

Immortality

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BY UNIVERSAL CONSENT

'If you were to destroy in mankind the belief in immortality, not only love but every living force maintaining the life of the world would at once be dried up. Moreover, nothing would then be immoral, everything would be permissible, even cannibalism.' Those are the words of one of the giants of modern literature, the Russian novelist, Fedor Dostoyevsky. He is but one of a united chorus of thinkers of all time who have proclaimed their belief in survival after death. 'Those who hope for no other life are dead even for this,' said Goethe. 'The thought of being nothing after death is a burden insupportable to a virtuous man,' was the verdict of John Dryden; 'we naturally aim at happiness, and cannot bear to have it confined to our present being.' He is re-echoing the considered opinion of the philosopher of Rome, Cicero: 'When I consider the wonderful activity of the mind, so great a memory of what is past, and such a capacity of penetrating into the future; when I behold such a number of arts and sciences, and such a multitude of discoveries thence arising, I believe and am firmly persuaded that a nature which contains so many things within itself cannot but be immortal.' Milton expressed the truth with his usual vigour: 'The spirit of man, which God inspired, cannot together perish with this corporeal clod.' Aristotle is in agreement: 'Whatsoever that be within us that feels, thinks, desires, and animates is something celestial, divine, and, consequently, imperishable.' With Charles Dickens men still cry: 'Oh, thank God, all who see it, for that older fashion yet - of immortality!'

From first to last the Bible is full of belief in immortality, so full that it is not to our purpose here to prove from its pages that the human soul will survive after death. Nor are we concerned with the constant teaching of the Church of Christ, proclaimed by Doctor after Doctor and Saint after Saint. It is a revealed truth; that we accept. Our purpose in these pages is to show that faith in immortality is supremely reasonable.

THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN SOUL

What do we know about the nature of the soul? In everyday life, as in philosophy, the word 'soul' has many different meanings. Here it is used to indicate 'the subject of our mental life, the ultimate principle by which we feel, think, and will'. Qualities must have a subject in which to inhere. You cannot have whiteness without having something which is white. Physical qualities, such as size and strength, imply that some physical thing exists which is of certain dimensions and possesses certain power. So, spiritual qualities imply the existence of a spiritual being in which they inhere. That spiritual being is a soul.

The other day I was reading about the devastation caused by volcanic eruptions over the centuries. I read how the city of Pompeii perished during the eruption of Vesuvius which followed an earthquake in the first century of the Christian era. But I knew that Pompeii and all its buildings were not reduced to nothingness. Even what did not survive beneath the ashes did not go out of

being. It merely altered its form of being. Every particle of those Roman houses, every bit of those stones and animals and men is still in this physical universe. When we say they have ceased to exist, as we do, we mean that they have lost their individuality. How can anything cease to exist? In three ways and only three. In the first, it might be annihilated, that is, deprived of its existence, by the Creator who brought it into being; or the parts which compose it may be separated; or, thirdly, the parts of some other being which it depends upon for its existence may be dissolved. We can dismiss the first briefly for the present. If the soul is created by God, who is infinite wisdom and goodness, it follows that it will not be annihilated by Him, because that would be contrary to His infinite perfection. What of the other two?

It is easy enough to see how they apply to material things. If an aircraft crashes it is destroyed because its component parts break up, they cease to adhere together. The rainbow we see in a puddle on the roadside vanishes, not because its parts disintegrate, but for a variety of natural reasons, one of which might be that the water in which the reflection takes place is evaporated by a warm sun.

THE SOUL HAS NO PARTS

Can the human soul cease to exist in either of these ways? It could only perish by the separation of its parts, like the crashing aircraft, if it had parts. If it has no parts, that is, if it is not an aggregate of atoms possessing extension, the parts cannot be dissolved. But the soul has no parts. We prove that by examining its actions. It works, like anything else, according to its nature. You, who are reading what I have written, can think of individual things - Francis, a lake, a racing driver; but you can also have in your mind ideas which correspond to those things but which are abstract - man, water, speed. Within you, then, is a faculty capable of abstracting from the particular characteristics of material things. You can disengage the thing from its material setting. You can strip it completely of all material conditions. Man is a universal concept which applies to every member of the species as well as to the individual of body and soul, Francis. It is a spiritual concept. So is water as against lake and speed as against a racing driver.

