

wise as to make it far easier for me to adopt the view of Euripides, that what we call death may be but the dawning of true knowledge and of true life. The greatest philosopher of modern times, the master and teacher of all who shall study the process of evolution for many a day to come, holds that the conscious soul is not the product of a collocation of material particles, but is in the deepest sense a divine effluence. According to Mr. Spencer, the divine energy which is manifested throughout the knowable universe is the same energy that wells up in us as consciousness. Speaking for myself, I can see no insuperable difficulty in the notion that at some period in the evolution of Humanity this divine spark may have acquired sufficient concentration and steadiness to survive the wreck of material forms and endure forever.

Only on some such view can the reasonableness of the universe which still remains above our finite power of comprehension, maintain its ground. There are some minds inaccessible to the class of considerations here alleged, and perhaps there always will be. But on such grounds, if on no other, the faith in immortality is likely to be shared by all who look upon the genesis of the highest spiritual qualities in Man as the goal of Nature's creative work. This view has survived the Copernican revolution in science and it has survived the Darwinian revolution. Nay, if the fore-going exposition be sound, it is Darwinism which has placed Humanity upon a higher pinnacle than ever. The future is lighted for us with the radiant colors of hope. Strife and sorrow shall disappear. Peace and love shall reign supreme. The dream of poets, the lesson of priest and prophet, the inspiration of the great musician, is confirmed in the light of modern knowledge; and as we gird ourselves up for the work of life, we may look forward to the time when in the truest sense the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Subjective or Altruistic Immortality.

BY AUGUSTE COMTE.

The Family and the Country, these are the two collective beings which in due succession were to lead by a natural process to the conception and the feeling of Humanity, which may be looked on as the common country or the universal family. The three complex terms will ever be the successive steps of a natural progression indispensable for our heart and intellect if we would reach the true synthesis. On a comparison of the two terms

peculiar to the earlier period, we see at once that the larger union is of a nature to foster our sense of dignity, the more intimate to secure fixity of existence. The family is the basis of the state, but it requires the influence of the state upon it to perfect its own ends, and are thus seen to be both equally connected with the term which completes the series of collective existences.

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The Great Being is the whole constituted by the beings, past, future and present, which co-operate willingly in perfecting the order of the world. Every gregarious animal race has a natural tendency to such co-operation. But it is only the paramount race on each planet that can attain unity as a race, for its ascent to power necessarily checks that of the lower animals. This justifies, in our systemic definition of the composite being, our omitting its peculiar species. On the other hand, the spontaneity of the co-operation and its external end are clearly indispensable conditions, if it is to be consistent and permanent. Eliminating, then, what may be understood without indistinctness, we confine our definition of the Great Being to: THE CONTINUOUS WHOLE FORMED BY THE BEINGS WHICH CONVERGE. In this condensed form I shall often make implicit use of the definition, leaving it to the reader to reintegrate the terms suppressed.

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The direct service of the Great Being is the exclusive appanage of our objective life; but the excellence of Humanity can only be worthily shown by its subjective and external existence. Our nature needs to be purified by death for its higher attributes to be seen; they stand out then clear of the grosser accompaniments which previously obscured them.

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In two senses, then, the living are brought more and more under the patronage of the dead, the dead being at once their protectors and types. The dead alone can represent Humanity; the living, born her children, as a rule become her servants, unless they degenerate into mere parasites. Granting it possible to form a judgment of the objective life during its course, it seldom is so fruitful in its results as to secure its main achievement from being obscured by subsequent degeneration. Till it be ended, even in the best men, the true attributes of our nature cannot fully assert themselves; we have to make constant allowance for the defects due to the necessities of our physical constitution. The true sphere of the soul's superiority is the subjective life; that, apart from exceptional cases of reprobation, belongs exclusively to such of its functions as are assimilable by others, the

purely personal elements no longer interfering.

