

"If a Man Dies Shall He Live Again?"

IMMORTALITY

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The conservative mind must approach a discussion of this subject with much hesitancy, and question, as to his equipment to treat a problem which has engaged the thoughtful attention of the greatest intellects of all ages, without results which place the affirmative view beyond the realm of doubt.

That there is doubt on the part of many on this subject is certainly not in the least surprising, as there is no proposition, even as it relates to material, or so called true science, which may not be gainsaid, questioned and argued, for and against.

This being true, skepticism and doubt is certainly to be anticipated when we enter the field of speculative science, and deal with intangible entities.

The readiness on the part of many to accept the strictly materialistic view of life, is explained in part, by the fact that many are disqualified by lack of capability for logical deduction, but more especially, because we live in a material world, and our five special senses, are brought to bear only on material things.

It is a struggle for the possession of material acquisitions which principally occupies our attention through life.

It being known full well that such possessions constitute the means by which material comforts and gratifications are secured—There is also, PRIORITY OF IMPRESSION; as, the developing mind ordinarily becomes fairly well informed as to his material environments and relations, before it is sufficiently matured to enter the field of speculative study.

Many articles on the subject of immortality, (mostly materialistic) have lately appeared in the San Francisco Press, in one of which it is sententiously declared that a belief in immortality is "degrading."

Another tells us that "Death ends all," "Death is annihilation" and a few sentences further on declares that death is "eternal rest and sleep," unwittingly perhaps, in his last declaration endorsing some form of eternal existence, as it is inconceivable, that a thing, or person can sleep or rest, without having an existence, or, after having been "annihilated."

One Rev. gentleman of some note is reported to have said in a discourse delivered at Golden Gate Hall, March 2nd, last, "There is nothing known of immortality." "I am more concerned in having the best there is in the life of now."

As he did not say what he considered the best in the life of now, he leaves much latitude for construction by those who accept him for a teacher, and thereby renders himself exceedingly popular with an average San Francisco popular audience.

If he had said HE knew nothing of immortality, and was willing to mortgage his possible chances of a life to come, in order to secure the best there is in this life, we would have been able to definitely classify his position, and to conclude that he ought to transfer his allegiance from the pulpit to American politics where his type of talent would have full play, unembarrassed by possible scruples. To say there is "nothing known" on any subject, smacks of a demagogic pretense of a possession of all knowledge on the subject, and suggests the possibility of a degree of egotism most malignant, and out of keeping with his profession.

Every multi-millionaire who has acquired his wealth by wrecking the material interests of his fellow men, and (nearly nine out of a hundred) have pledged their possible future for the "life of now" will gladly enlist under the Rev. gentleman's banner.

The unscrupulous, the avaricious, the debauchee, the forger and the libertine, will read such discourses with marked approval, and construe it as license, without the deterrent fear of penalty.

The discourse in question is only noticed on account of its source, and the demoralizing effect it may have on immature minds.

BELIEF.
There are degrees of belief, depending on the conclusiveness of evidence.

Very few indeed believe any proposition unqualifiedly, BUT ACCEPT, because of a preponderance of evidence. There is no question in which is limited, and of which we know all; if we could at once master every detail of science, in one or all departments, then progress would cease, and the purpose of creation would be defeated.

To say there is "nothing known of immortality" is dogmatic and extravagant, but to say that the evidence of immortality is not so sufficiently conclusive as to convince all minds, and, that arguments may be made both for and against, the statement would be rational, and bring us back to the question of the preponderance and convincing nature of testimony by which we ACCEPT a given theory as most nearly proven, and therefore, to the rational

mind, most worthy of our ACCEPTANCE as our rule and guide of life.

If it is required to prove any proposition, beyond the domain of question or argument, before we can say there is anything known of it, then we may safely challenge the materialist to prove that there is a material world, or that he has a material body, and declare there is nothing known of physical existence or of material in any form.