The faculty by which you make such abstractions cannot be material. If the idea wore material, it would occupy space. It would correspond part by part with the organ which apprehends it. As St. Thomas Aquinas says: 'If the understanding were a corporal substance, intelligible ideas of things would be received by it only as representing individual things. At that rate the understanding would have no conception of the universal, but only of the particular, which is manifestly false'. The very fact that we can form abstract or universal ideas is, in itself, a proof that the soul is immaterial or spiritual. In its essence it is independent of matter; it is immortal.

THE SOULS OF BEASTS

As we proceed with our discussion of the nature of the human soul it is possible that some readers may be wondering how all we are writing applies to the brute beasts. Are not some animals extraordinarily intelligent? Are there not many stories of how dogs have saved the lives of men by their sagacity? Such questions are answered by psychologists who have proved by many experiments over long periods that the animal is incapable of forming abstract ideas and that its activity is not spiritual. The principle of its action, its soul, is intrinsically and essentially dependent on matter. It has neither intellect nor free will. As Gruender puts it: 'Even the highest psychic functions of which a brute animal is capable, those of the internal senses (imagination, sensitive memory, etc.) which play such an important part in instinctive activities, all are organic functions.'

All of them admit of localization in some cortical nerve-centre. Hence the entire being of the brute soul is "immersed in matter". It is, in scholastic terminology, the "substantial form" of the body and nothing else but that, i.e., its whole *raison d'être* is to give life, vegetative and sensitive, to the body. This is implied when we say that the brute soul is intrinsically dependent on the body'. (Psychology without a Soul, p. 146.)

St. Thomas Aquinas did not think of the 'soul' as a thing or being on its own account but as the principle which directed, coordinated, and unified an organism. Because the soul is there the organism is able to act within itself and as a whole. If there were no soul there would be no reason why the different elements which make up an animal should act together, in order, and as one. An apt comparison is that of a child playing with bricks. He uses just the same amount of physical energy whether he throws them in disorderly heaps or builds them into the shape of a house. In much the same way the action of the principle of animal life, called the soul, does not affect the total energy of the organism but simply directs it in a particular way. The energy in an animal would be the same whether the physical forces in it act independently and at random or are directed in a definite way and co-ordinated by the soul. This soul depends for its existence on the matter which it informs; it belongs to the material order, as contrasted with the spiritual one. At the same time, it is not endowed with the properties of matter because it is not extended in space nor is it a source of physico-chemical energy. It acts in space; it directs energy but it is neither extended nor productive of energy. It is incapable of life apart from the body and perishes with it. But we must not say that the animal soul is material in the sense that it can be touched. It is material though it enjoys some operations that are beyond the merely material. These are perfectly consistent with a principle of life which is intrinsically and essentially dependent on matter.

LEARNING FROM A JUDGMENT

What I have written is a judgment: 'The soul is immortal'. In it are two distinct ideas, the idea of the soul and the idea of immortality. In that judgment they are apprehended together, compared and pronounced compatible. This proves that the soul is one undivided entity. I could make no such judgment if the concept of 'soul' were in one part of my mind, and the concept 'immortal' in another. To compare them I would need a third part, but that would be impossible because such a part would know nothing of either of the other concepts. Nor would they be able to compare themselves any more than ideas in Mr. Jones's mind can compare themselves with ideas in Mr. Smith's mind. Again, if the mind were divided into a multiplicity of parts and many ideas were being compared in each part, there would obviously be a great variety of judgments being made by the mind of the same individual on the same topics. But that is contrary to all our experience. The very fact that we are able to make judgments proves that the mind has no parts, or that the soul, in the language of philosophy, is simple; that is, without composition of any kind.

What we have been thinking about is a very simple operation of the mind. We can do vastly more complex things. Not only can we compare ideas and form judgments but we can compare those judgments and draw conclusions from them. For example, 'The human soul is spiritual' is a judgment; so is the statement, 'What is spiritual is immortal'; from these two we draw the certain conclusion, 'Therefore the soul is immortal'. It is impossible to explain this and the far more complicated mental processes of which man is capable by supposing that all our ideas and all our judgments are in different compartments of the mind. There is no explanation except that based on the fact that the soul is one indivisible agent.