No amount of superiority, however, can call the subjective life into existence, or give it permanence; for this is dependent on the objective. The living, it is true, are subject to the power of the dead, but, on the other hand, the dead cannot exercise their power save through the medium of the living, though it is not open to the latter to refuse their co-operation, even when rebelling against the inevitable yoke. The objective life is direct and complete, its chief characteristic is will; the subjective passes under the empire of fate. The function of the dead is to form the immovable foundation, that of the living to introduce the secondary modifications of man's destiny. The direct service of Humanity, then, has its source in the will, the condensed expression of all our brain action; for the will, in its proper sense, combines the impulse given by the heart with the light derived from the intellect and the guidance furnished by the character. And the will has a natural safeguard against caprice, in that its efficiency depends on the maintenance of the subordination of the living to the dead. Emancipated from this control the will loses its power for good, and becomes a mere source of disturbance.

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Accept it in a right spirit, and in this very dependence lies the chief source of our true greatness. I have shown in the last volume, that the attribute of omnipotence introduces a radical contradiction into the idea of God, from the impossibility of reconciling omnipotence with wisdom and goodness. Compare the two cases and we see more distinctly the logical connection between the dignity and the dependence of the true Great Being. The condition of unity for man is complete submission; without it, as I have shown over and over again, his feelings would be ill-regulated, his thoughts incoherent, his actions a mere source of disorder. We may regret that the order of things is not more within man's power to alter. But true wisdom forbids our wishing it to be in any part open to indefinite modification. As we advance, so far from shrinking from this inevitable yoke, we extend its range by paying to human institutions the obedience we cannot refuse the laws of nature.

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The composite nature of Humanity involves its having as its principle, love, the sole source of voluntary co-operation. The constant supremacy of feeling over thought and action thus becomes the fundamental law of the human consensus. Love, as the principle of synthesis, had been instinctively recognized by Fetichism, and deliberately sanctioned by Theocracy. But apart

from their inadequate estimate of the benevolent instincts, these two rudimentary religions were found irreconcilable with the ulterior progress of our intellectual and active powers. Their triumphant advance broke through the earlier discipline but the sense that they needed control gave rise to an admirable attempt to reconstruct the supremacy of the heart. The ultimate result of the effort was, however, to show the increasing loss of power in the fictitious synthesis in regard to this capital problem, the true solution of which necessarily devolved on the principle which gave to reality the sanction of utility. The gradual outcome of the unfettered evolution of thought and activity, the positive spirit, has a natural tendency to restore to feeling its ascendancy, the better to place under its direction the normal development of our powers.

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And yet the idea were incomplete without a direct examination of the chief attribute of human unity, viz., the necessary coincidence of duty and happiness, both equally placed in Living for Others. Complete as is the sanction, and natural as complete, given by the sympathetic instincts to every right exertion of our intellect, every right exercise of our active powers, such efforts are always urged as means to an end, the means adapted to the overcoming the difficulties of man's position. The highest gratification they can afford is derived from their unavoidable and constant ministrations to the Great Being. Set aside these wants, and man's happiness, as his true unity, depends on his emotional nature. A woman's pen has fitly expressed this prerogative of man, and the admirable expression is her chief claim to immortality, 'There is nothing real in the world but love.'

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Thus realizing the highest aspirations of theology in its dreams, the kingdom of Humanity is a kingdom of love, perfecting our inward satisfaction by co-operation from without. Each makes others his chief object, and as a natural result gains the support of others in his own need. But he may not gain it, and if he gain it, it is not the motive of altruism, nor can it be its adequate reward. We are liable to set too much store by such reciprocity of services, owing to habits contracted under the egoistic synthesis, and any over-value of it would endanger the unity of our sympathetic, by stimulating our personal, instincts. Even in the anarchy of modern times, the true moral conception found its spontaneous expression in the noble wish of the great Danton, 'Perish my memory, only let my country be free.'

Yet even in this heroic cry we trace the idea that the outward re-