If, in the absence of infallible and unquestionable evidence, we are justified in declaring, there is "nothing known" on a given subject, then no human being is in possession of a definite, unqualified fact. As, when the materialist attempts to prove that he has a physical body, he must depend on the testimony of his five special SENSES for the evidence and these MATERIAL avenues are all subject to disease and perversion of function, and are therefore by no means infallible.

Double vision, hearing sounds, voices and whisperings where none exist, perversion of taste, smelling and feeling, are all of common occurrence, and persons afflicted with these functional aberrations of the special senses, are by no means all confined to insane asylums.

Notwithstanding the universally acknowledged fallibility of these witnesses, (and they are the only source from which evidence can be derived, in proof of physical existence) who will be so irrational as to declare, "there is no evidence of the existence of a physical body or a material world?"

We believe there are evidences that the mind is a definite though intangible ENTITY—a principle: the disease, death or destruction of which is inconceivable; and viewed in this light immortality seems an assured fact. A presentation of some of the evidences of a soul entity, and indestructibility is the purpose of this paper.

The most wonderful entities of our world are, in fact, things unseen; we cannot see the force of gravitation any more than we can see the immortal life principle in man, because seeing with material eyes, we can only see material things.

PRIMAL LAW PROVES AN ORIGINAL LAW-MAKER.

No rational person questions the existence of a power called gravitation force, a force which revolves the earth on its axis; which carries our earth around the sun in its orbit, which causes birth, life and death to come to all animate things with perfect uniformity. As these forces always act exactly in the same way, without variation, repeating themselves millions of times without varying an iota, we must certainly all agree that they are directed and governed by law. No one can rationally claim that a law can make or create itself. It is beyond our conception; nothing cannot create. So we are forced into a recognition of an original law-maker. Law in its systematic and orderly direction of force is, of itself a flat contradiction of chance in the premises. These propositions must be most conclusively impressed on the rational mind, when he observes the fact that the Infinite Creator always moves along the lines of perfect laws, for the accomplishment of absolutely definite purposes, demonstrating design, and therefore, a Designer, and, leading to beneficent results. Reasoning from results to cause, (and surely there can be no results without a cause,) we are thus enabled to demonstrate the existence of not only a first great original cause, but we also learn most unqualifiedly that this original and only source of creative power, is endowed with the attributes of design, infinite wisdom, beneficence of purpose and measureless power.

DESIGN AND ULTIMATE PURPOSE.

To illustrate, let us consider the subject of rainfall. From the surface of the ocean vapor arises, as a result of heat this vapor is carried over the earth's surface by air currents; when the vapor laden current meets another air current of a lower temperature, condensation results, and the water is brought (in drops, for better distribution) by gravitation force directed by law to the earth's surface, not only giving us pure water to drink, but affording a system of irrigation, which renders our world productive, beautiful and habitable. Gravitation force carries away the excess of water, and in so doing, washes and cleanses the earth's surface, carries away refuse, debris, and disease, generating matters through the rivulets, creeks and rivers, into the oceans. This gives us the first great universal system of sanitation, and sewerage of which all human efforts are but mere imitations. The constant reception of these currents of waste matter, reinforced by the death and decomposition of marine animals, would soon render all oceans putrid; and the winds sweeping over these expansive surfaces would carry pestilence and universal death over the earth's surface.

But for this, infinite wisdom, design and beneficence makes ample provision by saturating all the oceans with four of the most perfect antiseptics known to chemical science, (viz.) Iodine, Bromine, Chlorine and Chloride of Sodium.

Now, at first thought it would seem that the whole plan would prove abortive, because vapor laden with the chemicals just mentioned, and deposited on the earth's surface by rainfall would just as surely destroy all vegetables and animal life, as would the air currents coming from the surface of putrid oceans. Here we recognize the wonder of wonders! The miracle of miracles! How is it possible to bring these vapors from the oceans without

their being saturated with these irritating antiseptics? No chemist or alchemist ever lived who can tell you. He simply knows that out of a saturated solution of poisonous chemicals, by some miracle surpassing human comprehension, we are given distilled and absolutely pure water. Hence we are forced to conclude that nothing is not possessed with measureless powers, wisdom, design and beneficence of purpose. That there is an intelligence endowed with measureless power, wisdom, design and beneficence, who is the author of our world, and who created and set in motion the laws which control the functional activities of every detail of its mechanism. Here can be found no element of chance, but perfect precision and co-ordination of innumerable occult and silent forces, moving irresistibly forward to the accomplishment of absolutely definite purposes.

