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ESCHATOLOGY: INDEXES

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ESCHATOLOGY

INDEXES

THE CONCLUDING VOLUME
OF THE SERIES
DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

BY THE
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AS COMPLETING THIS SERIES OF
DOGMATIC THEOLOGY
TO THE
BLESSED MEMORY
OF
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
THE GREATEST CONSTRUCTIVE THEOLOGIAN
OF CHRISTIAN AGES

PREFACE

THIS volume completes the Series of Dogmatic Theology which the writer began to produce sixteen years since. The undertaking was planned, and the accumulation of material begun, in 1886. The length of time taken in completing the work has been due in part, of course, to its largeness; but also to the amount of unescapable routine duty which the writer's work as teacher has imposed upon him, and to his rather limited strength.

This volume treats of matters of which our assured knowledge is comparatively slight, but concerning which for obvious reasons conjecture has always been busy. The writer has striven to distinguish correctly between Christian certainties and speculative opinions, and to confine unqualified affirmations of doctrine to the former. In conformity with the constructive and unifying aim of the whole Series, he has endeavoured, especially in the closing chapter, to link up the doctrine of human destiny with the whole drama of creation and redemption. He has hoped thus also to bring into clear relief the practical bearing of the revealed faith, as affording the light in which alone men can intelligently pursue their chief and Godward end.

For the purpose of saving space the works most frequently referred to are designated by their authors' names only. The omitted titles are given in the bibliographical footnote at the commencement of the first chapter.

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ESCHATOLOGY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. *Gentile and Biblical*

§ 1. Eschatology¹ has to do with the last things, death and after, whether of individuals, of mankind, or of the visible universe. It presupposes that men survive bodily death and that the end of this world is not the end of all things.

Not all races have considered whether this world will come to an end and what, if any, events will

¹ On Eschatology at large, see S. C. Gayford, *Future State*; R. E. Hutton, *Soul in the Unseen World*; Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Christ. Dogma*, ch. xiv; H. B. Swete, *Life of the World to Come*; E. Griffith-Jones, *Faith and Immortality*; H. R. Mackintosh, *Immortality and the Future*; Jos. A. Beet, *The Last Things*, 5th Ed.; Jas. Fife, *The Hereafter*; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, Suppl. lxix-c; Jos. Pohle, *Eschatology*; *Cath. Encyc.*, and Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, q.v. Exhaustive bibliographies up to 1860 in W. R. Alger, *Crit. Hist. of the Doctr. of a Future Life*. On its history, Ethnic, Jewish and Christian, see S. D. F. Salmond, *Christ. Doctr. of Immortality*, 4th Ed.; R. H. Charles, *Crit. Hist. of the Doctr. of a Future Life*; E. C. Dewick, *Primitive Christ. Eschatology*; W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Doctr. of Last Things, Jewish and Christian*; H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul's Conceptions of the Last Things*; J. A. Macculloch, in Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Eschatology"; and the Histories of Doctrine, *passim*.

follow. But belief in human survival after physical death has been practically universal from the earliest ages concerning which we have pertinent and trustworthy information.¹ How such belief originated is disputed; but that men should in time have acquired it was practically inevitable, in view of the universal non-satisfaction in this life of men's natural cravings for happiness and for a proper equation in the distribution of justice. Human instinct and reason have been unable to acquiesce in the notion that death ends all; and the lack of rational demonstration of a future life has not prevented this belief from holding its own.

But men's ideas concerning human conditions and destinies after death have varied greatly, often being very crude and even grotesque among backward races, and being determined in their development by the ruling ideas of God or of the gods, and by the prevailing ethical conceptions. Only as men have advanced towards monotheism, and an enlightened belief in divine power, providence and righteousness, have they acquired an eschatology that is susceptible of truly rational and moral defense. As will be shown in due course, it was Jesus Christ who first brought immortality to light in its true perspectives;² and it is upon His teaching that we depend for the knowledge of the future upon which our assured hopes rest.

The forms of thought and symbolical terms which Christ employed in His eschatological teaching were

¹ S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 10-15.

² Cf. pp. 18-19, below.

largely those which had been gradually developed among the Hebrews under divine tutelage in the old covenant. But the Hebrews entered upon this schooling with conceptions of the future which were of the most uninspiring nature. As these conceptions in certain respects resemble those previously prevailing among the Babylonians, we are led to infer that Abraham brought them with him from his Chaldæan birthplace. But none the less, under the influence of his acceptance of the true God, the eschatology which he transmitted to Israel, unethical and uninspiring though it was, had been relieved of various polytheistic and mythical elements which were patently inconsistent with true religion.

This eschatology does not appear to have been modified or enriched by Israel's residence in Egypt; for Egyptian ideas, in important respects more advanced than those of the Hebrews, are conspicuously absent from early Old Testament documents. The eschatology with which the chosen people began their divinely guided development appears, therefore, to have been derived from an expurgated Babylonian tradition.

§ 2. According to this eschatology, which is individual in reference, men survive but cannot really be said to live after death. They abide in Sheol, a cheerless region in which practically all that makes life worthy of the name is wanting. Sheol was also thought to lie outside the dominion of Jahveh; and as the pious Israelite came to find increasing joy

in communion with God, he likewise increasingly shrank from contemplating his personal future after death. He derived no hope from considering his present favour with Jahveh; for, according to this eschatology, the good and the evil, saints and sinners, share in Sheol the same fate, the same separation from God.¹ This non-ethical and pagan conception cannot, of course, be regarded properly as the inspired teaching of the Old Testament, so much as a divinely permitted register in Scripture of earlier and as yet uncorrected ideas.²

The meaning of life had to be assimilated before the foundations of a true doctrine of immortality could be laid; and even then the Israelites had to become truly monotheistic, before they could rightly apprehend the presence and saving power of Jahveh in the region and shadow of death. When the chosen people learned that life meant life with God, they had taken a long step towards the true belief in immortality. But so long as the Israelites regarded Jahveh primarily, perhaps wholly, as a national God among other deities, having a limited domain, one confined to this side of the grave, the immediate effect of their discovery of the meaning and joy of life was to make them cling to this world rather than advance to a higher idea of the other world. When,

¹ Psa. vi. 5; xxx. 9; lxxxviii. 5; Isa. xxxviii. 18-19. Cf. Isa. xiv. 9; Eccl. ix. 4-6.

² A notable illustration of the futility of an indiscriminating appeal to proof-texts in doctrinal argument.

however, the all-embracing sovereignty of Jahveh came to be realized, and His loving care for the righteous was reflected on, a higher and ethical conception of the future began to emerge. This development was conditioned and facilitated by the then new emphasis placed by Jeremiah and Ezekiel upon the individual, his independent value in God's sight and exclusive responsibility for his own conduct.¹

In earlier ages the life and future of an individual Israelite were bound up with that of his family, of his tribe and of his people. His religion was social and corporate, and its individual aspect was subordinate. God's covenant was with the people corporately regarded, and the individual shared in its benefits only as member of the chosen race. Upon this basis the doctrine of the Kingdom of God began to be revealed, and became the organizing idea of Old Testament theology. The catholic conception of this Kingdom was at first far from Israel's thought. It was indeed latent in the promise to Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed.² But it was necessary that for a long time Israel should be separated from the Gentiles and be put to intensive training, before the Kingdom could be established in the catholic form that it was divinely intended to have.

¹ Cf. Jerem. xxxi. 29-30; Ezek. xviii; Psa. xxxvii.

² Gen. xii. 3; etc. Cf. Acts iii. 25; Gal. iii. 8. See *The Church*, pp. 39-41.

The prophets, indeed, were inspired to describe the world-embracing extent of the Kingdom, and to set forth with increasing determinateness the promise of a Messiah who should deliver Israel and rule forever, even over the Gentiles. They also gave intimations of the spiritual nature of the Messiah's rule, and of the persuasive power of righteousness in His Kingdom in all the nations. But when the time of fulfilment came the chief priests and scribes of Israel were dominated by political conceptions and did not recognize the Messiah. Only a small spiritual remnant was ready to undertake the high privilege of propagating His Kingdom among the Gentiles and of bringing to actualization its catholic form and triumph.

So long as the original and gloomy idea of death and Sheol prevailed, and it did not wholly give way in the Old Testament period, the Israelites looked to this world exclusively as the sphere within which their hopes for the future could be realized. Accordingly, when they began to think of the individual, a doctrine of resurrection was developed in some circles, but one which at first meant merely a restoration of righteous Israelites to this life, in order that they might enjoy the expected triumph of Israel in "the day of the Lord."

But the succession of disasters which their nation underwent developed among the Jews in later days a darker view of this world, as unfit for the final fulfilment of God's purposes, either for His Kingdom

or for righteous individuals. The thought of another and better world gained attention and expression. This was to be introduced by a judgment of the wicked, and by a great cataclysm, in which this world would be ended and a new one established.¹ These expectations were embodied in apocalyptic imagery. The doctrine of the resurrection also underwent modification in harmony with this new outlook, and in a Christian direction. But these developments were not completed until after the close of the Canon, and were somewhat confused and mutually inconsistent in details. The resulting apocalyptic literature is of considerable importance, however, because it contains forms of thought, and pictorial symbols, which our Lord and His Apostles, after purging them of fanciful elements, employed in setting forth the true eschatological doctrine.²

§ 3. Our Lord's eschatology³ has for its central and determinative elements the Kingdom of God and eternal life to be enjoyed therein. His public preaching began on the lines initiated by His fore-

¹ On O. T. developments, see S. D. F. Salmond, Bk. II; E. C. Dewick, Pt. I; A. B. Davidson, *Theol. of the O. T.*, XII; and in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, s.v. "Eschatology"; S. C. Gayford, ch. i.

² On the later Jewish developments, see E. C. Dewick, Pt. II; W. Fairweather, in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, extra vol., pp. 302-307; R. H. Charles, *op. cit.*, and in Hastings, *op. cit.*, s.v. "Eschatology of the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic Literature"; S. C. Gayford, ch. ii.

³ On which, see S. D. F. Salmond, Bk. II; E. C. Dewick, Pt. III; Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, s.v. "Eschatology"; E. W. Winstanley, *Jesus and the Future*.

runner, St. John the Baptist, with a call to repentance and to belief in the Gospel because of the prophesied Kingdom of God being at hand.¹ And on a certain occasion He summarized the purpose of His Incarnation in the words, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."²

The Kingdom and eternal life were exhibited as beginning in this world — indeed as already present and available, because of His own coming into the world. And He claimed to be the promised Messiah, the King, and the source to all of life everlasting. In brief, the future of men was to be determined by their relation to Himself. But the consummation of the Kingdom and the full enjoyment of life therein, according to His doctrine, lay in the future. It was to be initiated by a cataclysmic end of this world, when He was to come again in the clouds of heaven and judge all men, they being raised from the dead and either rewarded or punished, according to their deeds, either with unending life or with everlasting fire.³

Speaking as Son of Man, He disclaimed knowledge as to when this final cataclysm would occur;⁴ but is apparently represented in the Gospels as saying that it would take place before the then existing generation passed away — a prediction not verified by the event. In view of our Lord's Person we cannot

¹ St. Mark i. 14-15, etc. Cf. St. Matt. iii. 1-2.

² St. John x. 10.

³ *The Church*, pp. 101-104.

⁴ St. Mark xiii. 32. Cf. St. Matt. xxiv. 36.

rationally infer that He erred in such a matter, nor is it the only available conclusion.¹ He placed strong emphasis upon the suddenness of the end, and upon the need of watchful readiness at all times. From the prophetic standpoint time is foreshortened, and in view of death, after which repentance is impossible, the end of all things is truly "at hand" in determinative effect. This sufficiently justifies the *interimsethic* said to characterize our Lord's moral teaching. It requires no particular conviction as to when Christ will come to justify the view that *for individuals* this world affords only a brief probationary *interim*, external fortunes in which are important only as providential conditions of preparation for the world to come.²

Concerning the condition and place of the dead previously to the consummation our Lord gives no directly definite teaching, although the parable of the rich man and Lazarus³ appears to throw indirect light on the intermediate state. Even if the picture there given is accommodated to current imagery and ought not to be pressed literally, we cannot rightly think that Christ would have committed Himself to a misleading portrayal, and certain conditions after death are unmistakably taken for granted by Him in the parable — for example a sep-

¹ See pp. 133-135, below.

² On Christ's interimsethic, see *Incarnation*, p. 274, n. 4; E. D. La Touche, *Person of Christ in Modern Thought*, pp. 163-167; C. W. Emmet, in *The Expositor*, Nov., 1912.

³ St. Luke xvi. 19-31. Cf. M. F. Sadler and Cornelius A. Lapide, *in loc.*, and R. C. Trench, *Parables*, § 26.

aration between the righteous and the wicked, the former being comforted and the latter suffering, memory of the past, concern for the living and prayer even by the wicked for the salvation of those left behind. Both our Lord and His listeners were chiefly concerned with the final consummation, and the intermediate state did not in that age engage the large attention which it secured in later centuries.

§ 4. The entire outlook of the Apostles and other disciples of Christ was changed by His resurrection and ascension, and the descent of the Holy Spirit.¹ Their eschatology, in particular, became wholly centred in Christ, and in the immortality which He had brought to light — an immortality determined by relations to Him, and grounded in belief that by His resurrection He has become “the Firstfruits of them that are asleep.”²

The future life was to be a resurrection life, in which man's whole nature, *σῶμα* as well *πνεῦμα* was to have share. St. Paul takes pains to say that our present flesh and blood lacks the power to inherit the Kingdom. But he proceeds to show that a change will occur at the last trump, which will enable this mortal and corruptible to put on immortality and incorruption, and thus to overcome death. The change referred to will convert the *σῶμα* from its present psychic

¹ On apostolic eschatology, see S. D. F. Salmond, Bks. IV-V; E. C. Dewick, Pt. IV; H. R. Mackintosh; H. A. A. Kennedy; E. Griffith-Jones, Pt. II. ch. iii; Hastings, *Dic. of Apos. Church*, s.v. “Eschatology” (E. C. Dewick).

² 1 Cor. xv. 20.

state into a pneumatic state, wherein the limitations now apparent in our bodies will be transcended in incorruption, power and glory. The manner of this change and the condition of the *σῶμα* after physical dissolution in the interval between death and the resurrection he does not discuss, but he plainly implies throughout that the *σῶμα*, in germ at least, will continue to exist and will be clothed upon in a manner suited to its final environment. This corruptible is the thing, he teaches, that will finally put on incorruption.¹

In the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, St. Paul widens our view and shows that Christ is central to all things, and that the future of the cosmos itself is in His hand. By the eternal will of the Father He is to have the preëminence. "In Him were all things created . . . through Him, and unto Him . . . and in Him all things hold together."² In line with this cosmic point of view the future destruction of this world, and its transformation into a new heavens and earth by Christ, are declared by several writers.³

These two mysteries, of human resurrection and of cosmic transformation, were to take place at the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven to judge all men. Then, St. Paul tells us, the dead in Christ shall rise first, and the living shall be caught

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 21-23, 35-57. Cf. Phil. iii. 21; 2 Cor. v. 1-4.

