression in the Apocalypse emphasizes the notion of duration; but it is important to remember that in the Bible the adjective *eternal* and the locutions relating to *eternity* always indicate an *indeterminate duration of which the maximum is fixed by the intrinsic nature of the persons or things*. This definition is, we believe, the only one that is applicable to every case. "In the Scriptures, seventy times out of ninety, the word 'eternal' qualifies objects of a temporary and limited nature." Herding, *Essai sur l'immortalité par Christ*, p. 87.

² Isa. xxxiv. 10; ix. 17, 18; Ps. xxxvii. 20; Gen. xix. 28. The expression "vanish in smoke" has become proverbial to indicate a complete suppression. So too in the Hindoo poem, the Ramayana, the evil genius of the universe, Ravana, "he who causes weeping," being at last delivered over to the flames, "vanishes in smoke"; that is a symbol of the end of evil.

³ Rev. xix. 3. Cf. xii. 8; xviii. 8-10, 21; xx. 11; xxi. 1; Ezek. xxvi. 21; Isa. xli. 12; Jer. l. 20; Dan. ii. 35.

⁴ Note on Jer. xxiii. 40. Cf. Ps. x. 15; Isa. xiv. 20.

⁵ L. Bonnet, *op. cit.*, 1852, II., p. 890.

7. The expression "day and night" adds nothing to the duration of the ages. On the contrary, it indicates that the punishment contemplated is in truth temporary, since in an absolute eternity there will no longer be the diurnal succession of light and darkness. The righteous will always be in the light and the wicked always in the darkness of nonentity (Heb. i. 11; 2 Peter ii. 4; iii. 10; Jude 6, 13; Rev. xx. 11; xxii. 5).

8. Eternal torments, in the absolute sense of the words, would not be in harmony with the consistent teaching of the Scriptures, and whether the authenticity of the Apocalypse be admitted or not, they would be in contradiction with the doctrine of John in his Gospel and in his Epistles. In the absence of a special miracle, the sufferings of a naturally mortal being could not be interminable. So far from predicting the intervention of such a miracle, the Scriptures with one accord teach that the wicked will be finally destroyed. The suffering of rebellious creatures could not then last longer than is compatible with their perishable nature. Vainly is it sought to oppose the New to the Old Testament by appealing to the "additional contents" of the Gospel. As we have seen, this additional matter is very far from reaching to the extent of making the wicked eternal.¹

9. In conclusion, the expression "for ever and ever" in our text cannot designate an absolute eternity; it is hyperbolic. Is there anyone who would argue that in the Bible generally, and particularly in the Apocalypse, there are no hyperboles?² If in the Apocalypse there were no hyperboles, it would be necessary to admit that unbelievers will be all together and without cessation the victims of a torment equal to that which here on earth would be caused during a few seconds only by a bath of fire and brimstone! Does there exist a theologian who is prepared to affirm that? If so, let him make himself known! If not, our right to see hyperboles in the Apocalypse remains incontestable.

It may fairly be asked what now remains of the argumentation based upon the few passages which have been treated as the palladium of the traditional dogma. These pretended proofs do not bear examination; they break down completely. He who would depend upon them will see falling to pieces along with them the whole Manichæan edifice of eternal

¹ That explains why we are told of a holy life that is "endless" and of an inheritance that is "incorruptible," but not of "interminable" torments nor of an "indestructible" hell.

² See, for example, in the original as well as in the common versions: Gen. xi. 4, "a tower whose top may reach unto heaven"; 1 Kings x. 27, "silver as stones for abundance"; John xxi. 25, "the world itself would not contain the books"; Titus i. 2, "eternal life promised before times eternal"; Rev. xxi, 16, a wall the "height" of which is twelve thousand furlongs.

sufferings and the crumbling fortress of religious despotism. He might as well try to make a mountain rest upon the point of a needle, after the manner of the Roman Catholics who based the frightful theory of the Inquisition upon the hyperbole of a parable: "Compel them to come in!"

SUPPLEMENT No. XXI.