THE FULFILLMENT OF A WONDERFUL DESIGN.

For further illustration let us, for a moment contemplate that laboratory of wonders, the human body. The measures for protection of the various organs are exactly proportioned to their delicacy and importance in the physical economy.

The body is a living and moving illustration of almost all known principles of science and philosophy. The monster vessels which plow the oceans have a prototype of their motor power in the human heart. The science of pneumatics has a primal illustration in the action of the human lungs. There never was a musical instrument which was not fashioned after the human vocal organs. From the simplest glasses to the largest telescope in existence are all constructed in accordance with the science of optics, as primarily existent in the human eye. Every telegraphic system with its operator manipulating his instrument and sending dispatches along its lines, has its prototype in the life principle, the real though intangible man, manipulating the brain, as its instrument, conceiving and transmitting ideas, and motor force along all the lines of the nervous system.

The primal illustration of all architectural effort is found in the human skeleton framework, its enclosure and external embellishments. There is nothing known to sanitary science which is not imitative of emunctories and eliminative processes found to exist for the maintenance of the health and purity of the human body. There is nothing in the science of acoustics which is not found to have existed in the human ear from the date of man's existence on earth. The philosophy of the simple and compound lever are all well portrayed in the flexion of both the upper and lower extremities. It would seem also that our whole system of jurisprudence exists primarily, within us. The analogy, to say the least is certainly interesting, of a judge presiding in court hearing the testimony of witnesses and deciding the question at issue upon the testimony, and the essential but intangible man similarly, sitting in judgement, using the brain as its instrument, receiving the testimony of the five special senses as witnesses; in each court a verdict is rendered on the testimony, and the FORCES directed by LAW are set in motion for carrying out the court's mandate. Who can contemplate the measureless splendor of genius who designed and fashioned this wonderfully constructed tenement house for the soul's habitation, without an overwhelming sense of wonder, awe, and admiration.

"THIS PERFECTION OF DESIGN."

If immortality awaits us, it is because the soul is a principle and therefore of very necessity indestructible, and, as an immaterial entity cannot make itself manifest and fulfill a mission in contact with a MATERIAL world, we are given material bodies for the soul's occupancy during our earthly assignment. Herein, we see the design and philosophy of the physical aspect of our existence. We believe we have proven clearly, that in our material world there is no element of chance. That a created object proves a creator. That the existence of primal law, proves the existence of an original law-maker—that the perfection of design and perfect co-ordination of forces for the production of definite results, proves the existence of a designer, and in the fact that beneficent results always come from these co-relative forces, we recognize also his attribute of perfect beneficence. We believe that by this line of reasoning we cannot only prove the existence of a Creator, but by reasoning from results, we can unerringly discover in him the attributes of Power, Wisdom, Design and Beneficence in a degree which surpass human understanding. If the material body emanates from an original power, endowed with the attributes as above indicated it must be equally true that the intellectual and moral constitution of the mind of man emanates from the same source.

Indeed, so far as we can conceive, it can come from no other, and design is here clearly portrayed, as in the mechanism of the material body or the material world.