² Ephes. i. 9-10; iii. 9-11; Col. i. 13-22.

³ 2 St. Pet. iii. 7, 10, 12-13; Revel. xx. 11; xxi. 1. Cf. St. Mark xiii. 24-25, 31. See ch. viii. §§ 1-4, below.

up with them in the air.¹ Influenced by the Jewish apocalyptic ideas, the Gospel writers and other early Christians understood our Lord to predict that His second coming would take place in their generation. "The Lord is at hand" was the general conviction. But two things are noticeable. In the first place, while this expectation helped to fortify the believers in persecution, it did not reduce their sense of responsibility for determinate lines of personal development and service for others in this world. In the second place, as time went by and the Lord did not come again, their reinterpretation of our Lord's prophecy apparently involved no stultification of mind and no loss of faith in the second coming. This suggests the likelihood that the degree to which the expected *nearness* of the second advent determined the outlook of primitive Christians has been overestimated by recent scholars. These same Christians probably were also less inclined to take literally their inherited and retained apocalyptic pictures of the future than is apt to be assumed by moderns.²

Having this likelihood in mind, we are disinclined to press the exact forms in which the apostolic belief in the revelation of Antichrist was exhibited.³ The essential element seems to be this, that antichristian powers, even then manifesting themselves and, as

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 15-17.

² On the apocalyptic method, see E. C. Dewick, ch. vi; J. H. Leckie, *World to Come and Final Destiny*, Pt. I. ch. i.

³ 2 Thess. ii. 3-10; 1 St. John ii. 18, etc. Cf. St. Matt. xxiv. 5, 24. See ch. v. § 6, below.

subsequent history shows, continually working in this world, will reveal themselves in a final climax of open malignity before the end. Underlying this prophecy is the belief, justified by Christ's own teaching, that, whatever superficial progress of the world in moral and social idealism may be accomplished by Christian influence, the triumph of God's Kingdom in its determinative and supernatural aspects waits upon cataclysmic divine intervention at the last day. It is not promised that this present world will ever become truly Christianized. The sub-apostolic expectation by some of a millennial reign of Christ on earth before the final consummation, was not justified by any explicit New Testament prediction. It grew out of a literal and mistaken interpretation of apocalyptic imagery.¹

The apostolic writers imitated Christ in setting forth the consummation of things — the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment and the abiding consequences of it — without undertaking to solve the problems concerning the intermediate state of the departed previous to the final judgment. No doubt the belief that the Lord was at hand reduced the interest felt in such problems; but the overruling Spirit undoubtedly determined the proportions of emphasis, in accordance with the relative importance for us of the several branches of eschatological knowledge. Therefore, while the fact of an intermediate state, and its preparatory relation to the consumma-

¹ See ch. v. §§ 5, 7, below.

tion, are undeniably involved and implied in apostolic teaching, the conditions of the intermediate state received no direct description.¹

Flowing in and around all apostolic eschatology is the ever present thought of full consummation hereafter for the faithful of eternal life with God, and of everlasting punishment for the obstinately wicked. This eternal life is represented as having its seat in Christ, as entered upon in this world by those who through Baptism put on Christ, as enlarged by grace and holy discipline, and as brought to its consummation by the resurrection of the body in glory and by an abiding enjoyment of open relations with God in the fellowship of the saints.

Catholic doctrine has adhered faithfully to apostolic teaching. Speculative developments consistent therewith have occurred, especially in relation to the intermediate state and to particular aspects of future punishment and of the heavenly life. As might be expected, individualistic vagaries have also appeared, and heretical views; but the fundamental consent concerning eschatological doctrines thought to be *de fide* which has continued in Christendom to the present day has been remarkably full, considering the ever present temptation to indulge in unrestrained speculation concerning the future.² So far as de-

¹ For fuller treatment, see ch. iii., below.

² On the history of catholic eschatology, see *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Eschatology," III; W. R. Alger, Pt. IV; and the histories of doctrine, esp. B. F. Otten, J. Tixeront and K. R. Hagenbach. The most important patristic reference is St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, xx-xxii.

scriptions of these speculative developments seem necessary for our purpose, they will be given in subsequent chapters and in their topical connections.

II. *Immortality*

§ 5. As has been stated at the beginning of this chapter, belief in human continuance after death is the necessary postulate of any type of eschatology that can engage vital human interest. If men are once really convinced that death brings their personal being to an end forever, the range of eschatological subjects of inquiry will become exclusively cosmological, and they will cease to have interest except for specialists in pure science. The only eschatological question that will secure serious attention from the ordinary man will be, "How long can I put off death and extinction, for myself and for those whom I love?"¹

But in no race and in no stage of human progress have men in general been able to believe that death brings absolute personal extinction. Belief in personal continuance after death appears, therefore, to be

¹ On human immortality, see *Creation and Man*, pp. 199-212; *Cath. Encyc.*, *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, and Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, 9.00; W. R. Alger, Pt. I. ch. iii (with exhaustive bibliog., to be supplemented for later literature by Schaff-Herzog); Jas. Martineau, *Religion*, Bk. IV; John Fiske, *Life Everlasting*; F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (psychical research); J. E. C. Welldon, *The Hope of Immortality*; Chas. Harris, *Pro Fide*, ch. xv.

natural to man, although apart from supernatural revelation it is usually limited to belief in the soul's continuance.¹ Whether this continuance has any end is not always seriously considered; but when endless continuance is had in mind, we have the doctrine of immortality of the soul — a doctrine which many thinkers have sought to establish by rational proofs. As these so-called proofs have been given in a previous volume,² and are likely in any case to be familiar to our readers, only the briefest recapitulation of them will here be given.

(a) The widespread belief in continuance after death, found in all races and stages of civilization, shows the belief to be natural, and therefore to possess the field of reasonable assent until disproved.

(b) Religious aspirations, natural to mankind and unsusceptible of adequate satisfaction in this life, point to future survival; and the evolutionary conception of history fortifies this suggestion.

(c) The forces and activities of the body appear to form a closed circle, the phenomena of mind being extraneous thereto in spite of their existing connection with them. The mind or soul need not therefore be identified in being and continuance with the body.³

¹ On Ethnic beliefs, see S. D. F. Salmond, Bk. I; H. R. Mackintosh, Pt. I. ch. i; J. B. Mozley, Essay in *Lectures and other Theol. Papers*.

² *Creation and Man*, pp. 202-206.

³ Wm. James, *Human Immortality*, pp. 7-30; Jas. Martineau, *op. cit.*, Bk. IV. ch. i. This argument bears on the question of brute immortality. See *Church Q. Review*, Oct., 1898, pp. 211-215.

(d) Certain psychic phenomena connected with seances and related demonstrations are alleged to prove the occurrence of genuine communications from the spirits of departed human beings.

(e) The soul is said to be an incomposite substance, and as such incapable of dissolution; and the actual annihilation of substance is widely held to be unimaginable and incredible.

(f) It is believed that moral ideals in general presuppose moral consummations which demand ultimate actualization, if the moral reason is not illusory — an incredible notion. But such actualization requires a longer continuance than this life affords.

(g) That a just equation of human fortunes must ultimately be realized is also demanded by the moral reason; and is likewise impossible, unless human life continues after death.

(h) Righteousness cannot gain full fruition except by the triumphant satisfaction of love's requirements, never obtained in this life.¹ Unless future continuance affords time and proper conditions for such satisfaction, righteousness must fail of fruition — a conclusion which our moral reason rejects.

These arguments are of very unequal value. For example, the psychic phenomena referred to in the fourth argument are susceptible of other interpretations. And it is quite possible that other than human spirits possess the minute information concerning the private affairs of living men which is dis-

¹ St. Anselm, *Monologium*, lxxviii-lxix.

played in spiritistic communications. In brief, the real source of these communications is not demonstrated to the satisfaction of all who are competent to reckon with them.¹ The fifth argument is also unsatisfying to many because of the disputed substance-philosophy which it presupposes.

The fact remains that the arguments for immortality have value, and this value is cumulative. Yet their convincing effect depends to a degree upon the standpoint from which they are regarded. Christian thinkers find more significance and force in them than others, especially because the nature of the immortality to which they point cannot be adequately realized except in the light of the Christian doctrine of eternal life.

§ 6. Accordingly, as St. Paul declares, it is "our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."² He has abolished death by overcoming it and converting it into a gateway to eternal life. And He has brought immortality to light by exhibiting its true nature and connections. Through the knowledge thus gained, and no otherwise, men are enabled clearly to perceive that immortality correctly unveils the meaning of the evolving universe — of creation, — and that it is as certain of actualization as is the working of the laws according to which created things are controlled by their Maker.

The primary and self-sufficient basis of Christian belief in immortality, therefore, is the teaching of

¹ See § 8 and ch. iv. §§ 5-6, below.

² 2 Tim. i. 10.

Christ, as brought to an objective climax by His resurrection in flesh from the dead, and as interpreted under the guidance of the Holy Spirit by His Apostles. This teaching affords a standpoint which enables us to discern with greater clearness and assurance the intimations of immortality which natural experience affords, and to discover in the natural arguments for immortality more convincing values than they exhibit when regarded from an exclusively empirical and natural standpoint.

The doctrine of a future life is not apt to secure an abiding place in men's vital convictions unless it is thought to be a life worth while, and one which brings satisfaction to human aspirations and a credible solution to the moral enigmas of human experience in this world. Mere continuance in being is not a welcome thought to those who contemplate the difficulties which beset the form of human existence with which they are acquainted. If their cravings make them dream of isles of the blessed, where sorrows and defeats give way to happiness and to satisfaction of every desire, these pictures retain their dreamlike remoteness and lack of power to persuade so long as they are unrelated to any coherent and credible conception of the general plan and purpose of history in the providence of God.

The Christian doctrine of immortality is grounded in the knowledge of God and of His loving purpose in creation. In the light of this knowledge, completed by the self-manifestation of God in Christ, and by

His double achievement of redemption and of unveiling the nature of eternal life in the Kingdom of God, the difficulties of this life are perceived to be passing incidents in a probationary school through which we have to pass before we can truly enjoy the life for which we were really created. We are now in the making; and our present pains are growing pains, a cheap cost of the abounding life which begins to be imparted to us even now, but which reaches its full and satisfying fruition in the world to come.

The several particulars of the Christian doctrine of immortality which make its revelation by Christ a bringing of immortality to light will receive treatment in this volume in their proper connections. They include the following.

(a) We were made for God; and knowledge of Him, and filial relations with Him in Christ, afford the determinative and distinctive aspects of eternal life—the life which fulfils our chief end. Life in this world is wholly preparatory and probationary for that.

(b) The joy of that life arises from its affording full satisfaction of mutual love in perfectly congenial social relations and fellowship with God and with other perfected human persons.

(c) Our entire nature — the *σῶμα*, transfigured and emancipated from this world's carnal and sinful limitations, as well as the *πνεῦμα* — will be glorified and have fruitful part in that life.

(d) Every implanted active principle and proper craving of human nature will be satisfied and made

fruitful, and personality will be fully actualized, in a perfect activity of a perfect life. In short, our legitimate and abiding desires are not to be killed out, but are to be sanctified, ennobled and fulfilled.

(e) Perfect happiness — not as being the moral aim and end of our endeavours, but as the inevitable concomitant of attaining that end — will be permanently established, when God, for whom we are made, becomes for us all in all.

§ 7. The fact that in every sphere of human life which is open to our observation “the flesh lusteth against the spirit,” so that we cannot without serious hindrance pursue spiritual aims, and never fulfil them completely while in the flesh, has engendered more or less radical belief that the body is necessarily alien to the spirit, and is a prison from which the soul must be entirely freed, if it is to enjoy true blessedness. So it is that, except among those who believe in the Christian doctrine of the redemption of the body, the only immortality which is anticipated or desired is a disembodied immortality of the soul. The possibilities of the body are regarded pessimistically; and this pessimism limits the faith of many professing Christians, who in fact, whether formally or not, retain the widespread ancient assumption that matter is evil. This pessimism appears in the numerous efforts of modern Christian writers to describe the resurrection body as non-material.¹

In East Indian thought this pessimism has been

¹ Cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 170-173.

extended to include in its reference the whole range of desires. Christianity looks to the sanctification, purification and ultimate satisfaction of human cravings; but the typical Hindoo sage looks to the extinction of desire and to a passionless Nirvana, in which individual personalities will be absorbed in Brahma, the impersonal sum of all true being. The hope of personal immortality in the accepted use of that phrase is wholly eliminated, for there is no faith in redemption and final satisfaction of desire. Against such a faith is set the doctrine of Karma, or the inexorable working of a law of cause and effect, which stamps the future with the present futilities of personal ends, and is worked out in a series of wearisome and disillusioning re-incarnations. This slavery can be broken only by the suppression of desire, brought about by the knowledge and passionless contemplation of Brahma. This is not an apologetical treatise, but takes for granted the truth of Christianity and of the Christian faith concerning the future. We content ourselves, therefore, with punctuating the contrast between a future in which men can enjoy a satisfying personal life and fellowship and one in which the very groundwork of such a blessed consummation is extinguished.¹

The doctrine of re-incarnation, and of the soul's pre-existence in another body, is said to explain the

¹ On East Indian ideas, see Wm. Bigelow, *Buddhism and Immortality*; Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.vv. "Brahmanism," "Hinduism," "Indian Buddhism" and "Nirvana"; S. D. F. Salmond, Bk. I. ch. iii.

evil tendencies with which we are born and the moral inequalities of men in this life. It does not do so at all. If true, it merely shoves back the problem of evil to a previous stage of existence. Moreover, the doctrine of re-incarnation rests upon purely theoretical assertion. No evidence of its truth has ever been discovered. Furthermore, all memory of previous incarnations is wanting, and the principles of justice are violated in a scheme of punishment in which the individual who is punished has no present knowledge whatever of the wrongdoing for which he suffers.¹ Finally, the contention sometimes made that endlessness of future life is nullified if we hypothecate a beginning of it, has no validity except on the unprovable assumption that God cannot create, and cannot permanently preserve what He creates.²

The question as to whether endless existence is in store for all men, including the incorrigibly wicked, is related to the doctrine of future punishment, and will be taken up in that connection.³

III. *Christian Eschatology*

§ 8. The only assured basis of knowledge, and of Christian doctrines, concerning things after death is

¹ Cf. Stewart and Tait, *Unseen Universe*, pp. 60-61.