THE SPECIFIC DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE CONDITIONALIST POINT OF VIEW.¹

(See page 381.)

THERE are two ways in which the divinity of Jesus Christ may be denied. There is first the old way, which consisted in a simple negation, and in the Church has been called Arianism or Socinianism. There is in the present day, however, a negation which is hidden under an affirmation; it is said that to Jesus truly belongs divinity, but it is a divinity that belongs in principle equally and by the same right to all of us. There would then be no specific difference between him and ourselves; Jesus would have been only an initiator; he would remain for us a model and a guide, but his superiority would be exclusively moral. It is said that to distinguish between the divine and the human nature is to create a *dualism* without reasonable foundation; thus by a roundabout process an implied denial of the specific divinity of Jesus Christ is reached.

For my own part, my honoured brethren, I must acknowledge that this Christology gives rise in my mind to various scruples which I feel bound to lay before you; it seems to me not to be justified either 1st, from the biblical standpoint, or, 2nd, from the philosophical standpoint, or, 3rd, from that of the moral consciousness.

1st, From the biblical standpoint. One of the most impartial scholars, whose competence is recognized by all theological parties, Professor Reuss, has expressed himself thus: "Incorruptibility, the quality of exemption from all decline, from all chance of death, belongs properly to God alone. None, therefore, but Christ, the image of God, could communicate to the world such a boon."² According to the Gospel of John, God has permitted Christ, and Christ alone, to have "life in himself"; Jesus is the "bread" that God gives to men. It is

¹ A communication presented to the Theological Society of the Canton de Vaud, 22nd June, 1891.

² See page 123.

not the Father but the Son who is the bread of life. Jesus is the vine-stock rooted directly in God ; we are the branches depending upon the stock. Say, if you please, that the *stock* and the *branches* are of the same wood, that their *substance* is in fact identical, you are justified in making that statement ; but you must admit that their *attributes* and *prerogatives* differ considerably.¹

The Israelites, and no doubt the non-Israelites also, who do not eat "the flesh of the Son of man" and who do not drink "his blood," have not in themselves a durable life. An empty stomach can produce only hunger. That hunger, which is consuming him, is the only thing that man, left to himself, possesses as his own. It is not, then, moral or spiritual life only that is lacking in us, but also *ontological* life, which is first and foremost perpetuity of existence. Olshausen, Sartorius, Reuss, Oltramare, Professors Ménégos, Aug. Sabatier, Fred. Godet, all agree on this point.²

Professor Aug. Sabatier says : "According to St. Paul, man is not naturally immortal ; he becomes so by faith. It is a grace,"³ and this grace is to be obtained only by a mystic union with Jesus Christ.

Paul's expression in his discourse on the Areopagus, Acts xvii. 28, "We are also his offspring" is invoked, but sometimes it is unduly pressed. It is quoted from a poem of Aratus entitled *Phænomena* ; it is also to be found in an ode of Cleanthes of Troas. In both these contexts it relates to Jupiter ; but, from the point of view of the Greco-Roman mythology, men did not belong to the posterity of Jupiter ; the legend traced them to Deucalion's stones.⁴ According to the narrative in Genesis, between the Creator and man there is only a *shadow* of resemblance ; in Hebrew, *tzelem*, from the root *tzâlam*, צָלַם, to be dark, obscure ; shadow is not at all identity.⁵

¹ If it be said, as in the school of Kant, that there are no *substances* but only forces and phenomena, that may be correct ; but yet it will be necessary to admit that, from the Gospel standpoint, Jesus is the only source of a divine *force* of which we are but the holders during his good pleasure.

² See Chap. IV., Sect. iii.

³ See pp. 125, 126.

⁴ See F. Godet, *Revue chrétienne*, 1884, p. 755 sq.