LEARNING FROM REFLECTION

Now think of the wonderful power we possess of reflection. John thinks of himself; he can think of himself thinking of himself and recognize that the John who thinks is the same as the John who is being thought of. His mind doubles back upon itself, it inspects itself. Material things cannot do that. My eye cannot look at itself; still less can it look at itself looking at itself. To be able to do that would be directly opposite to the very nature of matter. A book cannot read itself, a knife cut itself, a brush brush itself or a violin play itself. Nothing which has parts can double back upon itself and act upon itself. Part of it may act upon another part of it but the whole of it cannot act upon the whole of it. How different is the human mind! The fact that it can know itself and reflect upon itself in a thousand acts of knowing proves that it is in no way extended and has no parts. St. Thomas Aquinas puts it this way: 'Of no bodily substance is the action turned back upon the agent. But the understanding in its action does reflect and turn round upon itself; for as it understands an object so also it understands that it does understand, and so endlessly. Hence Holy Scripture calls intelligent subsistent beings by the name "spirits", using of them the style which it is wont to use for the incorporeal Deity.'

OUR ABIDING IDENTITY

We think back over our lives. We recall experiences of the past which thrilled us. I know, for example, that I am the same person who nearly forty years ago was thrilled to receive the information that I had matriculated. It was I who was punished at school, I who went to college, I who studied philosophy and theology, I who was ordained a priest, I who served as a Chaplain in the Royal Air Force. I know that I have been myself now for some fifty years. Every man is conscious of his own abiding identity. How are we to explain it?

Dare we argue that the mind is made up of successive mental states? Certainly not, for there is not the slightest reason why such states should be connected with each other any more than the clouds which follow one another in the March winds. Nor could the subject of our mental states be our bodily organism. It is well known that that changes every few months or so. It has been said that all our organism is but a current of molecules, a ceaselessly renewed flame, a river which we may look upon all our lives but never see the same water again. In truth there is only one explanation of the fact that we know that we have been the same knowing person over several decades; it is that there must be in every man an indivisible principle which always abides and underlies his fleeting mental states.

RELATION OF BODY AND SOUL

All that we have written proves that the human soul is not made up of parts. It cannot, then, cease to exist by being resolved into parts which make it. Moreover, because it is immaterial, that is, independent of matter, it cannot cease to exist merely because the body is dissolved. Yet the crude materialist is tempted to argue: 'The soul is born with the body, it grows and decays with the body, therefore it perishes with the body.' He is quoting Lucretius, who lived in the first century before Christ.

We have seen that the soul is essentially independent of matter because it can form abstract ideas, make intellectual judgments, draw logical conclusions and reflect upon many things including itself. All these are the outcome of spiritual actions and indicate that the soul is essentially independent of the body. How, then, is it related to the body? Surely it is dependent in some way? Is it not through the senses, sight, smell, hearing, touch, that we receive impressions of things outside ourselves?

Yes, that is true. When these impressions are received they stimulate us to form mental images of the objects. From these mental images the mind abstracts ideas. So in our present state bodily organs provide the data or the material for the operations of the mind. But it by no means follows that the mind cannot act when data are not provided in that way.

MIND AND BRAIN

It would be wrong to think that just as the eye is the organ of sight, the brain is the organ of the mind. Nobody can see without an eye. The eye is absolutely necessary for sight; it sees. On the other hand, the brain provides the mind with a mental image, but it does not think in the way in which the eye sees. In this life the soul is united with the body, and in order to obtain the data on which it works it uses the bodily organs. But that does not mean that it is always and under all circumstances dependent upon those bodily organs. Thought is not essentially bound up with the brain. It might be argued that when the brain is diseased the mind cannot work properly. That does not prove that a man's thoughts are directly connected with the brain. Other things are capable of disturbing thought but they are not essential for thought to exist. A very severe attack of neuritis may make it impossible for a man to think properly. But as soon as the source of the pain is taken away he is able to think again. In the same way, the fact that our thoughts are affected by an abnormal state of the brain does not prove that in order to think a person must possess a brain in a normal condition. Even if it could be proved that in this present condition when the soul is united with the body the brain is necessary for thought, it would not follow that in a future state in which the soul exists without a body it could not think. Here is an example: when a man is locked in prison he cannot see the sky unless the window of his cell is transparent. But it would be foolish to argue from that that when he is released from jail he will not be able to see the sky because there is no longer any glass through which he can look.