² On pre-existence and re-incarnation, see W. R. Alger, pp. 475-487; J. M'T. E. M'Taggart, *Human Immortality and Pre-existence*; G. F. Moore, *Metempsychosis*; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Metempsychosis"; Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Pre-existence." Origen supported the theory of pre-existence, but not consistently.

³ In ch. vii. § 11.

the relevant teaching of supernatural revelation. Natural knowledge does indeed, as has been shown, suggest the need of a future life for the completion of the evolutionary drama of which man is the climax, and affords several seeming confirmations of the truth of the ancient and general belief in such a life. But apart from supernatural revelation we have no trustworthy information as to the nature and conditions of the unseen world and of our destinies hereafter.

Spiritualism claims to lift the veil which shrouds the future;¹ but to one who has assimilated the surer knowledge which Christ has afforded, the alleged revelations of Spiritualism fail to meet the tests which his Christian standpoint constrains him to apply. Spiritualistic descriptions of life after death are far from being mutually consistent and coherent, and are involved in associations and methods of communication which hopelessly discredit them. The other world of which mediumistic spirits speak is not a world in which God in Christ is paramount, but one in which spirits of sub-Christian character are chiefly at home. We are driven to suspect that the genuine residuum which remains after fraud has been eliminated has its source in spirits whom we

¹ On Spiritualism and its claim, see F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*; Frank Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism*; and *The Newer Spiritualism*; W. F. Barrett, *On the Threshold of the Unseen*; Sir O. Lodge, *Raymond*; Jane T. Stoddart, *The Case Against Spiritualism*; Geo. Longridge, *Spiritualism and Christianity*; Edmund McClure, *Spiritualism*; Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Spiritism" (full bibliog.).

ought not to trust, and whose influence upon those who cultivate intercourse with them is certain to be morally and religiously disastrous. In some cases we seem to be confronted by devils rather than by those who have our true welfare at heart. The knowledge of the future life which God would have us enjoy, can hardly be thought to be extended to us through channels which are choked with elaborate artifice, trickery and frivolity. Sound Christian instinct enables us to perceive that the stern disapproval of necromancy which is registered in both the Old and New Testaments is abundantly justified. It is possible that departed human spirits can under some conditions break through, so to speak, and by the aid of "controls" and "mediums" communicate with their friends. But the explanations given of the uninspiring nature of their communications, if true, do not make them spiritually helpful.¹

§ 9. Not only is our knowledge of things after death confined to the contents of supernatural revelation, but much of this revelation comes to us in highly symbolical terms; and careful allowance for its figurative nature has to be made before we can discern its substantial contents. To forget this, and to interpret literally the apocalyptic imagery of Holy Scripture, is to include in eschatological doctrine particulars which have no real warrant. Certain objections to catholic doctrine concerning the future

¹ For fuller discussion and refs. on the practice of necromancy, see ch. iv. §§ 5-6, below.

owe their plausibility to this mistake, and are seen to be non-relevant when the unauthoritative accretions of literalism referred to have been discounted.

The figurative method of divine revelation in this direction appears to be justified and explained by two considerations.

(a) In the first place, as already suggested above, it is not expedient or consistent with undistracted attention to the duties and responsibilities of this earthly life that our knowledge of the future should be more specific in details than is necessary for affording true motives and guidance in our present and probationary stage of growth Godward.¹ Natural and permissible within limits though it be to speculate concerning the future, and to construct provisional representations of future conditions and developments, God does not will to gratify mere curiosity; and when our speculative conceptions or "pious opinions" are given the status of certainties, they disturb the proportions of faith and sometimes banefully modify religious practice. The opinion that penal sufferings have to be endured in Purgatory, and the related doctrine of indulgences, illustrate this danger.²

(b) In the second place, we have no reason to believe that the conditions of the other world and of the consummation at the last day are susceptible

¹ See W. L. Walker, *Christ. Theism and a Spiritual Monism*, pp. 396-397.

² See ch. iii. § 10, below.

of literal description in terms intelligible to us. To be intelligible to those on earth terms have to be borrowed from earthly experience, and it is obvious that earthly terms cannot serve as literal descriptions of unearthly states and of events which are extraneous to the present visible order. Revelation of the future in its descriptive aspects is therefore necessarily figurative, and the analogies employed are somewhat remote. They are naturally borrowed from previously existing apocalyptic imagery, this being modified only so far as truth requires. The normal method of divine revelation is to utilize, improve, and give higher meaning to, existing forms of human thought and representation.¹

The figurative form of eschatological revelation does not nullify its permanent value. And we may be sure that the forms of imagination concerning eschatological events and conditions which revelation affords are those which will best prepare our minds for a right apprehension of what is to come. Moreover, in spite of their figurative nature, the terms of revelation have for spiritually qualified minds implications which, when once assimilated, afford present enlightenment and guidance in the journey to God. And these implications are given determinate pertinence by direct and definite revelations which afford due warrant and justification for the determinative propositions of catholic eschatology.

¹ Cf. S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 233 *et seq.*; W. O. E. Oesterley, ch. xi; E. Griffith-Jones, pp. 147-150.

The doctrine of everlasting punishment for the finally impenitent, for example, does not at all depend for truth and substantial meaning upon our interpretations of Christ's descriptions of such punishment, whether figurative or literal.

§ 10. In view of the confusing prominence of speculative opinions in this field, and in order to handle the several particulars of catholic eschatology in correct perspective, we devote this section and the following to provisional definitions of Christian certainties, and to the proper method of regarding and treating the speculative opinions referred to. By "Christian certainties" we mean those eschatological doctrines which stand the test of the rule of faith, because the Catholic Church teaches them and the Scriptures confirm them. They are not as comprehensive in detail as the wish which is father to the thought leads many to anticipate, but they suffice for guidance in our earthly journey to God. We may not require more.

(a) The physical death which all must incur ends human probation, or the opportunity of becoming subjects of ultimate salvation. Whatever opportunities may be afforded after death for completing salvation, and perhaps also for initiating it in those who miss the Gospel message in this world, death ends opportunity to form the fundamental disposition which can make such opportunities avail for salvation. There can be no second "probation." Each individual's salvability is irreversibly deter-

mined at death by a discriminating and unerring "particular" judgment on this life's course.

(b) Salvation and fitness for eternal life has to be completed and perfected before the saved can receive their full reward, that is, before the final or "general" judgment. And since this perfecting is not normally completed before death, it has to be completed after death in an intermediate state.

(c) Departed Christians are still members of Christ's mystical Body, and a real communion exists between them and us, a communion which ought to be cultivated by us. But the only formal method of cultivating it is prayer. Efforts to establish communication with them are contrary to the divine will.

(d) This world will come to an end at a definite time, and will give way to an abiding new heaven and earth, in which the Kingdom of God will be completely established forever.

(e) At this time all men will be raised from physical death with their bodies, although these will be changed in ways that can be explained only by divine power and, in the case of the subjects of salvation, by their union with Christ and share in His resurrection.

(f) Christ will come again in the clouds of heaven at the end of this world, and the resurrection will be followed by open and general judgment of all men in their bodies according to their deeds in the same. The incurably wicked will be sent into everlasting punishment, and the righteous will be taken into eternal life.

(g) Except in the particular of banishment from fellowship with God and His saints, the method of final punishment is known only in terms open to figurative interpretation. But, although we are permitted to think that its severity is not the same for different individuals, and that it is susceptible of mitigation, its endlessness and the finality of loss of the beatific vision are certainly revealed.

(h) The eternal life awarded to the righteous has for its determinative element an open vision and enjoyment of God in the communion of saints. From the nature of things it is clear that the enjoyment of such a life is absolutely dependent upon previous development in us of certain supernatural virtues and desires, without which no creature is able to enjoy open and enduring relations with God and His saints.

§ 11. These Christian certainties, sufficient though they be for our spiritual guidance through this world, presuppose a context of unrevealed truth which men inevitably desire to explore. They are like the projecting headlands of an icebound continent, fragmentary suggestions of a great world beyond. Moreover, the unseen world which they suggest, and to which they guide our approach, is one in which the future destiny of us all is to be actualized. Our desire to know more about it is both natural and, if properly controlled, free both from blame and from danger. We are exhorted to meditate on the truths of our religion, although the duty of submitting cheerfully to the limitations of knowledge which God has im-

posed upon us is also clearly inculcated. But we cannot thus meditate on eschatological doctrine without being led on to conjectures, and even to the formation of speculative opinions. It is also inevitable that mourners should strive to picture the state of their dear ones departed, and that reassuring conjectures should be offered to them by those to whom the pastorate of souls is given. These conjectures inevitably develop into opinions, held with more or less confidence, and employed as rational contexts of expositions of the certainties of faith. Finally, the exigencies of apologetics, or our efforts to meet rational objections to the several particulars of catholic eschatology, have similar results.

In brief, if we are to hold and maintain our certainties intelligently, we have to view them in some kind of intellectual context, and this necessity is not removed by the fact that the context will to some extent be speculative, affected by current and changing forms and tendencies of thought, and liable to important modifications. We cannot successfully apprehend revealed truths *in vacuo*. An appearance of unrelatedness will necessarily reduce, if it does not destroy, the credibility of a doctrine. The liberty of Christians, therefore, to develop and to advertise openly what are called "pious opinions" in eschatological questions is beyond cavil, if a certain guiding principle is carefully observed and applied.

This principle is that we should not, because of absorption in speculative questions, cease to realize

that the certainties of revelation are exclusively and sufficiently determinative of the Christian course in this world. An important application of this principle is that "pious opinions" in no case should be given in our minds the rank and determinative influence of revealed doctrine. No doubt some of these opinions are very reasonable and credible. They may be true. But we may be certain that, until God somehow assures us of their truth, the rule of safety is to hold them provisionally only, and to give them secondary places in our thoughts and expositions. To impose them upon others as articles of faith is unjustifiable. History shows that forgetfulness of this has caused much damage to souls. We shall try to observe this principle in our present treatise, which necessarily contains speculative matter.¹

¹ Cf. *Introduction*, pp. 202-208; *Authority*, pp. 274-277.

CHAPTER II

DEATH

I. *Both Natural and Penal*

§ 1. None are likely to dispute the fact that all members of the human race as such are by nature subject to physical death;¹ so that none can escape dying, except by a divine intervention for which no child of Adam has the slightest shadow of reason to look while this world lasts. But death is not equivalent to an ending of personal existence, which, as has been shown in the previous chapter, survives and is the subject of great possibilities in the future. There are several meanings of the word "death." In general, it is the opposite of life rather than of existence, of life in the sense of effective adjustment to, and correspondence with, environment.² The physical death with which we are here concerned is a ceasing of the body to keep in living touch with its physical environment, this resulting in corruption of the flesh and

¹ On death, see W. R. Alger, Pt. I. ch. ii; H. P. Liddon, *Advent in St. Paul's*, Sermon v; Jos. Pohle, Pt. I. ch. i; *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, and Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, q.v.; Hastings, *Dic. of Bible* and *Dic. of Apos. Church*, s.v. "Life and Death"; A. B. Davidson, *Theol. of the O. Test.*, pp. 432-436.

² Cf. ch. viii. § 5, below.

in dissolution of its constituent material elements. The death of the inhabiting spirit or soul, on the other hand, is its failure to correspond to its proper spiritual environment. With such death we are not just now concerned, except to say that physical death neither causes the soul's death nor precludes its continued possession of a germinal remnant of the physical body, the seed of a transformed resurrection body in the world to come.¹

That all men are naturally subject to physical death is generally acknowledged by catholic writers, and is set forth in Holy Scripture. "It is appointed unto men once to die." "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth." "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power over the day of death."² It is also a matter of common experience and consequent consent. In all history no man has been known to escape death by natural power. The translations of Enoch and Elijah, if they are instances of immunity from physical death, are supernatural exceptions which prove the natural law. The same must be said of those who are alive at our Lord's second coming and are then to be changed without dying.³

¹ Cf. ch. v. § 9, below.

² Heb. ix. 27; 1 St. Pet. i. 24; Eccles. viii. 8. Cf. Job. xxx. 23; Psa. lxxxix. 48.

³ Gen. v. 24; 2 Kings ii. 11-12; 1 Cor. xv. 51-52; 1 Thess. iv. 15-17.

Natural science corroborates the law of physical mortality, and discovers in the natural constitution of the human frame the seeds of inevitable corruption and ultimate dissolution. It seeks with a limited measure of success to prolong physical life, but acknowledges the law that all physical organisms must in time wear out and dissolve. The alleged immortality of the protozoa is not that of a complex physical organism, and therefore affords no real exception to the natural mortality of organic forms of life; although it perhaps throws light on the problem of continuity between our present corruptible body and the resurrection body.¹

Enlightened Christian reason enables us to perceive the fitness of the law of death, or at least of the wondrous conversion of this *σῶμα ψυχικόν* into a *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, of which death is normally the conditioning antecedent. "That which thou thyself sowest is not quickened, except it die." The reason is that this body is not capable of adjustment to the environment in which men are destined to live hereafter, and is incapable of the functions there to be fulfilled. By nature flesh and blood are incapable of inheriting the kingdom of incorruption to come. This corruptible body must therefore be changed from above before such inheritance is either possible or to be desired.² Immortality of this physical frame would be unendurably wearisome.

¹ Cf. pp. 154-156, below.

² 1 Cor. xv. Cf. pp. 150-152, below.

§ 2. In spite of all this, however, catholic doctrine asserts that if sin had not gained entrance into human life men would not have been under the necessity of incurring physical death. The basis of this doctrine is the general premise that the things from which Christ came to redeem and save us are consequences of sin and did not have place in man's original state of innocency and grace. Inasmuch as Scripture includes physical death among these things, and describes it as brought upon the race through Adam's sin, the inference is made with catholic consent that if, by the aid of the grace with which he was originally endowed, man had wholly avoided sin, he would also have been enabled by grace to avoid dying.¹

This does not mean that he would have entered upon his final inheritance without change. As has been shown above, flesh and blood cannot in their present physical state inherit the kingdom of incorruption; and this is a natural incapacity, independent of the complicating adjunct of sin. The doctrine referred to is that the necessary change would have been accomplished without the dread process of physical dissolution. Man would have transcended the natural law of death by supernatural aid, and in that sense would have been immune from death.

We find apparent confirmations of this doctrine in the mysterious translations of Enoch and Elijah, the symbolical significance of which, in Scripture, is not

¹ Geo. Bull, *Discourse v* (gives patristic citations). Cf. *Creation and Man*, pp. 264-265; H. P. Liddon, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

wholly nullified by critical denials of the historical validity of the narratives in question. In any case, the change of the quick which St. Paul declares will take place at the last day¹ affords a clear illustration of the manner of change which, according to catholic doctrine, would have forestalled the necessity of physical death for man, if he had not sinned.