⁵ The term *living soul*, נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה, is applied in Genesis to fish and all kinds of animals as well as to man (Gen. i. 20, 21, 24, 30). So it is in the New Testament with the word usually translated *soul* (Rev. xvi. 3). As for the famous *nishmath chayim*, נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים of Gen. ii. 7, it is the panting breath of respiration, from נָשַׁם to puff, to sniff ; the animals possess this breath. Cf. Gen. vii. 22 and Ps. cxlvi. 3, 4.

According to *The Hebrew National*, 19 July, 1867 : "The Midrash (Bereshith Rabba, Chap. XII.) does certainly enumerate five appellations of the human spirit met with in Scripture ; but these alike designate the principle of life in man and in beast. For that spiritual essence which exclusively is the portion of man, the Hebrew language affords no term." According to the Talmud, the soul of the wicked perishes by gradual decay. The light breath in man's nostrils is in Scripture a symbol of weakness and mortality (Gen. vii. 22 ; Isa. ii. 22). The *breath* or *spirit* of God creates the multitudes of solar systems and animates all living beings

Like the old prophets, Paul speaks of God as the potter and of man as the vessel, which the potter destroys or preserves at his pleasure. When Paul says that God "himself giveth to all life," that expression applies to plants and animals as well as to man; the life spoken of is evidently not imperishable.¹ In the Bible there is nothing that guarantees the native imperishability of the human *ego*. To Jesus alone it has been given "to have life in himself." It has been well said by Professor F. Godet :

"Jesus alone has direct access to the supreme source. The life that he draws from that source, in human fashion elaborated and reproduced in his person, becomes in him accessible to men. Thus is he for all the *bread of life*; only if it is to give life that bread must be *eaten*. . . . The true God, the living Father, gives himself to one alone, but *in* him to all those who will eat of that one. . . . The life that he imparts to the believer is then not of a purely moral nature; it is his complete life, bodily as well as spiritual, his whole personality."²

Even in heaven the existence of the elect is dependent upon the tree of life, which again is Jesus Christ.³ No one can be on an absolute equality with him by whom his existence is maintained.

2nd. From the philosophical standpoint it seems impossible to prove that we by nature possess immortality, which, in our view, is only to be obtained through Jesus. Professor Charles Bois, the author of a confession of faith that bears his name, who has lately died, and who has been called the chief of the evangelical and synodal party, acknowledged that the philosophical arguments for unconditional immortality were insufficient.⁴

Several of the greatest metaphysicians of our time, Rothe, Lotze, Renouvier, Charles Secrétan, have come to the same conclusion. Kant

(Psa. xxx. 6; civ. 29, 30). The word נֶפֶשׁ, *soul*, is used a dozen times as synonymous with *corpse*; and in 1 Cor. xv. 45 the apostle contrasts the *living* but *mortal* soul of the first man with the life-giving spirit of the second Adam. For the meaning of נֶפֶשׁ, see too G. F. Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament*, T. and T. Clark, 1874, vol. i., p. 216 sq.

"That which in Hebrew psychology is called *breath* is not a personal being, not the *soul* of modern philosophy, but merely a force that has come from God and gives to matter a personal and particular though temporary existence." Reuss, *Poésie lyrique*, p. 320. Prof. Reuss also says that Eccl. xii. 7 "does not in any way contemplate a *spirit* or *soul* existing by itself and continuing to live in the presence of God after the death of the body." *Philosophie relig. et mor.*, p. 328.

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 13. Ζωογονούντος τὰ πάντα. The root of the verb here used is the γένος of Acts xvii. 28. It is evident that in both passages Paul refers neither to emanation nor to procreation, but to creation, in the biblical sense of that word. Under the Old Covenant no man calls God his Father. The apostle says: "Ye are sons of God, through faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. iii. 26).

² F. Godet, *Commentaire sur l'évangile de Jean*, 1865, Vol. II., pp. 131-134.

³ Rev. xxii. 2, 14, 19. Cf. Chap. XI. Sect. III. and Chap. X. Sect. VI., p. 295.