The desire for immortality, a longing for a reunion after death with those we love, is an inherent primal attribute of the soul. It exists in all, from the barbarian to the most enlightened. We are so constituted and so emanate from the creative hand of the Infinite and Allwise first cause. No one ever lays away one of his family in the grave, without his soul goes out in pleading and supplication that he may meet that one again in a new

and better world. Such hope and belief is the moral ballast of the human race. Man did not create this desire and hope, for he can create nothing. We see design in every department of the Creator's constructive Laboratory, also in this. To create man with this longing for immortality, and without the means of its realization, would show the absence of all designs or intelligent ultimate purpose, and instead, the refinement of cruelty. It would be the one absolute failure of a definite design, and ultimate wise and beneficent purpose, in the whole realm of creative effort. There would be no purpose, design or wisdom in man's existence if ("Death ends all,") as the materialist tells us. It certainly is consistent and rational to believe that the author and creator of our material world and all material things is equally the designer and creator of the intangible entities. "In the formulation of the human soul. He has not endowed it with a single attribute without a wise purpose.

He has not given the soul any longing or desire, without a possibility of a realization of that desire at some time, in some place; otherwise his plan as it relates to man would be devoid of justice, reason, consistency and beneficence, which obtain so universally elsewhere in his economy.

Man did not create the desire within himself for immortality. Man can create nothing. All the human agencies the world has ever known cannot add to, or take away one single soul attribute. He is endowed with capabilities to do right or wrong, and the promptings of a conscience to direct him in his course in life. He is possessed with the power of keeping those qualities of mind, which if in control lead to violation of moral law, and therefore punishment, in obedience. Hence the Lex-Taltonis, is rational and just and by its reminders and penalties, becomes the basis of moral progress. All must admit the restraining influence of a knowledge of the fact, that a penalty must follow a violation of the law. From temporal law, one may escape, but from the penalty for violation of the laws of the Infinite, there is no escape, even though its infliction may be postponed for half a life time, or even to eternity. The rational mind, conversant with this truth is thereby prompted to make a constant effort to align itself with the ways of moral rectitude, and thereby insure not only his own happiness, but become an active contributor in the accomplishment of the ultimate destiny of man.

Here are evidences of wisdom, design and beneficence, as clearly portrayed in the mental and moral constitution of the human mind or soul, as in the wonderfully intricate and perfect adaptation of our physical organization for the fulfillment of its purpose.

It would seem that we too often fail to recognize evidences of a life to come, which bestrew our pathway all through this life. It is certainly suggestive, that we lie down and take a semblance of death in our sleeping hours, to awake to a new day, and new effort—a new life. We know in mid-winter when there is a total absence of vegetable life, and nature seems dead, that at a given time the vegetable world will spring into a new life. It was the writer's privilege to observe the transition changes of an insignificant "grub" from a repulsive creeping thing to the development of wings of beautiful color which carried it away into the upper world of sunshine, and into a new life.

There was never a more wonderful miracle, and so suggestive, that to my mind it was conclusive. Here alone is proof, positive of a new form of existence without the aid of any of the collateral evidences which go so far to prove a new life, awaiting humanity. The materialist declares that "death ends all," that all life phenomena are the result of brain function" (mistaking results for cause) and, "that all knowledge we possess is the result of impressions made on the "Tablets" of the brain through the medium of the special senses." "That these impressions on the brain cells are filed away for future reference, something after the method of photographer's filing away his negatives for future use, and that memory is explained in searching out of these negatives or brain impressions; that the systematic filing away of these impressions made on the brain cells, explains the acquisition of classified knowledge."

In order to test the truth of this material hypothesis, I wish to call attention to two unquestioned truths in science:

First—that the body is made up of an aggregation of cells.

Second—that in accordance with physiological law, these cells serve their purpose, die, disintegrate and are eliminated from the system. That these two latter propositions are unquestioned scientific truths, I think no one will attempt to gainsay.