§ 3. This doctrine at once explains and is confirmed by the teaching of Scripture that death is penal — natural, indeed, apart from divine forestalling, but penal because God's non-prevention of it is part of His punishment of our sins. If man had remained sinless, he would have obtained the transformation needed for the fruition of His destiny without the disturbing incident of physical dissolution. His being left in his natural liability to it is a punishment.²

The principle is set forth in the Old Testament. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." St. Paul says that "as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." "For the wages of sin is death." The Epistle to the Hebrews ascribes the power of death to the devil,³ and whatever power

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 51-52.

² The Council of Carthage VI (can. 1), in 418 A. D., condemned the Pelagian denial of this (J. Hefele, *Hist. of Church Councils*, § 119). See H. P. Liddon, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55; the writer's *Creation and Man*, pp. 264-265, 277; St. Thomas, I. II. lxxxii. 3; D. Purves, *The Life Everlasting*, ch. v; A. B. Davidson, *Theol. of O. T.*, ch. xii. § 11; H. R. Mackintosh, pp. 149-152.

³ Ezek. xviii. 4, 20; Jerem. xxxi. 29-30; Rom. v. 12; vi. 23; Heb. ii. 14. Cf. Gen. ii. 17; iii. 19, 22; 1 Cor. xv. 21-22, 56.

the devil has over us is due to human sin. It may, of course, be said that these passages have reference to spiritual death, to the loss of eternal life with God; and this answer is true in part. The death to God is the final penalty, compared with which physical death is of far lesser moment. But St. Paul can hardly be thought to hold that eternal death has "passed unto all men," and Scripture habitually unites the ideas of physical and spiritual death together as the working out of the same dark mystery of evil. The absence of specific assertions that physical as distinguished from spiritual death is a penal consequence of sin is therefore non-significant.

But the penal aspect of physical death is not confined to the fact that sin has nullified the gracious working of God which would have saved us from incurring it. Because of sin, death has become the king of terrors. The fact that we have to die, sad though it be in certain respects, both to ourselves and to others, is not naturally terrifying in itself. It is not as a rule painful, and when it is attended by pain, we have abundant evidence that the actual process of dying is also a process of relief from pain. The physical contortions which sometimes occur at the point of departure are probably automatic and not at all painful. There is no physical agony of death, certainly none under normal circumstances.

The real sting of death is sin, and the sense of judgment after death from which few men escape. Even those who seem immune, whose consciences are

deadened beyond hope, die without hope. The sting of despair is not less real in their case because they have schooled themselves to it; for at best, themselves being frequent witness, they contemplate total darkness instead of the glorious light of eternal life which they were intended to enjoy. In brief, it is a penalty of sin that the sadness of death, of partings and of ended opportunities, has become by reason of sin a terrifying entrance upon judgment and final condemnation. The awful thought is engendered, "It might have been"; and hope, as well as the body, dies.

If there had been no redemption, and if only in this life we had hope, our state would be pitiable. The salvation from sin which Christ's redemption has provided does not relieve us from the necessity of physical death. That part of our punishment has still to be endured, even if our sins are forgiven and our final escape from the power of sin is assured. None the less God "giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Death becomes part of a mystery of purification from sin, an antecedent of quickening of our corruptible bodies, and the gateway to eternal life. Henceforth "to die is gain"¹ for all who repent and believe in Christ and by faithfulness to His "way" die in His grace.

¹ Phil. i. 21. Cf. Revel. xiv. 13.

II. *The Particular Judgment*

§ 4. It is catholic doctrine that the judgment of every man is determined by his deeds done in the body, that is, during this life. Accordingly the moment of entrance into the unseen world is the moment of divine and irreversible decision as to each human person's future, whether it shall be that of indefectible progress towards eternal blessedness or that of final forfeiture of salvation and endless punishment. This decision is called the "particular judgment."¹ Presumably it is not a formal judgment so much as the determinate end of the individual's chance to alter the conditions and consequent results of judgment by any effective change in his moral disposition and attitude towards divine truth and righteousness. How far the individual then receives knowledge of the final moral significance and judicial consequence in general of his earthly life we do not know.

The particular judgment differs in several ways from the general judgment at the end of the world. In the first place, as above stated, it is not a formal procedure but a moment of decisive completion of the data of judgment. Secondly, it is preliminary and private, although it is the last and determinative phase in the long process of judgment which attends

¹ 2 Cor. v. 10; Rom. ii. 6; Revel. xx. 12-13; xxii. 12. On the particular judgment, see Darwell Stone, pp. 241-243; A. J. Mason, *Faith of the Gospel*, ch. xi. § 1; Jas. Orr, *Christ. View of God*, pp. 343-346; H. N. Oxenham, *Cath. Eschatology*, pp. 45-49; Jos. Pohle, Pt. I. ch. ii; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Judgment," III.

our lives on earth, and which in consciences that are not stifled repeatedly registers itself in self-judgment.

If that judgment goes fatally against anyone, he will, so to speak, exemplify the truth of Abraham's word, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead."¹ That is, the moral attitude which makes him reject truth and grace in the forms made available to him in this life, will inevitably cause him to reject what he vainly imagines to be a better chance in the other world. A man's moral attitude and fundamental disposition towards truth and duty, rather than the degree of light which is afforded to him, determines how he will react to moral opportunities. There is presupposed, of course, the fact that men are afforded sufficient light and grace, even in heathen lands and under barbaric conditions, to make their manner of life a revelation to God of their moral susceptibility to opportunities of whatever scope. God is omniscient and all-wise, and to Him the most rudimentary forms of probation afford sufficient data for unerring judgment — a discriminating judgment, neither less merciful than just nor less just than merciful. The ability of the Judge of all the earth to do right is not conditioned by the limitations of our several forms of probation.

Apart from these considerations the teaching of

¹ St. Luke xvi. 31. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus indicates a separation between the good and the bad in the intermediate state.

Scripture is decisive. "Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation," that is, of becoming subjects of the process of salvation which is completed at the last day. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment." This surely means, that judgment is the next determinative fact after death. The subject matters or moral data of the judgment are expressly declared to be the deeds of this life, and these only. "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad."¹ No doubt the relative amount of light and opportunity will be abundantly allowed for, and the moral significance of deeds for personal character and disposition will be the standard of judgment. But the data of judgment will consist of what is done in the flesh.

§ 5. If physical death ends our probation, or opportunity of becoming subjects of God's mercy, it does not end our opportunities of salvation, of obtaining fuller spiritual knowledge and of making progress in our journey to God. To our imperfect observation it appears, indeed, that the majority of men do not even begin to be saved in this life; and nothing in Scripture forbids us to think that multitudes of such will be vouchsafed opportunities of salvation after death, all, that is, whose more rudimentary probation outside the light of the Gospel

¹ 2 Cor. vi. 2; Heb. ix. 27; 2 Cor. v. 10

reveals to God a moral susceptibility to the light and grace of salvation.

In any case, and for faithful Christians as well as for other possible subjects of salvation, opportunities of progress in salvation after death are necessary, and undoubtedly will be afforded.¹ Mistaken spiritual conceptions and erroneous consciences and choices, not at all confined to non-Christians, will have to be rectified in the light of the other world, if we are to adjust ourselves to the essential conditions of enjoyment of eternal life. Spiritual errors, and courses of life based thereupon, when due to unavoidable ignorance rather than to malignant wilfulness, need not be regarded as fatal to final salvation. But salvation cannot be completed without their removal; and since such errors are often due to invincible ignorance, ignorance for which the conditions of this life afford no effective remedy, our faith in the mercy of God and in His will to save all who can be saved constrains us to look for God-given opportunities after death to turn from error of mind and will to truth and right. If so, such turning may perhaps be called repentance, but with a significant difference, for it is not a reversal of previous moral disposition and attitude. It is a perfectly consistent manifestation of an already existing disposition to correct unintentional errors and wrongs when they become apparent.

¹ The catholic doctrine of the intermediate state involves this. Cf. ch. iii. § 8, below, and refs. there.

Summing up the previous paragraph, the continuance after death of education for eternal life is necessary for all, not less truly for those who have learned the Gospel in this life than for those who have not; and we have abundant reason to believe that opportunities for such education will be afforded. But other opportunities will also be needed and may confidently be looked for. An elementary disposition such as makes one susceptible of salvation, and enables him to die in hope of it, does not of itself effect a deliverance from spiritual weakness and a removal of sinful propensities and other spiritual limitations. Therefore, catholic doctrine teaches that the work of our perfecting will go on until the day of Jesus Christ. Those who are to be saved will be saved as by fire, and the opportunity of purification after death is precious to those who realize that without perfect holiness the sight of God is necessarily a source of torture rather than of joy. If we would enjoy God, we must grow on until by *post-mortem* mercies we attain "unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."¹

§ 6. There is no renewal of probation in these opportunities after death.² They do not constitute chances to reverse life's fundamental orientation,

¹ Phil. i. 6; 1 Cor. iii. 15; Heb. xii. 14; Ephes. iv. 13.

² That probation is confined to this life, see H. N. Oxenham, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-62; P. G. Medd, *One Mediator*, § 149; Stanley Leathes, J. Cairns, Bishop Weathers and G. W. Olver, in *Future Probation: A Symposium*; Jos. A. Beet, pp. 240-244; R. E. Hutton, pp. 50-60; Jas. Denney, *Studies in Theol.*, pp. 242-246. For contrary arguments,

for that becomes fixed at death. Rather they are initial parts of the reward which God affords to those who in this life have established in themselves a disposition susceptible of salvation. It is as if a man were put through an apprenticeship with the promise that, if he showed himself in it to be of the right sort of timber, he would ultimately be admitted to partnership, but after he had thus approved himself had none the less to be more fully equipped for his promised position by going through the intermediate grades in the factory. The apprenticeship would be his probation, and not less completely this because of the further opportunities of preparation needed before the goal could be reached. It is in this life that the raw materials of sainthood are produced. These materials, indeed, have to be worked over in the other world, before the saint can be fully perfected and enter into his destined joy; but their suitability for this working over is produced here, not there.

The arguments for probation after death presuppose two mistaken ideas. The first one is that all opportunities pertaining to salvation, as such, are necessarily probational — are chances to reverse one's fundamental attitude towards truth and right and thus to become susceptible of salvation. The falsity of this has already been sufficiently shown. The

see *Future Probation*, *passim*; H. M. Luckock, *Intermed. State*, XVII-XIX; E. Griffith-Jones, Pt. III. ch. ii, v; H. R. Mackintosh, pp. 157-161. Cf. Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*; and *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, s.vv. "Probation."

other presupposition is that a man has no real or fair probation unless he has had the Gospel of salvation effectively published to him. This also is certainly an erroneous assumption. Whether the particular form of salvation which is offered to Christians, and which ends in the beatific vision of God, is designed for all men has not been declared in Scripture. We shall consider the problem in a later section.¹ But the opportunity to develop and reveal to God one's fitness for further enlightenment, progress and blessedness can surely be distinguished readily from this further enlightenment and from the chance consciously to accept the reward prepared by God. Wise parents often find it expedient to conceal benefits which they will to bestow upon their children until they have put them to proof in rudimentary ways. The reality of probation is not at all dependent upon specific knowledge of the reward or punishment that is designed for those who are subject to it. In order to prove that the heathen have no real probation we have to show that their lives have no moral quality, and cannot be proper subject-matters of a discriminating moral judgment of God.

The theory of probation after death, usually advanced in the interests of others, is not needed, as we have seen, to vindicate divine justice and mercy towards the invincibly ignorant. In many instances there is reason to fear that its maintainers are not

¹ In § 9, below.

entirely sincere in pleading for others, but are really moved by consciousness that they themselves are failing to take proper advantage of this life's opportunities, and by the illusory notion that if they had another chance in the other world their disposition towards opportunities of grace would be changed. Such persons are deceiving themselves. If they obstinately reject these opportunities now, the fundamental disposition thereby developed will prevent their reversing this rejection in the other world. It is not morally and spiritually safe for any man to think, whether because of his own argumentation or because of the rash teaching of others, that he can hope for another chance after death. He is almost certain to relax his efforts and carelessly to disregard the inspired warning, "Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

III. *Unrevealed Possibilities*

§ 7. The problem of a "larger hope" for those who, through no fault of their own, remain during this life invincibly ignorant of the Gospel — larger, that is, than has been ordinarily realized by orthodox Christians — has come to the fore in modern days.¹ Unfortunately it has often been approached with the assumption that one must join issue with "orthodox" Christian doctrine in order to maintain that there

¹ Pushed forward by F. W. Farrar's *Eternal Hope* and E. H. Plumptre's *Spirits in Prison*. Cf. ch. vii. § 10, below.

is any hope of salvation for the heathen and for those in Christian lands who, because of unfortunate circumstances, have been effectively hindered from perceiving the truth and value of the Christian doctrine of salvation. This misapprehension is natural enough, for the view that the heathen are hopelessly lost unless they are brought to Christian belief in this world is sufficiently widespread among Christians to be confused by many with the authoritative teaching of the Catholic Church. Moreover, the Calvinistic doctrine of election, widely, although mistakenly, regarded as an essential element of Christian orthodoxy, does in fact leave no open door of hope for the heathen. It treats them all as predestined to everlasting punishment.

This horrible doctrine, and all forms of Christian opinion which dogmatically consign a vast majority of mankind to perdition, must be eliminated from consideration altogether, if we are to consider the problem before us in a reasonable way. It is true that catholic doctrine, abundantly confirmed by Scripture, makes Christian Baptism the only means of entering a state of salvation, of beginning to be saved, in this life.¹ No one can be justified except by faith in Christ, that is, no otherwise can one gain the footing of acceptance as a subject of present saving grace. Furthermore, it is only in the name of Jesus Christ that men can be saved. The New Testament says that "such as were being saved"

¹ *The Sacraments*, ch. i. § 10.

were added by the Lord to the Church,¹ and "the Way" of Christianity is there plainly treated as the only way into life eternal. The elect are the baptized, and no others are so regarded by New Testament writers.

In spite of these and other identifications of Christian salvation with the acceptance and practice of Christianity in this life, there remain several open doors of hope that those who through no personal fault miss the opportunity of Christian salvation in this world are not necessarily doomed by God to everlasting punishment. In the first place, we should remember that the New Testament is written for those who have had a chance to receive the Gospel, and it nowhere deals with the problem with which we are here concerned. For this and other reasons we seem justified in interpreting its stipulations as to salvation, and its condemnations of those who do not fulfil them, as presupposing knowledge of the Gospel — as not intended to determine the possibilities of divine mercy for the rest of mankind. The teaching is clear that no one can in this life enter the state of Christian salvation except in the Christian way. In brief, those dying outside this "Way" have not obtained admittance to Christian salvation. But the inference that none of them will ever in any manner be saved from eternal doom is not logically valid.