⁴ See his explicit declaration, pp. 59, 60.

had previously said that the soul could perish by extinction. In this connection, again, it seems difficult to controvert a conviction that has in its favour such weighty authorities and, as scarcely needs to be said, very solid reasons behind those authorities. It seems, then, to be ascertained that we are all only contingent beings, not at all necessary, consequently perishable.

According to Adolphe Franck's *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*: "There are only two modes of existence, two modes of being: one necessary, the other contingent." If the human *ego* belongs to the category of contingent beings, if Jesus imparts to us an immortality that we do not naturally possess, this fact assigns to him a superiority that is not merely *moral* but is also *ontological*. An absolute identification of the two notions of morality and existence would imply a confusion of categories. The brightness of the flame ought not to make us forget the gaseous fluid that nourishes the flame. By the side of the unique divinity conferred upon Jesus Christ, I see upon earth only frogs wishing to make themselves—enormous.

3rd. Lastly, our conscience cries out against any pretension that we might make to assimilate completely our nature to the nature of Jesus Christ. If we look closely into our consciences, far from finding there an equality with God, we at once perceive disquietude, self-reproach, the sense of our unworthiness, and, more than that, of our nothingness; like the publican, we smite upon our breast as being unworthy to live.

"By the use of his liberty, man has cut off from its source his own being which he derived from God, and he exhausts it in a slow death-process."¹

Conscience shows that, being sick unto death, undermined by sin, we are going on towards nonentity; it demands a Saviour who is able to infuse in us a new life. But to infuse new life is the work of the Creator; conscience therefore demands a Saviour who shares the creative nature of the Creator, a nature which evidently is not ours, since we are about to perish. In other terms, the specific divinity of Jesus Christ is legitimated before the tribunal of conscience; and, according to Schleiermacher, that is an undeniable proof of the truth of a doctrine.

¹ Charles Secrétan. See the fuller quotation, p. 292.

SUPPLEMENT No. XXII.

COMPARISON OF THE PRIMITIVE GOSPEL WITH NON-BIBLICAL RELIGIONS.¹

(See page 396.)

THE principal impressions left in the mind by a study of the religions of the ancient world are two. On the one hand, there is surprise at the beauties that sparkle in these old-world systems, which are all too little known. On the other hand, our gratitude towards the God of the Gospel is increased as we recognize the abyss that separates the revealed religion from all human systems of religion. In primitive Christianity we can admire the miraculous synthesis of so many scattered truths. It is thus that in a sunbeam are united and eclipsed all the prismatic colours ; that the most brilliant stars fade and disappear at the rising of the sun. This superiority of the Christian teaching is especially apparent in the domain of eschatology, as soon as that is considered from the conditionalist point of view.

The Egyptian awaited the return of the soul into the mummy ; the Gospel promises to us a new and spiritual body.

The invisible majesty of Jehovah rises far superior to the imposing idols of Assyria. The magnificent idea of creation belongs only to the God of the Jews ; the heathen deities are only procreators.

The God of the Bible alone is free ; all rival gods are the slaves of destiny. Alone among all divinities, the God of Israel forbids any representation of his person.

The sun and moon, those great divinities of Babylon, Phœnicia, and Egypt, are for the author of the book of Genesis only great lights to illuminate the earthly scene ; the chapter that tells of the creation does not even give a name to these luminaries.

At Babylon and elsewhere sorcery was held in honour ; in Israel it was proscribed under pain of death.

In the Jewish commonwealth there was no executioner, nor was there any cruel refinement of torture in punishment.

The Gospel sets forth an ideal purity without imposing the crushing yoke of the Zend-Avesta.

The cross of Jesus Christ satisfies our sense of the need for expiation,

¹ Extract from an article by the author in the *Chrétien évangélique* of March, 1887, being a review of the *Religions de l'ancien monde*, a translation by M. Clément de Faye of the work by Prof. G. Rawlinson, M.A. Geneva, 1887.

without wounding our sentiments of humanity. The Phœnician divinities are continually drunken with human blood, and thirsting for more.

In Buddhism is found a tender compassion for fallen and suffering beings ; the true Christian cherishes this compassion without the strange exaggeration of the Hindoo, who in walking fears to crush an insect unperceived.