IMMORTALITY AND ANNIHILATION

We have proved that the soul does not perish with the body merely because it dwells in the body and is united with it. We have shown also that the soul cannot cease to exist by corruption, dissolution, or the separation of its parts. Of its nature it is incorruptible. The death of the body is not the end of all. Reason alone proves that there is a life beyond.

Earlier we mentioned the possibility of annihilation. Is it not within the bounds of possibility that what is alleged to have been produced from nothing could be reduced to nothing by the Creator? The omnipotence which created could also annihilate. To argue like that is surely fallacious. An all-wise God would not have created a soul with an incorruptible nature if He intended all the time to annihilate it. Are we not right in suggesting that from the nature of the creature we gather something of the intention of the Creator? He would not have made the soul spiritual and essentially immortal if He intended to destroy it by reducing it to nothing.

UNITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The unsympathetic reader might suggest that our argument has been overdrawn. 'Is it so very true that consciousness possesses complete unity?' he asks. 'When do we begin to remember things? Only when we have already lived for some years. At first memory is faint; it needs to be trained. Constantly we forget what we wish to remember. We search the great mass of material in our brain to find the item we need at a particular moment. To put it more crudely, are not memory and consciousness dependent upon a proper supply of food and at the mercy of drugs and anesthetics?' See this objection in its true light. Examine the real nature of the unity of our consciousness. It

proves that our personality has remained identical through the years in a way that is unparalleled in the order of nature. It is not the identity of a regiment of soldiers, whose personnel is always changing, nor of the flame of a candle of which the constituent element is different second after second, nor of a river in which fresh water flows past a given spot every fraction of a second. In cases such as these unity is only apparent. But they have little resemblance to the unity of consciousness. The men of the Irish Guards do not recognize themselves as being identical with the men of the Irish Guards a century ago. The candle flame which has burned for a quarter of an hour is not the same flame that was passed from the match to the wick. A river is never identical at any two moments. The men of the regiment are continually being replaced by different men; the flame and the river are always fed by ever changing matter. Nothing remains the same.

It is not so with the unity of consciousness. In ourselves our whole physical organism is in a state of constant flux. It is like the flame or the river. But in spite of it the same conscious personality persists throughout. I know, for example, that I writing this am the identical person who matriculated in 1926. I know that I am the identical person who was ordained a priest in 1939. I know that I am the identical person who flew the Atlantic in 1946. In spite of all the changes in my body I am the same personality.

My identity is absolute. It transcends all the properties of the matter of which I have been made at various periods of my passage through this world. During a recital a violinist breaks a string and replaces it by another. The second string gives exactly the same note as the first, but could it possibly know that the first string gave that note? It could not, because it is an entirely different string. Now remember that the molecular structure of a man's brain is continually altering. My brain at fifty is made of different material than the brain which I possessed when I was twenty-five, yet the result is a similar mental state. I am capable of remembering mental states at various periods of my life. MY brain alone is no more capable of remembering my former mental states than the second string of the violin can remember the sound given by the first. Yet I know that I remember my mental states. I recognize the similarity between them. Surely there must be something within me which remains always the same, something which abides, an absolute unity of consciousness. As for the point that it is only with difficulty that we are able to remember, surely the vital matter is that each of us is capable of recalling some memories of our childhood days. I know that I lived at home with my mother. Although she died when I was barely three years old I can still remember her. I know that I who knew her am the same person who is writing now about the nature of the human soul. My consciousness now is the same as the consciousness of that child under three years of age. My personal identity abides.

THE CONTRADICTIONS OF MATERIALISM

A photograph is printed on suitable paper and then obliterated. By exposure to the fumes of mercury it is restored. Suppose that many impressions were superimposed on the same paper, could the fumes of mercury restore at random any picture for which one called? No, but my memory is different. The impressions I have gained during life probably amount to hundreds of millions. They are all clearly preserved. I can select this or that as I will. Materialistic forces could not do such a thing. Let the materialist explain how this comes about, that I am able to recall vividly, just as I wish, any single one, of millions of pictures which have been impressed upon my mind over the past fifty years. It is something utterly beyond the power of matter alone.

There have been those who argued that in the same manner as the steam engine produces motion, so the organic complication of force-endowed materials produces in the animal body effects so interwoven as to become a unit, which we then call soul, spirit, or thought. We have already explained that thought is, in its essence, completely independent of the motions of the molecules of the brain. They have nothing in common. To explain thought merely as the result of the movement of molecules or other elements of the material brain is to beg the question. Thought and matter are opposite poles of existence. The materialist wants to jump without being seen from pole to pole. As for the analogy of the steam engine, what has happened to the driver?