We know that God willeth the salvation of all

¹ Acts iv. 12; ii. 47.

men¹ — not indeed unconditionally, but surely in this sense that He does not consign anyone to perdition who can be brought to embrace salvation and fulfil its necessary conditions. The inference is reasonable that, since the heathen and invincibly ignorant do not receive the knowledge of salvation in this world, God will somehow afford to them a way of escape from doom, if the fundamental disposition which they develop in their earthly probation has not nullified the moral possibility of their benefiting by it. Their salvation, like our own, will be based upon Christ's death, of course, for, according to Scripture, no other basis is available.

These possibilities are not at all precluded by the New Testament identification of the elect with baptized Christians. Election there means called by God's eternal will to the enjoyment of baptismal grace on earth. It points to privilege, no doubt, but to one enjoyed in this life — one which does not absolutely insure its subjects' final glory. The elect can fall away.² Probation is real for all, and is invariably contingent in result. We certainly dogmatize beyond valid warrant, whether scriptural or other, when we understand the "non-elect" to be necessarily doomed. If we have regard for the limited meaning of the "elect" in the New Testament, "non-elect" should mean simply not called to baptismal grace in this life.

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 4.

² Cf. *The Church*, p. 85; *Creation and Man*, pp. 19-38.

God's ways are not our ways, and an appeal to human analogies in determining what God is likely to do cannot be depended upon for dogmatic conclusions. None the less, in matters which are not determined by revelation, we are justified in believing that our sense of the more fundamental requirements of justice and love will not be stultified by the ways of God. If we cannot reconcile His consigning the invincibly ignorant — a vast majority of our race — to eternal doom, without affording them any chance of escape therefrom, if we cannot reconcile this with the sense of justice and love which He has implanted in us, we are surely justified in cherishing the hope that He will somehow provide a way of escape for them in the other world.

§ 8. If we accept the teaching that probation and the development of personal salvability are confined to this life,¹ we cannot logically believe in the final salvation of the heathen and invincibly ignorant, unless we have reason to think that they have sufficient opportunities in this world to become salvable. The question before us is, Do they have such opportunities?

We have seen that an affirmative answer depends neither upon the process of their salvation being initiated openly in this world nor upon their receiving knowledge beforehand of what is in store for them in the other world. We have also seen that the heathen do face moral issues of some kind, issues

¹ Cf. § 6, above.

which put them to a real probation, however elementary it may be. Their lives are proper subject-matters of moral judgment, and the all-wise God is able to judge them without violating either justice or mercy.

Whether they have sufficient opportunities before entering the other world to become salvable — that is, fit for educative and other saving mercies there afforded by God — depends upon what men must have opportunities of doing or becoming in order to be possible subjects of salvation. We do not mean that men can do anything that will make them salvable without divine grace. Such a supposition is contrary to revealed truth and catholic doctrine. But it is a widespread and permissible theological opinion that all men are in fact afforded sufficient prevenient grace to enable them to take advantage of the probational opportunities, whatever they are, which are providentially afforded to them.¹

Light is shed upon the problem by St. Paul's doctrine of justification, or of the condition in us which makes us subjects of salvation.² This condition is not, properly speaking, what we do, or have the opportunity of doing, but the faith which is shown in whatever we do. That is, it is an attitude towards our Christian opportunities, a docile, receptive and responsive attitude towards them. This, and this alone, is our part in becoming salvable. We indeed have to work out our salvation subsequently and in

¹ Cf. *Creation and Man*, p. 353.

² Cf. *The Church*, pp. 259-260.

the appointed way; but we obtain the status of salvability, God's grace being presupposed, by our moral attitude.

The presumption is strong that the same principle holds with regard to heathen salvability. If, with the aid of hidden and prevenient grace, a heathen man displays towards his lower opportunities an attitude which is morally analogous for his conditions to that which a recipient of the Gospel exhibits in justifying faith, he would seem to prove his salvability.¹ That is, he would seem to show that he is the kind of material, however raw, out of which God can make a fit recipient of beatitude. Just as the Gospel of a salvation *begun in this world* was proclaimed to "men of good will"² rather than to men of achievement, so we may be permitted to think that the possibility of salvation *begun after death* is attained in this world by the heathen on the same condition of good will — of good disposition towards the moral opportunities here afforded to them. By a good disposition we mean one which God can accept, in view of all the conditions and limitations of heathen probation. It would seem to be thus acceptable as showing to the All-wise that the possessor of it would have become a child of saving grace, if he had enjoyed Christian opportunities.

¹ In Rom. i. 18 *et seq.* and ii. 12-16, St. Paul clearly implies a probation for the heathen, upon the basis of which they will be judged.

² St. Luke ii. 14 (Greek).

Such value as this line of speculation may have does not lie in any enlargement of knowledge which it affords. It is speculation, not a Christian certainty, for it lies outside the scope of revelation. Its value is apologetical. It shows that the Christian doctrine which confines probation to this life does not compel those who accept it to think of the heathen as consigned, one and all, to perdition.¹

§ 9. Another line of speculation also bears on the problem of heathen salvation. The opinion is lawful that, although salvation from sin and from its penal consequences is, or will be, made available to all men, the beatitudes or happy destinies prepared for men are not the same for all — not the same for the baptized and the unbaptized. St. Thomas Aquinas maintained that unbaptized infants, although deprived of the beatific vision, are not painfully sensible of their loss but enjoy a natural beatitude.² His view has been widely adopted. But if the lack of Baptism causes infants to receive a different beatitude from that of the baptized, we seem

¹ Some ancient Christian writers believed in a "dispensation of paganism." See J. N. Newman, *Arians*, ch. i. § iii. 5; J. B. Mozley, *Predestination*, pp. 113-117. On the salvation of the heathen, see S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 529 *et seq.*; H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, XVII; E. H. Plumptre, *op. cit.*, Study VI; E. B. Pusey, *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?* pp. 8-10; P. G. Medd, *One Mediator*, § 197; J. A. Beet, pp. 219-220; R. E. Hutton, pp. 56-60; St. Thomas, II. II. ii. 7. *ad tert.*; H. N. Oxenham, *Cath. Eschatology*, pp. 26-28, 49.

² *Summa Theol.*, III. Suppl. lxxi. Cf. P. J. Toner, "The Lot of those Dying in Original Sin," in *Irish Theol. Qly.*, July, 1909; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Limbo."

to be justified in holding that the unbaptized generally, if saved, fall under the same rule.

This inference has not received much attention, but if true it perhaps throws light on the distinction in Scripture between the elect and the non-elect. St. Paul does not mean by the elect those who are certain finally to be saved, but those who have received on earth the baptismal benefit of saving grace.¹ We may not infer, therefore, that the non-elect, as such, are doomed to everlasting punishment. They are simply the unbaptized. The question emerges, however, as to why some are elected of God to this privilege and others are not. A possible answer is that, although God willeth the salvation of all, He does not will or provide that all shall have that form of future beatitude of which Baptism is declared to be the antecedent condition.

The popular conception of human destinies, as comprehending only the Christian beatitude of open vision of God and the perdition which is the penalty for witting and obstinate rebellion against Christian truth and precept, is not in harmony with any adequate conception of biblical teaching. Our Lord speaks of "many mansions" which He was to prepare for His faithful ones, and the diversity of future rewards thereby implied is confirmed by other hints.² In the future world manifold vocations and con-

¹ Cf. p. 50, above, and refs. in n. 2 there.

² St. John xiv. 2. Cf. St. Luke xix. 15-26 (and parallels) with xii. 47-48.

ditions will surely be found. That world will not be made up exclusively of a pinnacle of glory and a bottomless pit; but, being a world in which all sorts of men are to dwell and are to find habitations suited to their capacities and deservings, its conditions, and the appointed activities of men in it, will exhibit the widest variety. Even in the Heaven and the Hell of Christians diversity appears to reign; and this diversity may be thought to involve a demarcation of the rewards and penalties and vocations which are to be meted out to the heathen and to the invincibly ignorant of Christian lands.

Such speculative considerations seem helpful in reckoning in Christian apologetic with the great inequality of probational conditions afforded to men. We shall perhaps find that God has functions in store for many, functions which have to be fulfilled in the complex working of the new heavens and earth, for the performance of which the Christian form of probation is not a suitable preparation. If so, we may still be sure that each man who is faithful to his own trust and trial will have opened up to him a just and satisfying destiny — a heaven prepared *for him*. In any case, this life is the appointed time within which his future possibilities have to be developed.

The missionary charge to go into all the world and to preach the Gospel to every creature may not in any case be disregarded. It constitutes “marching orders” for the Church Militant, against which there

can be no appeal. Christ plainly wills that the number of the elect (of those called to the Christian vocation and destiny) shall be made up from every race and condition of men; and the appointed method of reaching them is that of preaching the Gospel. If the inability of many to assimilate the Gospel message, their invincible ignorance, is not a reason for believing that they are all doomed to everlasting punishment, neither is it a reason for reduced interest and effort in missionary propaganda. And if this invincible ignorance points to the fact that God has prepared future destinies for many of which we know nothing, this fact also leaves the missionary commission in full force.

CHAPTER III

THE OTHER WORLD

I. *Receptacles of Souls*

§ 1. (a) Up to the time of the later prophets at least, the Israelites regarded the region of the dead, which they called *Sheol*,¹ as a gloomy and cheerless place, a place in which good and bad alike are deprived of the good things of this world, without receiving any satisfying equivalent. No equation of divine justice there was thought of. Modern critical scholars say that this was due to the Israelites' limited conception of Jahveh, as ruling only in this world and over His chosen people. Sheol, they thought, lay outside His realm, and therefore was lacking in the benefits of His moral government. To go there was to lose the privilege of communion with God which they were conscious of enjoying in this life, and this privilege was the thing which made life worth living to a pious Israelite. Thus King Hezekiah is reported to have written, "Sheol cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee:

¹ On Sheol in the O. Test., see A. B. Davidson, *Theol. of O. Test.*, ch. xii. § 4; S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 160-172; E. Griffith-Jones, pp. 117-119; W. O. E. Oesterley, *Immortality and the Unseen World*, ch. vii.

They that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day.”¹

But the Jews came to have larger conceptions of divine sovereignty and purpose, and of God’s care for the individual; and with their gradual realization that this world is not a suitable sphere for the final vindication of God’s righteous government, they came to distinguish between the states of the righteous and of the wicked in Sheol. The wicked were then thought to be consigned to Gehenna and the righteous to Paradise or Abraham’s bosom.

(b) The name *Gehenna* is derived from the phrase “valley of Hinnom” (גֵּי הִנּוֹם).² This valley lay to the south and southwest of Jerusalem and was used in the time of Ahaz and Manasseh for idolatrous sacrifices, in which children were made to pass through fire to Moloch. By way of reformation King Josiah polluted the place with human bones, but the same evil was revived under King Jehoiakim. Jeremiah in consequence prophesied that the place would be called the “Valley of Slaughter.”³ In the apocalyptic period the name *Gehenna* came to stand for the place of everlasting punishment of the wicked. In later Judaism *Gehenna* was held to fulfil the double

¹ Isa. xxxviii. 18-19. Cf. Job x. 21-22; Psa. vi. 5; lxxxviii. 5; cxv. 17; Eccles. ix. 5, 10.

² Neh. xi. 30; Josh. xv. 8; xviii. 16. On *Gehenna*, see Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, q.v.

³ 2 Kings xvi. 3; xxi. 6; xxiii. 10, 13, 14; Jerem. xi. 10-13; xix. 11; Ezek. xx. 30.

function of everlasting punishment of the Gentiles and of a temporary purgatory for faithless Jews.

(c) The name *Paradise*¹ appears to be of Median or Persian origin and signifies a well-watered garden, which to those occupying arid lands was naturally associated with everything delightful. In the Septuagint it is used to translate גֶּן־עֵדֶן, the garden of Eden, concerning which glorifying legends were developed in the Rabbinical schools. Various conceptions of Paradise prevailed when our Lord came, but the dominant idea was that of a happy place for the blessed, the place of Enoch, Elijah and Moses. *Abraham's Bosom*² appears in some instances to have been another name for Paradise, and in others to have designated an intermediate place in which the righteous peacefully awaited their final reward. Although the word *Heaven*³ frequently occurs in the Old Testament, it did not acquire its Christian meaning of the final abode of the blessed; although it was used to designate the dwelling place of God.

§ 2. Our Lord and His Apostles took over the current names for the receptacles of souls in the other world, but placed them in the more determinative context of Christian teaching concerning eternal life. None the less they exercised some reserve; and while emphasizing the future alternatives of life and death, they left unanswered many questions concerning the regions and conditions of the departed.

(a) *Hades* (αἵδης) was taken over from the

¹ See Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, q.v. ² *Idem*, q.v. ³ *Idem*, q.v.

Septuagint as the general name for the present place of departed spirits, displacing the Old Testament name "Sheol."¹ It was to Hades that our Lord was by implication said to have gone after His death. Thus St. Peter told his pentecostal listeners that our Lord's soul was not left in Hades.² When Christ declared that the gates of Hades should not prevail against His Church³ He meant that death should not prevail against it; and in the Apocalypse death and Hades are coupled together as describing the state and place of the departed.⁴ The darker aspect of the Old Testament Sheol is retained to some extent. For example, our Lord describes going down into Hades as the punishment of Capernaum for its refusal to accept His warnings; and the rich man is described as being in torment when he lifted up his eyes in Hades.⁵ But the supposition that Hades is a place of torment for all is not taught. Certainly neither Lazarus nor our Lord Himself can be regarded as consigned to suffering when they went to the place of the departed. The story of the rich man and Lazarus, whether taken literally or not, presupposes a separation of some kind between the righteous and the wicked in Hades. Abraham's Bosom is in Hades, but is separate from the place of torment therein where the rich man lifts up his eyes.

¹ On Hades, see *Idem*, *q.v.*; Jas. Fyfe, *The Hereafter*, Pt. I ch. v. § III.

² Acts ii. 27, 31.

³ St. Matt. xvi. 18.

⁴ Revel. i. 18; vi. 8; xx. 13-14.

⁵ St. Matt. xi. 23; St. Luke x. 15; xvi. 23.

(b) In accordance with existing Jewish usage, the place of the final punishment of the wicked is normally called *Gehenna* (γέεννα);¹ although in one instance the verb *ταρταρώω*, derived from *τάρταρος*, is used to describe the casting of the wicked into this place.² Our Lord describes Gehenna as a place of fire; and St. James speaks of the evil tongue as "set on fire by Gehenna,"³ the only instance of apostolic use of the name given in the New Testament. Gehenna is to receive the bodies as well as the souls of the wicked; and the devil is able to cast them into that place, and there to destroy both body and soul. A wicked man is called a "son of Gehenna," and the final condemnation of sinners is described as "the judgment of Gehenna."⁴ The fact that our Lord Himself makes use of these terrible descriptions is highly significant. The fire of which He speaks appears to be figurative, but the figure is clearly intended to teach that the future punishment of the wicked has an intrinsic horror equal to that of being cast into fire. We dare not think of our Lord as resorting to misleading description.⁵

§ 3. The New Testament names for the receptacles after death of those who are ultimately saved are "Abraham's Bosom," "Paradise" and "Heaven," all terms in current use.