The Gospel preaches a salutary fear ; it teaches the notion of irreparability ; it threatens the impenitent with an inevitable chastisement ; it reminds him of the terrible fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, but it never reproduces the ignoble pictures of the mythological hells.

Then, too, the boasted serenity of the Olympian gods is a coarse eudemonism which serves as a dark background to bring out clearly the harmonious picture of the celestial Jerusalem, of the ineffable peace, the holy activity, and the blessed communion of the saints in light.

As it has been well said, the contrast between human religions and Christianity may be summed up thus : Those religions are like the imprints of the wandering steps of man seeking God and groping in the dark ; the Gospel, on the contrary, describing the life of Jesus, enables us to follow the shining traces of a God who comes near to man.

Rationalism had built high hopes upon the history of religions ; desiring to make use of it in order to prove that revelation contained nothing supernatural. We believe that the Gospel, when once disburdened of the accretions of Platonism, will speedily triumph over this test to which it has been subjected. In vain do the Philistines take possession of the ark of God in order to put it into the temple of their false gods ; Dagon falls and is broken to pieces before the sacred ark.

“ Unless we are utterly mistaken as to the religious and philosophical developement of the ancient world, it seems certain that if that world had a glimpse of the moral idea which is at the same time human and divine, that is all that can be said ; the thick clouds by which it was veiled before the eyes of that world were not dissipated. There is not one of the religions of ancient paganism which has not fallen back into the old pantheistic nature-worship, whatever the heights to which it may have attained at times in the light of a prophetic intuition. There is not one of its philosophies, not even that of Socrates and Plato, as admitted by the most trusty and impartial historians, that has freed itself from that dualism which is logically the negation of theism. Nor has faith in the future life ever attained to full and joyful certitude. Philosophy has never gone beyond the *perhaps* of the *Phædo*, and popular beliefs have always been mingled with fears and miserable superstitions.”¹

¹ *L' Ancien monde et le christianisme*, by Edmond de Pressensé, p. 654.

SUPPLEMENT No. XXIII.

TESTIMONY OF CONDITIONALIST MISSIONARIES.

(See page 397.)

§ 1. REV. W. A. HOBBS.

DURING a number of years Mr. Hobbs was a missionary in Bengal, at Sewry and afterwards at Calcutta. Writing to Rev. Edward White, he expressed himself thus :

I have not been forgetful of my standing obligation to diffuse as widely as possible a knowledge of the special truth so tersely expressed by Paul : " The wages of sin is *death*, but the *gift* of God is *eternal life*, through Jesus Christ our Lord." I regard this doctrine as being the backbone of Christianity. . . .

From September 15th to March 31st not less than ten thousand persons have heard from my lips, and from the lips of the native brethren associated with me, what we believe to be the truth as it is in Jesus.

And here I desire to note a fact which I think worth recording. Years ago, and before God had brought me to receive Scripture teaching as I now receive it, I was often sorely pressed in argument by these men of brains around me (especially those known as Brahmists¹) in relation to the *Christian doctrine* of unending suffering ; in vindication of which dogma I was necessitated to resort to a species of argument which I felt to be as sophistical to my own mind as it was evidently unsatisfactory to my questioners. I have now, however, to bear testimony to quite a new and different kind of experience. Cavilling Hindoos still ask me the same sort of questions concerning the nature and extent of God's vengeance ; the triumph-twinkle in their eyes indicating that they have anticipated my answer, and are only politely waiting to hear my words confirm their anticipation before launching out into a strain of cutting satire or assumed virtuous indignation at Christians attributing such a character to God. Their pent-up eloquence, however, rarely finds its desired vent. A minute or two spent in repudiating the doctrine as it is usually presented, and five minutes more in laying bare to view the essence of Christianity as set forth by the Lord Jesus himself (see John iii. 16, 36), gives to the whole matter such a reasonable and un-