A little less crude, but not much, is the idea that thought is as much a function of matter as motion is. What do those who propound this view mean by the word function? We have already proved beyond a doubt that thought is not produced by matter; we suspect that those who wish to describe it merely as a function of matter are in reality trying to show that it is a product of matter. Use the word function in any other sense and you deny the simplicity, spirituality, and immortality of the soul, which are proven facts. This is true whether you think of function as productive, permissive, or transmissive.

THE UNIVERSAL BELIEF OF MEN

There is no doubt that the notion that men survive after death in some form has existed in the human mind from the most primitive times to the present hour. Nobody has ever been able to prove the contrary. One has seen it stated that belief in immortality is not found in Buddhism, nor in the ancient popular religion of the Chinese, nor yet in the reformed religion of Confucius; and, what seems strangely significant, it is not found in the earlier and purer religion of the Jews. Here are the facts. Many scholars have stated that Buddhism is so persuaded of survival after death as being the rule, that it grants only to rare and elect souls the privilege of at length laying down the burden of continuous life. In the latest edition of Chambers Encyclopedia Frederick Harold Smith D.D., Professor of Comparative Religion and Philosophy of Religion at Manchester University, writes of the Buddhist belief in the after life: 'The goal of all true aspiration is Nirvana. The word signifies "Blown out" (as of a flame) or "extinguished" and refers primarily to cessation of the craving for individual existence. But, as Vallee Poussin points out, Buddhists have held three different positions at different times: (i) annihilation (after death), (ii) immortality, and (iii) unqualified deliverance from craving and suffering. The third view is the prevailing one in Hinayane Buddhism; indeed, to desire immortality, or even annihilation, only creates further Karma and Riba.' As for the Chinese, their race as a whole fully recognizes the conception of personal survival after death. Confucius himself asserted: 'Death is not destruction properly so called, but a decomposition which resolves each substance into its natural state. The intellectual substance again ascends to heaven from which it came, the animal spirit, Khi, unites with the aerial fluid, and the terrestrial and aqueous substances turn once more to earth and water.' Of the Jews, Hastings Rashdall wrote: 'The Jews were at one time behind the other nations in the distinctness of their belief in personal immortality, just because (it would seem) of the intensity with which they believed that obedience to Jehovah's laws would be rewarded by national victory and agricultural prosperity - a belief ultimately shattered by the experiences of the exile.' Nor is it a fact that savage tribes have been found to exist with no conception of a future life. Scholars are agreed that it is impossible not to be struck by the strength and universality of the natural belief in immortality among the savage races of mankind. For them life after death is a practical certainty. Nobody doubts it. It is as real as the fact of existence. Of course, crudities and absurdities have been found. Weird and wonderful ideas of heaven have held

sway. But the important and notable thing is that in spite of diversity in detail the underlying belief has always been the same, namely, that there will be life beyond the grave.

What does all this imply? Could not universal belief in immortality be as wrong as the once universal belief that the sun went round the earth? No; there is an important difference. Belief that the sun went round the earth was based on observation of external phenomena. It could not be checked by comparison with the phenomena of man's inner life. It made no difference to life whether the sun went round the earth or the earth went round the sun. It did not affect men vitally. It is different with the question of immortality. It affects every man vitally. There is no man who does not want to know and strive to know if he can look forward to life beyond the grave. It is the question of questions. On the reply to it the whole meaning and tenor of life depends.

Is the universal belief of mankind in immortality a mere delusion? If it is, then human reason is essentially fallacious and incapable of ever attaining to truth with certainty. The argument in favour of immortality derived from the universal consent of mankind is strictly scientific because its source is research based on facts and those facts have been proved, beyond a shadow of doubt, to be certain.

THE YEARNING FOR IMMORTALITY

As certain as one of the axioms of Euclid is the maxim of Aristotle: 'Nature does nothing in vain'. Astronomy, geology, botany, biology, and other departments of the study of nature bear witness to the truth of this dictum. Nothing in creation is without a purpose. It has been well said that the best cure for atheism is an examination of the human eye. Every fibre of it fulfills its function. The same is true of the whole human body and of every organic body. The lowest micro-organism is full of purpose. When a desire is found to be implanted in a creature it is also discovered that the gratification of that desire is in the constitution of the creature. I may wish for food, that is because my make-up is meant to be satisfied by food. The same applies to the wish for motion, or sleep, or society, or knowledge. These are not random whims; they flow from the nature which experiences them and they are meant to be satisfied by food, motion, sleep, society, and knowledge.