¹ Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, q.v.; Jas. Fyfe, *op. cit.*, Pt. I. ch. v. § IV.

² St. Pet. ii. 4. ³ St. Matt. v. 22; xviii. 9; St. Jas. iii. 6.

⁴ St. Matt. v. 29-30; x. 28; St. Luke xv. 15; St. Matt. x. 28; xxiii. 15, 33.

⁵ Cf. ch. vii. §§ 4-5, below.

(c) *Abraham's Bosom* is mentioned only in the story of the rich man who fared sumptuously every day, and a beggar named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate full of sores.¹ "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's Bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame'. But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they which would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us.'" No doubt we should not interpret the figures in this parable literally; and we should remember that the lesson primarily in view is that of the equation of justice in the world to come. But Christ's figures, even when borrowed from current use, are never incongruous with reality. We are justified, therefore, in concluding that when our Lord spoke there was in Hades a place of comfort for afflicted righteous souls, and that this place, called

¹ St. Luke xvi. 22-23. On Abraham's Bosom, see Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, q.v.; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Abraham, the Bosom of."

“Abraham’s Bosom,” was somehow separated by an impassable barrier from the receptacles of the wicked. Other inferences can also be made, but these can best be considered farther on.

(d) *Paradise* is mentioned once by Christ in His dying words to the penitent thief, “To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” It is mentioned twice elsewhere in the New Testament. St. Paul describes himself as having been “caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” Whether he here designates under another name the third Heaven, of which he has just written, is a question which we do not venture to answer; but in any case he has reference to a place of divine illumination. In the Apocalypse, again, “the Paradise of God” is mentioned, as having in it “the tree of life,” eating of which is given “to him that overcometh.”¹ The question arises, Can these uses of the word “Paradise” be reconciled? Our Lord’s utterance places Paradise in Hades, and after returning therefrom to this world He declares to the Magdalene that He has not yet ascended unto the Father. St. Paul plainly designates an exalted place of enlightenment, and the Apocalypse clearly describes Paradise in terms of Heaven. The traditional explanation seems convincing. What constitutes Paradise is Christ’s visible presence there, and to be with Christ is to be in Paradise. Thus for some forty hours

¹ St. Luke xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. xii. 4; Revel. ii. 7. On Paradise in the N. Test., see Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, and *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, q.v.

Paradise was in Hades, but when the Apocalypse was written it was in Heaven. Yet, in so far as the faithful departed are with Christ, they may be said also to be in Paradise, whether their abiding place is to be identified locally with Heaven or not.¹

(e) The name, *Heaven*, as already said, is not used in the Old Testament to designate specifically the final abode of the blessed, and the word is variously employed in the New Testament.² But amid these uses the one with which we are here concerned stands out clearly. It frequently denotes the place above which is at once the sphere of God's open self-manifestation,³ the region from which Christ came and to which He has ascended,⁴ the abode of the holy angels,⁵ and the everlasting future home of the righteous,⁶ wherein the Kingdom which Christ came to proclaim and establish among men in this world is triumphantly brought to its complete and permanent consummation.

In common with the other receptacles of the departed, Heaven is described in the New Testament in local terms, as a place or region above this world, Hades and Gehenna being referred to as beneath.

¹ St. John xx. 17; Phil. i. 23. On the Christian meaning of Paradise, see *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 157-158; R. E. Hutton, pp. 159-172.

² Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, q.v.

³ St. Matt. v. 16, 34. Cf. Isa. vi. 1; lxvi. 1.

⁴ St. John iii. 13, 31; vi. 33; St. Mark xvi. 19; Acts i. 10-11; 1 St. Pet. iii. 22. The Holy Spirit is sent from Heaven: 1 St. Pet. i. 12.

⁵ St. Matt. xviii. 10; xxii. 30; St. Mark xii. 25.

⁶ St. Matt. v. 12; vi. 20; St. John xiv. 2-4; Col. i. 5; 1 St. Pet. i. 4; and frequently.

Thus our Lord signalized His going into Heaven by ascending and disappearing above the earth in a cloud, and His going to Hades after His death on the cross is referred to in terms of descent. These terms of direction are apparently figurative. They are borrowed severally from the higher and lower conditions which pertain respectively to Heaven and to Hell. They do not give us information as to where the receptacles of souls are located. Probably their localities cannot be described in terms intelligible to minds whose experience is earthly only. Space exists only as a relation of created things; and the translation of a creature from the visible to the invisible order probably involves a radical change in its spatial conditions, one beyond our experience and imagination. To borrow a theoretical analogy, a four-dimensional world cannot be pictured within a three-dimensional one. But just as a four-dimensional body is as truly dimensional and local as a three-dimensional one, so a finite creature retains its subjection to the local conditions of finite being in the invisible world. In brief, Heaven and Hell are local regions in this sense at least that they are the habitations of creatures whose finitude makes local relations to be necessary conditions of their existence. Heaven, for example, is a region the centre of which is wherever the glorified body of Christ is.¹

¹ On the whole subject, see *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 154-157 (with other refs.), 277-278; T. H. Passmore, *Things Beyond the Tomb*, ch. viii.

It is sometimes described in plural terms, as if it contained more than one regional division. "In my Father's House are many mansions," Christ said; and St. Paul speaks of being "caught up into the third Heaven."¹ Behind such descriptions lies a traditional notion that there are seven Heavens. But this description is, of course, entirely speculative. Yet we have abundant reason to look upon Heaven, and upon Hell as well, as a realm of manifold conditions both qualitative and local.

§ 4. We shall be disappointed if we look to the ancient Christian writers for more determinative descriptions of the receptacles of souls² than the New Testament affords. Speculation on the subject began, indeed, at an early period, but no consensus emerged except in the fundamentals of eschatology which have been summarized in a previous chapter. Certain early writers seem to have identified Paradise with the waiting place of the saved in Hades, and to have held that none, with the possible exception of martyrs, can enter Heaven until after the final judgment at the last day. But the view ultimately prevailed that the faithful are received into Heaven, and enjoy the vision of God, so soon as they become perfect,³ although their full consummation of bliss waits for the resurrection of their bodies at the last

¹ St. John xiv. 2; 2 Cor. xii. 2.

² On which, see St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxix; F. X. Schoupepe, *Elem. Theol. Dogm.*, Tr. XIX. §§ 44 *et seq.*; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Man. of Cath. Theol.*, Vol. II. pp. 177-178, 552-553.

³ The question is treated of in § 11, below.

day. Along with this view went an identification of Paradise with Heaven, one which is now very generally accepted except in a certain Anglican school of divines.¹

The doctrine of purification after death of souls dying in a state of salvation but still imperfect was accepted, although without clear definition, from the earliest sub-apostolic period. Originally referred to the day of judgment, the process of such purification came, from the time of St. Augustine and St. Gregory the Great, to be regarded as commencing immediately after death. Out of this grew the Western conception of Purgatory as a distinct receptacle of souls.²

Summarizing Western theology on the subject, five receptacles of souls in the other world are distinguished: (a) Hell, *infernus*, where the wicked are everlastingly punished; (b) *Limbus patrum*, where the Old Testament saints awaited the coming of Christ, supposedly emptied when Christ descended into Hades; (c) *Limbus infantium*, in which unbaptized infants are thought to enjoy a natural beatification; (d) Purgatory, the place where saved souls are purified, perfected and, according to scholastic theory, where they endure the penal sufferings still due because of their sins; (e) Heaven, the final abode of the blessed. The Orthodox Easterns have not

¹ Cf. pp. 64-65, above.

² This purification and the Western doctrine of Purgatory is considered in §§ 7-10, below.

acknowledged the existence of a distinct place called Purgatory.¹

II. *Conditions of the Departed*²

§ 5. Death is brought about by a rupture of the tie which unites our present physical frame with its inhabiting soul or spirit, this resulting in a dissolution of the former. Accordingly the soul is said to enter the other world in a disembodied state. Whether this disembodiment is complete will have to be considered shortly, but first it is desirable to reckon with the somewhat widespread notion, pagan rather than Christian, that escape from union with a body is an emancipation for the soul, a sort of deliverance from prison. This is not at all the case, for the life of a man naturally consists in an alliance between body and soul in mutual harmony and in sacramental and functional adjustment to environment. If human spirits ever exist in an entirely disembodied state, a doubtful contention, that state brings the man's death. He is no longer in full alignment with reality, he no longer truly lives, for all our available

¹ *Council of Bethlehem*, cap. xviii; *Orthodox Confession* (Mogila), Pt. I. qq. 64-68. Cf. D. Stone, pp. 253-256, 338, for quotations.

² On which, see St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxix-lxxvii; S. C. Gayford, chh. iii-iv; R. E. Hutton, chh. viii-xvi; H. B. Swete, ch. ii; H. M. Luckock, *Intermediate State*; J. A. Mason, *Purgatory*, Lec. ii; D. Stone, pp. 243-256; E. H. Plumptre, *Spirits in Prison*, Study xvi; Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, s.v. "Dead, the"; *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, s.v. "Intermediate State."

knowledge, whether direct or indirect, points to the conclusion that the human spirit can neither experience anything nor functionally express itself intelligibly except sacramentally or with the use of some material medium.¹

We do indeed escape at death from the carnal limitations of the *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, from those elements of mortality and fleshly corruption which, necessary though they be for the purpose of this life, stand in the way of our adjustment to the higher environment of the world to come for which this life is preparatory. As St. Paul teaches, our present groaning, if rightly directed, is not that we may be unclothed, or disembodied, but that we may be clothed upon with the *σῶμα πνευματικόν* provided of God, and have the present mortality of our *σῶμα* swallowed up of life.²

The question confronts us, Does death make us wholly naked, so that the dead man has no *σῶμα* at all? If this mortal is to put on immortality at the resurrection, as St. Paul also teaches, we have to answer "No." A body that has completely ceased to be cannot become the subject of resurrection and of the change from the psychic to the pneumatic state of which St. Paul speaks. In some reduced and transitional condition, therefore, the bodies of those who have died continue to exist. In what condition

¹ *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 227-230; *Creation and Man*, pp. 191-192. Cf. J. R. Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, ch. i; C. S. Gerhard, *Death and the Resurrection*, pp. 85-88.

² 2 Cor. v. 1-10. Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 44, 51-54.

they continue we are not told and cannot define. St. Paul's figure of the seed which is sown, which dies, and which receives a new body, confirms the thought of a continuing thing which is identical with itself throughout the successive stages of sowing, dissolving, and rising again in new clothing.¹ Biological science affords another analogy, that of the germ-plasm, which in embryonic growth finally breaks away from the mother's organism and renews its life in that of the child.² The resurrection body is sown in the body of this flesh, and when the flesh is dissolved, in due course it is clothed upon more gloriously.

Sacramental doctrine throws some light upon this subject — at least so far as the members of Christ are concerned. Baptismal regeneration is the sowing in us of the life which immortalizes the resurrection body. It is, in short, the inception of the process which issues at last in the resurrection. In the Holy Eucharist we are fed with the flesh and blood of Christ, and the spiritual body that was born at the font is nourished with the food of immortality. The body thus renewed the Lord promises to raise up at the last day.³ When the soul departs into the region of the dead it retains this body, although in a com-

¹ S. C. Gayford, pp. 79-83; W. J. S. Simpson, *Resurrection and Modern Thought*, pp. 335-337.

² The writer's *Evolution and the Fall*, pp. 65-66; A. Weismann, *Evolution Theory*, Lecons. xxiii-xxv, esp. pp. 260-263; M. Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*, s.v. "Acquired Characters."

³ *The Sacraments*, chh. i (§ 6), (vi § 6). Cf. St. John vi. 53-58.

paratively unclothed state, for it is not fully clothed upon and glorified until the resurrection of the dead.

Does the *σῶμα* of a departed soul have a recognizable form, analogous to that of its previous physical frame? Many think so, and think that they have evidence derived from certain obscure deathbed experiences and from spiritistic sources.¹ They also discern confirmations of their opinion in the manifestations from the unseen world, angelic and human, which are described in Scripture. But the conditions of such self-manifestations, conditions which were necessary if the manifestations were to be intelligible, do not of themselves prove anything *ad rem*. There is no specific revelation recorded in Scripture which determines the point, and the opinion in question although reasonable and probable, is speculative.

§ 6. To earthly observers the phenomena of dying resemble those of falling asleep, and the soul does really go to sleep in relation to the exercise of waking faculties of the body in this world. Naturally enough, therefore, to die is often described in the New Testament as a falling asleep, and the dead are spoken of as having fallen asleep. Our Lord said to His disciples, "Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep"; and when the disciples thought He meant ordinary sleep, He said plainly, "Lazarus is dead." St. Paul describes

¹ This idea was held by Swedenborg and runs through Arthur Chamber's eschatological books, e.g. *Man and the Spiritual World*. It also has some patristic support, as H. M. Luckcock shows in *Inter-med. State*, pp. 119-121. C. S. Gerhard, *op. cit.*, ch. v, takes a different view.

our Lord, because of His being raised from the dead, as "the first fruits of them that are asleep . . . For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." Again he writes, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."¹

Some have pressed this description literally, and have maintained that the dead remain in unconscious slumber between death and the resurrection.² The fortieth of the *Forty-two Articles* of 1553, however, condemned those who say "that the souls of such as depart hence do sleep, being without all sense, feeling, or perceiving until the Day of Judgment." In so doing it was guided by the general consent of catholic writers and the plain implications of the New Testament. Our Lord's promise to the penitent thief that he should be with Him in Paradise, and St. Paul's desire to depart and be with Christ, lose their point if the being with Christ is unconscious. When a certain rich man is described by our Lord as lifting up his eyes in Hades and as seeing Abraham afar off, the implication that he is conscious is clear. The "spirits in prison" to whom our Lord preached when He descended into Hades were surely not

¹ St. John xi. 11-14; 1 Cor. xv. 20, 22, 51-52. Cf. St. Matt. xxvii. 52; Acts vii. 60; xiii. 36; 2 St. Pet. iii. 4; etc. See Hastings, *Dic. of Christ* and *Dic. of Apos. Church*, s.v. "Sleep."