¹ Meaning probably the members of the Brahma Somaj, disciples of the late Keshub Chunder Sen. See the recently published work entitled *Au Bengale*, by Charles Byse, Lausanne, 1892.

objectionable aspect, that in the vast majority of cases it leaves neither room nor desire for protracted discussion.¹

Writing of some of the better educated natives, Mr. Hobbs says :

To a man, so far as my observation has extended, they refuse to believe in the dogma of unending suffering. . . . It is almost amusing to note how vacant they look, how they flounder about in argument, when I tell them that I and many more do not believe in eternal torment. . . . I then lay before them half a dozen texts from the Bible, and ask them to tell me what they think the words mean. In nineteen cases out of twenty they declare that though my view is a new view to them, nevertheless it is that which they themselves would naturally adopt if they were for the first time reading the words. . . . It is astonishing how this view of divine truth commends itself to the almost instant apprehension and appreciation of the unprejudiced native Christian mind.²

§ 2. REV. L. SKREFSRUD.

Mr. Skrefsrud's missionary work has been carried on among the hill tribes of northern India. He has been called the apostle of the Santhals ; for years he dwelt among them in their poor huts sharing their frugal fare. An accomplished linguist, he speaks twenty-nine languages, and has been employed by the English Government to prepare a Dravidic grammar, which is to include no fewer than seventeen dialects. His testimony is, then, that of a scholar who has been able, better than many other missionaries, to make himself acquainted with the ideas and the spiritual needs of the natives.

Mr. Skrefsrud has declared that the zeal of the Churches founded by him has increased since he has himself been led to adopt the primitive doctrine respecting life in Christ. He has testified that :

1st. The thought that their ancestors would be burning for ever in hell was for these poor Santhals a terrible incubus ; they have a lively appreciation of the more evangelical teaching which has rid them of that burden.

2nd. They understand better than they did before that for their salvation there is need of a communion of soul with Jesus Christ as the only source of eternal life.

3rd. They understand also much better the supreme danger that threatens the unbelievers, and they have redoubled their efforts to bring over their compatriots to the Christian faith.

¹ E. White, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

² Extracts from a subsequent letter.

§ 3. REV. EVAN BRYANT.

After fifteen years of missionary life in China Mr. Bryant said :

I have preached the Gospel in China on the lines of conditional immortality for ten years, and I never saw any signs whatever of the soothing and soporific effect that has been spoken of, but I did see many a time the declaration of the destruction of the wicked producing an unmistakable sense of terror among my Chinese hearers ; and I know that not a few Chinese have felt satisfaction and joy at the assurance given them that in Christ is sure to them an endless life, perpetual incorruption, an abiding for ever, and divine duration. This teaching gave to me definiteness and freedom in my work, and great was my joy in being thus able to preach the Gospel of everlasting life to all sorts and to untold numbers of China's sinful people. . . . I believe that the doctrine of life eternal in the ever-abiding Christ (to him that believeth in that Christ), with its correlated ideas, is profoundly fitted to meet and sweep away the falsehood of Buddhism, Tauism, and Confucianism, and to fulfil whatever is true connected with them.¹

To sum up, we may say that the characteristic feature of the religions of Eastern Asia is despair. Crushed under the weight of life's troubles, knowing nothing of the marvellous deliverance brought about by Jesus Christ, Brahminists and Buddhists are longing for the suppression of conscient life. They curse the present state of existence ; they will detest yet more the notion of an endless hell. They refuse to believe that a personal God can have created an imperfect world ; they will all the more reasonably reject the traditional God who, as some missionaries say, created the universe without foreseeing the lamentable result of his work, and who, as other missionaries claiming to be yet more orthodox say, has predestinated hundreds of millions of human beings to unending torments.

But tell them that Jesus frees us from sin and sorrow, that he confers upon us new vitality, and that eternal torments are utterly foreign to the divine plan, and their aversion will speedily give place to admiration, and they, too, will be willing to take advantage of the blessed immortality promised in the Gospel.

¹ *Christian World*, 13 July, 1882, and extract from a private letter.

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