The soul of man is above all other created things in our universe. We are daily aware that our yearnings remain unsatisfied by anything finite. We know, all men know, from experience that St. Thomas Aquinas was right when he said: 'Some measure of happiness is attainable in this life, but not perfect and true happiness. For happiness, inasmuch as it is a perfect and sufficient good, excludes all evil and satisfies all desire. But the exclusion of all evil is impossible in this life, fraught as it is with many inevitable evils - ignorance, inordinate desire, bodily inflictions ... So, too, the desire for good cannot be satisfied in this life. For man naturally desires permanence in the good that he possesses, whereas the good things of this life are transitory; life itself, which we naturally desire and wish to continue for ever, instinctively shrinking from death, is itself fleeting; whence it is impossible to attain to true happiness in this life.' Yet man craves for precisely that - happiness unalloyed, unending, and perfect. He longs for the very thing that all men know is unattainable in this life. If there be no life beyond the grave, the highest and noblest aspiration of man is without meaning or purpose; it has been implanted within him merely to be frustrated. But if that were the case it would be the solitary exception to the maxim of Aristotle: 'Nature does nothing in vain'. Throughout creation that is true. Dare we suggest for a moment that the only exception to it is found, so to speak, on the topmost rung of the ladder of creation?

AN OBJECTION ANSWERED

Against this it may be suggested that the desire for perfect happiness does fulfill its purpose in this life. It is rather like the fish which are given to the sea lions at the circus to stimulate them to further effort in performing their tricks. Long ago men searched for the philosopher's stone and the result was much scientific lore. Is it not possible that man's striving after the will-o'-the-wisp of perfect happiness has brought about progress in civilization, in fact is the very mainspring of advancement in social life? Those who advance an argument like this are singularly out of touch. It is not the belief in the after life which has stimulated progress towards civilization. Have not men in general, especially in this atomic age, practically forgotten belief in immortality? It is certainly naive to suggest that it has been the mainspring of progress. What man desires is not future life but perfect happiness. His desire is satisfied by nothing less than perfect happiness. Universal experience proves that perfect happiness cannot be attained in this life. Therefore it must be attainable in some future state. But as the late Archbishop Downey wrote: 'The only justification of the desire for perfect happiness is the possibility of its fulfillment. To argue that it is satisfactorily accounted for by the benefits that it has brought to man in this life, is about as sensible as to account for the quacking of geese by the fact that this noise, acting as an alarm signal, saved the Roman capital'.

THE MORAL LAW IMPLIES IMMORTALITY

Men everywhere agree that right is to be done and wrong to be avoided. Unless there is a future life it is hard to see how our best interests are served by such a line of conduct. Virtue is not always its own reward. Thousands have given their lives in battle, having freely volunteered for duty. Their response to the call was prompted by nature. But if a Flanders grave be the end of all, nature's dictates are indeed self stultifying. There is no rational meaning or explanation for human life as we see it unless we suppose that our present life has an end which lies in part beyond the limits of the present natural order. Belief in immortality for individual souls is by far the most natural and intelligible form such a purpose of human life could take. Rousseau put it very cogently: 'If I had no other proof of the immortality of the soul than the prosperity of the wicked and the oppression of the just in this world, that alone would be enough to convince me. I would feel constrained to explain such a manifest contradiction, such a terrible exception to the established harmony of the universe. I would be forced to exclaim within myself, "All cannot end with death. All will be put into proper order and harmony after death".'

THE PURPOSE OF THE UNIVERSE

Unless a man believes in the immortality of the soul he cannot reasonably explain the Universe at large. It is impossible to divorce these two questions, the survival of the soul after death and the rational purpose of the Universe. The more firmly we are convinced of the rationality of the Universe, the more unwilling we ought to be to believe that such an order can be final and permanent. Belief in God has nearly always carried with it a belief in immortality. It is God who guarantees the reasonableness of creation. He is infinite justice and righteousness. Therefore immortality follows as a direct and immediate consequence of the rational organization of the Universe and indirectly and ultimately from the existence of an infinitely perfect God. He underwrites the reasonableness of the cosmic scheme; He vindicates the moral law written in the mind and heart of man. He is the Supreme Being, who is both the ultimate source and sanction of the moral order of the Universe.