² Certain mediævals, the Anabaptists and some moderns. The theory, psychopannychism, was condemned as heresy by the Councils of Ferrara, Florence and Trent. Calvin wrote against it. See H. M. Luckcock, *op. cit.*, ch. v; *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, s.v. "Intermediate State" (5); Chas. Hodge, *Syst. Theol.*, Vol. III. pp. 730-733.

unconscious of His preaching. There is also the scene of our Lord's transfiguration, in which the disciples saw Moses and Elijah talking with Christ.¹

The New Testament and catholic doctrine that the divine work for our perfecting goes on in the other world until it is completed,² a doctrine which we shall soon consider, seems undeniably to require a continuance of consciousness. Moral perfecting cannot be imagined as possible apart from conscious operation of the moral faculties of those who are thus perfected. Divine grace does not and cannot elevate our characters without responsive moral activity on our part. This consideration has to be borne in mind in interpreting the New Testament description of the faithful departed as at rest. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow with them."³ Evidence has been given above that they do not sleep in unconsciousness; and if they are conscious, their minds at least must be active. Their rest is not a state of sheer passivity, but of relief from the toils and trials of this life. In this sense their work is over; and Christ says with reference to the advent

¹ St. Luke xxiii. 43; Phil. i. 23 (cf. 2 Cor. v. 8); St. Luke xvi. 23; 1 St. Pet. iii. 19; St. Matt. xvii. 1-8. Cf. Revel. vi. 9-11. On the soul's consciousness after death, see S. C. Gayford, pp. 26-27; A. J. Mason, *Faith of the Gospel*, ch. xi. § 2; D. Stone, pp. 244-245; E. H. Plumptre, *Spirits in Prison*, pp. 396-399; H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, ch. v.

² Phil. i. 6.

³ Revel. xiv. 13. Cf. vi. 11 and Job iii. 16.

of death, "The night cometh, when no man can work."¹

Hints are given in the New Testament, none the less, of their continued activity, and of some of its lines. They appear to recognize each other, and to engage in mutual communion and conversation, as is indicated by what occurred in the mount of the transfiguration, and by the parabolic description of the rich man's conversation with Abraham in Hades.² In the latter story, the rich man remembers his living brethren, and is charged to remember that he enjoyed his good things in this world. The martyrs under the altar likewise remember what they endured in the flesh, and also raise their voices in prayer that the coming judgment upon human wickedness may be hastened. Inasmuch as our Lord surely would not have preached to the dead if they could not have understood His preaching, we may be certain that the dead are susceptible of educational enlightenment and intellectual progress.³ These indications of mental activity imply that the emotions and wills of the dead are called into play. Indeed there is no such thing known as purely intellectual activity, wholly unconditioned by feeling and volition.⁴

¹ St. John ix. 4.

² St. Matt. xvii. 1-8; St. Luke xvi. 22-31. On recognition, see H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, XI-XII; W. Rede, *Communion of Saints*, pp. 85-88; E. Griffith-Jones, pp. 313, 322-325; W. R. Alger, Pt. V. ch. vi.

³ Revel. vi. 9-11; 1 St. Pet. iii. 18-20; iv. 6; vi. 9-11. For patristic interp. of the preaching to the dead, see H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, XIV. ⁴ *Introduction*, pp. 94-97, and refs. there.

We cannot infer with certainty from Abraham's reminder to the rich man of his previous worldly fortunes that the patriarch had himself observed these fortunes; nor can we be sure that in the reference of the Epistle to the Hebrews to the cloud of witnesses about us, the word "witnesses"¹ implies observation of our earthly efforts. The probabilities appear to be that their direct perception of earthly events ceases with their loss of the physical faculties through which alone the observation of earthly phenomena is known to be possible for men. Spiritualistic phenomena are too doubtful in source to justify a different conclusion. In any case they do not bear the marks of holy agency. The departed may indeed learn somewhat of our doings through those who from time to time come to them from this world; and God may enable them to gain through the mirror of His own self-manifestation such knowledge of earthly concerns as will enable them to pray intelligently for us.² That the righteous dead do pray for us is an inference from their revealed activity there, and from their known disposition, which no thoughtful and unprejudiced Christian believer is likely to question.³

¹ *Μαρτύρων*. Heb. xii. i.

² Cf. D. Stone, *Invocation of Saints*, pp. 19-20; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxiv. 1; and pp. 122-123, below.

³ Cf. ch. iv. § 9, below.

III. *The Perfecting of Souls*¹

§ 7. That there is an intermediate state for souls between death and the judgment is too generally recognized to-day to require argument. The sixteenth century doctrine that the departed go immediately either to Heaven or to the final place of the damned is contrary to numerous plain implications of the New Testament. In particular, the biblical doctrine concerning the nature and conditions of heavenly blessedness forbids the supposition that men can adjust themselves to these conditions and enjoy the open vision of God and the heavenly fellowship before they have been made perfect. Our observation teaches us that very few, if any, of the faithful are entirely ready for these things when they die. And the notion that they are made perfect at the moment of their entrance into the unseen world implies, at least for the vast majority of souls, a miraculous change which no reasonable view of the laws and re-

¹ On the history of the doctrine of the perfecting of souls after death, see D. Stone, pp. 250-256 (with the more important patristic and later refs.), 338; R. E. Hutton, chh. xii-xvi; A. J. Mason, *Purgatory*, Lecs. i-ii; Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, s.v. "Purgatory"; *Tracts for the Times*, 79. For the Roman doctrine of Purgatory, see *Cath. Encyc.*, q.v.; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxii; J. Pohle, Pt. I. ch. v (with bibliography). Eastern doctrine appears in quotations given by D. Stone, as cited. For Anglican views, see A. P. Forbes, *Thirty-Nine Arts.*, pp. 312-353; S. C. Gayford, pp. 38-50; E. B. Pusey, *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?* pp. 102-121; E. C. S. Gibson, *Thirty-Nine Arts.*, pp. 542-554. Cf. Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "State of the Dead (Christian)," 9; E. H. Plumptre, *Spirits in Prison*, Study x.

quirements of moral development makes credible. God is almighty, but the change referred to does not appear to lie within the category of power, and no hint of such a thing can be found in the New Testament. On the contrary St. Paul plainly indicates that the work of perfecting continues until the day of Jesus Christ.¹

There is, indeed, the problem of the perfecting of those who die on the eve of the final consummation, and of those who do not die before our Lord comes again. But a possible solution lies in the prospect, variously hinted at by Christ and His Apostles, that the last days of this world will be full of trial for Christians. The faithful in that time may be comparatively few in number, being winnowed out and perfected by persecution and trial, and thus brought to an advancement in spiritual character susceptible of entire perfecting by the great fire of the last day.² But the change to which St. Paul refers, as taking place suddenly at the last trump, has reference to our being clothed upon with the resurrection body, rather than to the perfecting of our characters.

Except in the vague reference above mentioned, to the divine work going on in us until the day of Jesus Christ, St. Paul is concerned with the completion of our salvation as by fire on the day of judgment,³

¹ Phil. i. 6. Cf. 1 Thess. v. 23-24.

² St. Matt. xxiv. 22-24; St. Luke xviii. 8.

³ 1 Cor. iii. 12-15. Since St. Augustine's time, and in the West, the tendency has been, however, to hold that "the day" of purging

rather than with the method of progress in the intermediate state. Many have detected the hint of a terminable punishment after death, for those who supposedly have not in this world fully endured the penalties incurred by their sins, in our Lord's warning concerning those debtors who are cast into prison and are not released until they have paid the uttermost farthing. A similar hint is found by them in Christ's distinction between those who are to receive few stripes and those who are to receive many.¹ No conclusive argument can be given for such exegesis; and the reserve exercised by our Lord with regard to the experiences of saved souls between death and the last day is obvious and apparently intentional. Yet that there is an intermediate state for such souls, a state which has its own significant experiences, is clearly implied in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. And if we keep in mind this teaching of Christ, we shall not share in the certainty displayed by certain critical scholars in denying the possibility of His having given other hints with reference to that state.

The Western doctrine of Purgatory in its simplest form dates from its tentative suggestion by St. Augustine² and its definite assertion by St. Gregory the Great.³ But ground was broken for the doctrine by fire referred to is indefinite and comprehends the period between death and the judgment.

¹ St. Matt. v. 25-26; St. Luke xii. 47-48.

² *De Civ. Dei*, xx. 13, 24. Cf. *In Psa.*, xxxvii. 3; *Enchirid.*, 69. He does not write with entire assurance.

³ *Dial.*, iv. 39. Cf. A. J. Mason, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-43.

by earlier writers. Origen spoke of a purgatorial fire, as did also St. Basil, St. Gregory Nyssen and others, connecting it with the last day. St. Ambrose spoke of its occurring between the first and the second resurrections, but as enduring for some time. Our Lord's reference to the uttermost farthing is made use of.¹ It will be observed that these early writers treat the saving fire of the other world as penal rather than as purgatorial or purificatory; and the later Roman apologists do not sufficiently distinguish the two ideas in appealing to their testimony.

§ 8. In our next section we shall consider the question of suffering in Purgatory. In the meantime we have to face the evident need of further education, purgation and spiritual growth after death, a need which is deducible not only from various elements of New Testament teaching, but also from thoughtful consideration of the patent contrast between what we are at death and what we must become in order to be worthy and capable of heavenly joys.²

(a) Our spiritual education and enlightenment begin here, but are limited by their probational purpose. The conditions of our trial involve limitations of knowledge. Men are guided sufficiently to lay hold on life eternal, or at least to choose such measures of truth and right as are afforded to them;

¹ The following passages show the early patristic ideas: Clement Alex., *Strom.*, vii. 6, 12; Origen, *In Jerem.*, ii. 3; *De Prin.*, II. x. 4; St. Gregory Nyss., *Orat. Catech.*, xxvi; St. Gregory Naz., *Orat.*, xxxix. 19; Tertullian, *De Anima*, 58; St. Ambrose, *In Psa.* xxxvi. 26; St. Jerome, *adv. Pelag.*, i. 28.

² S. C. Gayford, pp. 30-38.

but the completion of their enlightenment, after the distracting limitations of this world are left behind, is necessary even for those who have made the greatest progress during this life. The most enlightened here perceive the things of eternal life in an earthly mirror and darkly.¹

Our entrance into the intermediate state will remove our probational limitations, and will open up a larger world, the wide perspectives and new conditions and experiences of which will baffle our efforts immediately to understand. We shall no doubt feel like beginners; but in due course we shall discover that we have simply entered a higher school, and that our spiritual education is proceeding on lines laid down in the Church Militant. The mysteries which we receive on earth in symbolical forms will be gradually apprehended more nearly as they appear to those in glory; and thus we shall be prepared for the eternal light, a light which would blind us in earlier stages of our growth in grace.

(b) If we realize the subjective consequences of sin we shall perceive that the fact that we die in grace and with God's full pardon assured to us does not of itself fit us for Heaven. Sin affects our habits and reduces our capacity for the enjoyment of holy things and privileges. The dying penitent is still under a foul taint and needs purgative treatment before he can possess that perfect holiness without

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Cf. ch. ii. § 5, above; H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, ch. vi; E. H. Plumptre, *op. cit.*, Study xvi.

which no one can bear the unveiled beauty of God.¹ So it is that the place to which the faithful come after death is in Western theology called Purgatory, a place of progressive purification from all the subjective consequences of sin. Whether this purification involves suffering, and whether this suffering is of penal nature, remains to be considered. In any case we shall all need purification, and the name "Purgatory" does not itself mean more than a place of some kind of purification. There we shall be relieved of the incitements of the flesh, and of all earthly causes of defilement; there we shall enjoy an environment calculated to draw our thoughts and desires along sinless lines, to the gradual cure of every sinful weakness and craving; and there we shall be brought into holy fellowship, and in closer contact with Christ himself shall progressively assimilate His purity of heart. The pure in heart "shall see God."²

(c) Finally we shall need to accomplish much positive growth in the spirit of holiness. Entire purification from sin, necessary though it be, is not itself sufficient. If the mutual congeniality which alone makes our life with God acceptable to Him and enjoyable to us is to be developed, we must grow abundantly in positive graces of character, patterned after divine perfection and exhibited in

¹ Heb. xii. 14. S. C. Gayford, pp. 38-50; H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, ch. vii; H. B. Swete, pp. 33-34; A. E. J. Rawlinson, *Dogma, Fact and Experience*, pp. 81-83.

² St. Matt. v. 8. Cf. Revel. xxi. 27.

Jesus Christ. The personal character which here begins to grow in us from the supernatural root of faith, which is sustained in growth by Christian hope, and which on earth partially blossoms and fructifies in love, must grow on until we attain "unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." In the degree of this progress we appropriate the liberty of the Spirit from Christ. "With unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord," we "are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as the Spirit which is the Lord."¹ Under no other condition can we fully enter into the joy of eternal life.

§ 9. We now come to the double question as to whether our future purgation will be attended by pain; and as to whether, if so, it is penal.²

There is no indisputable evidence in Scripture of suffering after death for those who die in grace, in a state of salvation. On the contrary, the dominant aspect of the biblical hints concerning their state is that of rest, comfort and peace. This appears in the Jewish book of Wisdom. "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them . . . they are at peace." In our Lord's parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the latter is described as "comforted" in contrast to the rich man's torment. The same note of comfort is sounded

¹ Ephes. iv. 13; 2 Cor. iii. 18 (R. V. margin). H. M. Luckcock, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-74; P. G. Medd, *One Mediator*, § 150; H. B. Swete, pp. 34-35. ² For bibliography, see p. 77. n. 1, above.

in the assurance to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." St. Paul speaks of desiring "to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better."¹ He is surely not claiming present perfection and a consequent prospect withheld from the faithful at large.

There are indeed certain statements which are thought to look the other way, but no one of them is certainly relevant. St. Paul says, "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." But he seems to have in view not the intermediate state but what will happen to the imperfect at the final judgment.² That he uses the term "fire" literally is not susceptible of proof. Christ says that the servant who knowingly fails to make himself ready for the Lord's coming "shall be beaten with many stripes, but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." But the scope of His warning includes those who sin wilfully against light, to whom at least final salvation is certainly not offered; and the whole passage can be taken to refer to the different degrees of punishment in Gehenna, and to the longer and shorter delays of mitigation thereof.³ The intermediate state apparently is not in mind. Nor does it seem to be referred to in our

¹ Wisd. iii. 1-9; St. Luke xvi. 25; xxiii. 43; Phil. i. 23. Cf. 2 Cor. v. 8; Revel. xiv. 13.

² 1 Cor. iii. 12-15. The early fathers usually so understood it.

³ St. Luke xii. 47-48. On mitigation, see ch. vii. § 6, below.

Lord's warning to him who fails in this world to agree with his adversary, "Thou shalt by no means come out thence," from prison, "till thou hast paid the last farthing."¹ Christ appears to be speaking of the last judgment, and the phrase "until" does not prove that he refers to a terminable period of imprisonment, unless it also proves that Joseph "knew" Mary after she had brought forth the holy child Jesus — not the conclusion of those who use the text under consideration as indicating purgatorial suffering.