It is also true, that the greater and more persistent functional activity of the brain, than in other parts and organs, renders it subject to more active cell destruction and reconstruction, than obtains elsewhere in the system. It is an estimate, that by this cell destruction and reconstruction, the whole physical structure is made anew, every seven years. While it probably occurs in much less time—let us accept the seven years theory—as we certainly do know that it must occur several times during the period of an ordinary life. Now in view of the known facts, as above stated; is

it not a further fact that if it is truly a material proposition, the nerve cells which received impressions seven years ago and have since lost their vitality, been disintegrated and eliminated from the body, that they must have taken their impressions with them? And would not the well stored mind of seven years ago now be a blank in consequence? Except such ideas as have been acquired during the last Septennial period. As a fact, would not his ideas begin to grow hazy on the day following their acquisition, for, we must remember this cell destruction is an every day occurrence? From day to day, week to week and month to month as these cells disappear, one's intellectual acquisitions must go also, or at best leave only fragments of knowledge, and such a general disarrangement of such ideas as may by any physical possibility remain, that intellectual chaos could only result. If the material theory be true, no one could know anything, definitely for any considerable time, and at the end of every seven years his mind must be a blank, and he must begin again and learn everything over.

There is no escape from this conclusion if mind is the result of brain function. As proof that the mind is not the result of brain function but is itself an entity, the writer once knew a very aged lady who lived during the Revolutionary War—At 90 years of age, she ceased to know her own children, but mention the Revolutionary War, George Washington, Greene or any of the leading revolutionists, and she would give detailed description of their personal appearances, and what they said, their dress and bearing and other particulars relating to that sanguinary and soul trying contest, surpassing all the books. Now this old lady's brain had been rebuilt and made new a dozen times over, and she ought not and could not have known anything of revolutionary times if the materialistic theory be true, whereas, these impressions were the only things she did know, as she was almost totally oblivious to her immediate surroundings. Would it not have been absolutely impossible for her to have remembered these things if mind were the product of brain function, and brain cell impressions, when we know to a certainty that she did not possess the same brain by several removes, that she had when she acquired these ideas? Only recently a man of mature years told me that the admonitions of his mother in his childhood days, had come to his mind in all his years, and had been his moral ballast through life.

The materialist will ask you if mind is not the result of brain function, how is it when insanity exists, it grows progressively worse just in proportion to the extent of organic or functional brain lesions? We answer that harmonious mental music, (right co-ordination of ideas) results whenever the brain's chosen instrument is normally attuned;—if the brain is deranged functionally from disease, our ideas are erratic, inco-ordinate and inconsistent—not the fault of the performer, however, but of a faulty instrument. Who would be so inconsistent as to criticize an accomplished pianist for producing discordant music from a wrecked and unstrung instrument—it seems plain that in either case the discordant results come from faulty instruments, and not from the performers for, in any case, there can be no "mind diseases."

These facts in refutation of the theory of the material origin of the mind have not, and cannot be disproved.

In the conclusion of this paper, I am aware that I have presented only a few of the many arguments in proof of a life hereafter. Nor is it written for the entertainment of experts in the field of so-called "higher criticism," but with the sole purpose of showing the fallacy, lack of philosophy, consistency, design, in fact, the theory, with every other department of the absolute incomprehensibility of the materialistic creators handi-work. It is written especially to present to the developing mind the important fact that it is not safe, nor for their good, neither here or hereafter, to cast aside the saving influence of a belief in personal responsibility and life after this. The cheerful acceptance of the "best there is in the world of now," without including moral responsibility affecting our welfare now and hereafter, will be construed as a license to the licentious and avaricious, to "go for what there is in sight" for that is the purpose (if any purpose there be) in such a life. Such creeds and influences are certainly calculated to antagonize the Creative plan of progressive, moral, advancement of humanity, with the prospective happiness of its devotee, and cause him to dispense misery and degradation to his associates.

There is much restraining influence in a clear knowledge of the fact that there is no violation of the primal law, without a resulting penalty, and that the penalty will correspond with the enormity of the transgression.

In this proposition we ought to see pretty clearly the philosophy of right. If death end all, then good example, moral rectitude and a clean consistent life goes for naught, and to teach evil is as consistent as to teach justice and right.

Dante's Inferno is a fitting representation of humanity without hope. There is hope however, and an active exercise of that soul attribute in the breast of every rational being.

Man did not create it. It emanates from the creative hand of the Infinite first cause, whose works show design, wisdom and beneficence; who has given us no desire, hope or longing of soul, which is not a subject for realization at some time, in some place.