Here is the argument put in simple form: God has written in our rational nature the moral law; He commands us to do right and to avoid wrong. He is infinitely wise, just, and holy; therefore He must

have provided a perfect sanction for the law He made. In this life such a perfect sanction certainly does not exist. Therefore the soul must exist at least for some time after death. Well has it been said that the Universe is a stairway leading nowhere unless man is immortal. Belief in the immortality of the soul has been called the supreme act of faith in the reasonableness of God's work.

The truth that the soul is immortal and the truth that creation must be reasonable support each other; neither could stand without the other. God and the rational organization of the cosmos are the ultimate grounds of belief in a future life; our moral nature's demand for a divine remunerator, who will rectify in a future life the inequalities of the present, is one of the most cogent proofs for the existence of God. These truths fit together into a pattern which not only satisfies the demands of our rational nature but gives human existence meaning and purpose.

THE EVIDENCE OF PAIN

A great deal has been written to prove by reason that the soul will survive when the body has died. The irrepressible demand of the practical reason of all mankind is expressed again and again by those who have to suffer. When pain seems almost unbearable, disappointments heart-breaking, and frustrations too much to endure, do not believers turn to God and make their act of faith that He knows best? They bow down before His will, say in their hearts if not on their lips: 'If I did not believe there is a God and a future life, I think I would go mad.'

If death completely destroys the human personality, the Universe is monstrously irrational. Think of it, every generation of incomplete, aspiring individuals is simply wiped off the earth, never to exist again, in the same way as a child sweeps unfinished problems from his slate, and another generation of incomplete, aspiring individuals is created only to be annihilated. Is such a thing possible? Is it possible that nothing is ever finished anywhere? Surely such a theory is blasphemous. It reduces God to the status of a half-witted artist who amuses himself with tasks that have no meaning, paints pictures in which the form of beauty is barely outlined, only to blot them out and begin all over again. It is as if God condemns us to produce music from instruments that are never in tune and never will be, or to grow beautiful roses in a desert that is incapable of producing a single weed. Merely to sketch the bare outlines of such a theory shows how utterly untenable it is. According to it the robber, the murderer, the pervert, the liar, and the drunkard are wise, but the saint, the sage, and the martyr are fools. Was there ever so complete a *reductio ad absurdum*? The cry of man for a life beyond the grave comes from that which is noblest in his soul.

CONCLUSION

Let us summarize. That the soul will survive when the body is dead is a truth of philosophy which can be established by appropriate evidence. Philosophical truths are not proved by methods of demonstration as in mathematics and the physical sciences but by philosophical facts and reasoning. This method is valid for its subject matter, as valid as methods of mathematics and of the physical sciences for theirs. Immortality cannot be torn from its roots in the spiritual nature of the soul and the rational organization of the Universe. From these two truths the necessity of an after life flows with invincible logic. The soul is immaterial and therefore it cannot be subject to death. Death means disintegration into parts. The soul is not composed of parts, therefore it cannot disintegrate or die. Not can the soul be annihilated either by itself or by any earthly power. God alone could annihilate it but He would never undo the noblest work of His hands. In all ages and all conditions of civilization men have believed in a life beyond the grave. Is all mankind in error? If so, then you must deny the capacity of the human mind to know. Such a suggestion is absurd.

In every human breast is the desire for perfect happiness. It cannot be understood if it cannot be fulfilled at some time. That time is not on this earth; therefore there must be a future existence in which perfect happiness can be realized.

We have seen, too, that belief in an after life is a corollary from the rational organization of the Universe, whose source and guarantor is God. The gross inequalities of the present life demand rectification in some future state; otherwise madness glowers over the cosmic scene. Virtue demands a reward different from vice. The saint deserves a verdict different from that of the thief, and the martyr a sentence that will contrast with that of the murderer. The supreme and ultimate reason for the existence of a future life is an infinitely just and holy God. Belief in an after life imposes on every man the supreme responsibility of so living that he will spend his eternity in the presence of God. That is the goal of life. To attain it is supreme triumph, to miss it is irretrievable tragedy.