The doctrine of suffering in Purgatory is plainly not divinely revealed, and in spite of its Western acceptance has no ecumenical authority. It is purely speculative, and is properly based upon rational inference from experience of the laws of moral development,² and, in penal aspect, from what this world's experience teaches us as to the requirements of justice. As a speculative opinion merely, we are free to believe in purgatorial suffering, provided our conception of such suffering does not in effect nullify the scriptural indications of comfort to be enjoyed by the faithful departed in the intermediate state. The mixture of joy and pain which is hypothecated in St. Catherine of Genoa's description of Purgatory³ appears to fulfil this requirement, and to agree with

¹ St. Matt. v. 26.

² S. C. Gayford, pp. 30-32.

³ *The Treatise on Purgatory* by St. Catherine of Genoa, transl. with Pref. by Card. Manning. This view is finely embodied in J. H. Newman's *Dream of Gerontius*. Cf. A. P. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 349-353.

the necessary conditions of subjective purgation from the taint of sin, so far as this world's experience enables us to determine them. The vision of the all holy Saviour can hardly fail to cut through our complacency and fill us with exquisite and intensified sorrow for the past. And the purging effect of His loving eye as it penetrates our souls can with difficulty be thought of as inflicting no pain. We shall perhaps then understand what growing pains are, with results lying beyond our present ken. But the absolute assurance of salvation from sin, the gratitude for the demonstration there afforded of God's pardoning love, and the realization that we are being made fit for eternal life with Him, these things will fill us with joy unspeakable.

§ 10. The conception of purifying pain in the intermediate state was of slow development. In the meantime, no clear distinction was made by the ancients between purgative and penal suffering for the saved hereafter; and the early tendency was to attend chiefly to its penal aspect, and to connect it with the day of final judgment. Therefore, when later speculation built up the idea of suffering for imperfect subjects of salvation between death and the resurrection, the emphasis then placed upon penalties to be endured in Purgatory, not wholly exclusive but much greater than that upon purification and growth, was in line with earlier speculation. That the belief in any form of suffering in the intermediate state is purely speculative we have already

shown. The added description of such suffering as penal does not, of course, afford higher certainty to the doctrine. And it has no real evidence in its favour, unless inferences from our imperfect earthly knowledge of the requirements of divine justice can be so regarded. The proof, if it be such, is chiefly an appeal to analogy and not demonstrative.

None the less, we are free to be guided by such argument in speculative opinion concerning Purgatory. And we seem to be led reasonably to the view that even the saved, pardoned though they be, must "pay the last farthing" of penalty for sin before the scales of divine justice can be brought to their necessary final balance. The supposition that sufferings inflicted by God are wholly reformatory and purificatory, ceasing when repentance is achieved, is not Christian.¹ It does not agree with the analogies of divine providence in this world. Divine forgiveness does not exempt us from suffering sufficiently for our sins. If, therefore, a pardoned sinner — one suffering execution for murder, but dying penitent, to give a significant example — has not fully endured the requirements of divine penal justice, it is reasonable to think that he will suffer sufficient temporary penalties after death. The more deeply we meditate upon the awfulness of sin in all its forms, the less inclined we shall be to confine our application of this argument to more conspicuous evil-doers.

But a qualifying consideration, already laid down

¹ See pp. 212-213 below, and refs. there.

in treating of purificatory suffering after death, has to be safeguarded. That is, we must not so conceive of suffering in Purgatory, whether purificatory or penal, as to nullify the scriptural description of the faithful departed as comforted and at peace.

A second limitation is that we should not even seem to estimate the penalties for pardoned sin in quantitative terms, as if each species of offence had a determinate amount of punishment assigned to it, as in human criminal law. Divine justice takes all things into account, and has preëminently a *moral* equation and personal character in view. These cannot be estimated rightly in quantitative or durational terms. The just punishment of a given sin will necessarily be governed in each several case by its punitive effect and significance for the individual involved; and this depends upon subjective susceptibilities, for which there can be no quantitative standard of measure. When divine justice has been sufficiently vindicated punishment will end. True justice is not vindictive. Accordingly, the suggestion involved in granting so many "days" or "years" of indulgences from purgatorial penalties is clearly erroneous and harmful.

This practice of granting indulgences, interpreted though it be by theologians as meaning that the Church pledges itself to pray for the relief of the souls in Purgatory in whose behalf they are granted, has led to another erroneous supposition — that of a treasury of merits which the Church's prayers can

make available for reducing purgatorial penalties. Properly speaking, merits cannot be transferred either in possession or in effect from one person to another, and no saint's merits are personally superfluous in amount.¹ The truth of this assertion is not weakened by our acknowledging, as we do, that holy souls have great power in prayer and in their interaction through the mystical Body of Christ upon the souls of others. The prayers of the Church for the departed are somehow surely useful.² But their result in reducing the sufferings of souls in Purgatory, if, as we think, there are such sufferings, cannot without misleading effect be expressed in the terms which we have been criticizing. The condemnation of the "Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory" in our *Articles of Religion* seems to be directed against these terms — not against any and every form of belief in Purgatory.³

§ II. The question remains, Do the saints when they become perfectly free from every taint and consequence of sin, and are entirely possessed of holy virtues, enjoy the vision of God? In other words, Do they in practical effect enter Heaven? Clearly they do not enjoy the full consummation of their destined heavenly state, functions and blessedness until they have been clothed upon at the last day with their glorified resurrection bodies. The

¹ Cf. *The Church*, pp. 275-278 and refs. on p. 278. The system referred to grew out of the earlier practice of ecclesiastical remission of penances.

² Treated of in ch. iv. § 8, below.

³ Cf. *Tracts for the Times*, No. 90, § 6.

question then is, Do they enjoy the beatific vision of God before this full beatification takes place? ¹

There is certainly no formal doctrine having ecumenical authority which determines the answer, and the teaching of Scripture is not conclusively clear. The question was not directly considered in apostolic days. We cannot make secure inferences from the use of the name "Paradise" in apostolic and ante-Nicene literature, for this use varied, and often was not clearly defined. Moreover, we cannot have the certainty of faith as to the local demarcation, if there be such, between the immediate receptacles of saved souls after death and Heaven; and this reduces the possibility of making sure inferences from apocalyptic pictures of the heavenly realm. Entrance into Heaven may be a change of state and enlargement of vision rather than a local migration. St. Paul supposes that the faithful departed are with Christ from the outset; and Heaven, in local description, is where Christ is locally present, the place of His bodily appearance. Whether St. Paul saw the beatific vision of God when transported into the third heaven he does not say. In the Apocalypse, the saints see and worship Christ, but are not described

¹ Several Anglican high churchmen take a negative view, e.g. A. J. Mason, *Purgatory*, pp. 77-100. The Roman affirmative answer appears in *Trid. Catech.*, q. 5. The Calvinistic view is that the righteous go at once to heaven: *Westm. Conf.*, xxxii. On the whole subject, see R. E. Hutton, ch. ix; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 269-271, 328-331; Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, s.v. "Beatific Vision"; D. Stone, pp. 248-250.

as seeing God in His triune essence.¹ All this indicates an interconnection between the place of the faithful departed and Heaven, perhaps an absence of regional separation.

The history of opinion on the subject need not detain us long. In the ante-Nicene period several writers appear to deny that any can enter Heaven before the consummation. Others take the affirmative view, which gained increasing hold upon the Church during the period of the ecumenical councils, and has continued to be the ruling belief on the subject, both East and West, to the present day. The sixteenth century Protestants and Reformers, rejecting altogether as they did the catholic doctrine of an intermediate state, held that the saved enter Heaven immediately after death. This radical view, a fruit of reaction, is now losing ground. Among Anglicans many have shared the Protestant view. On the other hand, a considerable number of high churchmen, apparently influenced by desire to avoid both Roman and Protestant "extremes," have stressed both the reality of an intermediate state of comfort for the faithful departed and a postponement for all of entrance into Heaven until the consummation. In recent days, however, Anglicans of the so-called "catholic" group have usually fallen into line with the long established traditional belief that the perfected saints now enjoy the beatific vision. The weight of its support and the argument

¹ Phil. i. 23; 2 Cor. xii. 2; Revel. iv; xiv. 1-5.

of St. Thomas, that the holy naturally gravitate to the Holiest,¹ along with the entire absence of evidence to the contrary, lead us to adopt this opinion, that is, speculatively. There can be no dogmatic certainty.

The conclusions at which we have arrived are as follows: (a) That there is an intermediate state after death for the preparation of saved souls for Heaven is assured catholic doctrine. (b) That the purification and perfecting of these souls involves some degree of pain, such pain as is consistent with their being comforted, seems highly probable, but is not clearly revealed. (c) That these souls have to endure penal sufferings in order to complete the satisfaction of divine justice also seems probable, although in less degree. Purificatory and penal sufferings need not be thought of as separable. The distinction may be one of aspects simply. (d) That perfected saints see God before their full beatification at the last day seems probable.

¹ *Summa Theol.*, lxi. 2.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

I. *Catholic Doctrine*

§ 1. The article of the Apostles' Creed, "The Communion of Saints," was of comparatively late insertion; and, whatever may have been the occasion and purpose of its adoption, it quickly came to be interpreted with special reference to our relations to the faithful departed.¹ This gained practical expression not only in the primitive custom of prayers for their consummation of bliss, but also in the subsequently developed practice of invoking the saints for their intercessions. But the phrase "communion of saints," as interpreted in the light both of New Testament teaching and catholic consent, has a more comprehensive meaning. The term

¹ A. Harnack supposes its insertion to be due to emphasis upon these relations. But H. B. Swete maintains that the motive was anti-Donatist and that the saints referred to consist of the baptized who make up the Catholic Church, with which it is necessary that all should be in communion. See his *Holy Catholic Church*, pp. 157 *et seq.* and *Apos. Creed*, pp. 86-88. Cf. A. Harnack, *Apos. Creed*, transl. by Mrs. H. Ward; J. Köstlin, in *Schaff-Hersog Encyc.*, s.v. "Communion of Saints."

“saints,” as can be verified in St. Paul’s frequent use, denotes all who have been separated to God in Christ by being baptized into His Body; and that of “communion” is often applied to mutual relations and actions other than prayer.

Comprehensively defined, “the communion of saints is a mutual interaction of life and operation, whether conscious or unconscious,” direct or indirect, “which continues between the members of the Body of Christ, wherever they are, and under whatever conditions they exist.”¹

This communion, it can be seen, is a central element of eternal life, which consists in living relations of social nature, grounded in the knowledge and enjoyment of God through Jesus Christ. In our experience of it, all life consists in “correspondence with environment,” in effective adjustment thereto;² and the environment to which personal beings have to adjust themselves in order truly to live, is that of other persons. Personal life has to be social if it is to be either satisfying or even properly personal. Personal development, then, is dependent upon, is practically one with, enrichment and perfecting of effective social relations, these being dependent for their mutually

¹ The writer’s *Doctrine of the Church and of Last Things*, p. 162. On the communion of saints, see H. B. Swete, *Holy Cath. Church*, pp. 147–258; W. Rede, *Communion of Saints*, chh. i, v–vii; Bishop Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, art. x; H. M. Luckock, *Intermediate State*, XXII; W. H. Hutchings, *Person and Work of the Holy Ghost*, pp. 142–146; *Cath. Encyc.*, q.v.

² Herbert Spencer, *Prin. of Biology*, pp. 58–81.

satisfying result upon the growth of mutual congeniality and love. Love is here used in its strict sense of joy in mutual and intimate personal relations between the lover and the beloved.¹

Eternal life, which is the chief end of man, is dependent upon, and receives its final consummation hereafter in, a fellowship which is centred in perfectly enjoyable and open personal contact with God, but which embraces the whole vast multitude of those who through Christ shall have attained to the same blessed end. This consummation is the communion of saints in its final perfection and glory. But eternal life, and the communion of saints involved in it, begins in the present earthly dispensation, the supreme purpose of which is to bring us into eternal life and to establish among us the probationary and educative beginnings of the communion of saints.

We naturally crave for Utopia, for a social order in which we can get on with each other, from which every form of pain and injustice is banished, and by means of which all our social instincts and idealistic aspirations shall be satisfied. The doctrine here considered teaches us that the preparatory and disciplinary purpose of this world absolutely precludes the fulfilment of this craving in the flesh. It points away from the world-society to the Church of God. The world-society is the sphere of probation and the

¹ Cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, p. 71; *Being and Attrib. of God*, pp. 301-304; and ch. viii. §§ 5-8 of this vol.

field of Christian propaganda. It can never become a fully satisfying goal of human progress.

§ 2. Only from the standpoint of these considerations can we do justice to the New Testament conception of the Church and of the fellowship of the saints, so frequently referred to in its pages. The Church is described as the Body of Christ, and that means much to St. Paul. It means the divinely appointed organism to which the saints are admitted by the selfsame baptismal mystery wherein they put on Christ and come into organic relations with Him. These relations in turn are deathless. They continue beyond the grave and constitute eternal life. The Church is, therefore, the fulness of Christ, in which we are enabled to grow up in all things into Him, "from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."¹ Even on earth, the Church is the sphere of diverse spiritual gifts, shared in by many members of one body of those baptized into Christ. The members differ in relative function and honour, but all need each other, and all suffer and rejoice together. The glory of the fellowship thus constituted and divinely provided with a unifying ministry lies in the "more excellent way" of love, which abideth hereafter, the Church continuing in the other world as the permanent and perfected

¹ Ephes. i. 23; iv. 15-16.

communion which Christ loved and died for, "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing."¹

Because the Church is all this, and interior fellowship is its supreme purpose, its organic nature and corporate unity receive pointed emphasis. The Lord prayed for the Church's unity before He died for it. St. Paul devotes a whole chapter to the subject in writing to the Corinthians, and again recurs to it in his Epistle to the Ephesians.² No sin appears to him more inconsistent with the communion of saints than that of schism within the visible body. He realizes that this evil must occur so long as the saints are held back from perfect love by the carnal limitations of an earthly development. But he plainly regards its occurrence as due to sin; and the reason is clear, for he always treats of the Church as being the communion of saints, imperfectly developed no doubt, but that or nothing.³

St. John sets forth fellowship as the motive of Christian propaganda. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us; yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." The Epistle to the Hebrews looks upward and forward and pictures the communion into which we are

¹ 1 Cor. xii-xiii; Acts xx. 28; Ephes. v. 25-27; Cf. *The Church*, pp. 90-101.

² St. John. xvii. 11, 20-23; 1 Cor. xii; Ephes. iv. 1-16.

³ Cf. Rom. xvi 17; 1 Cor. i. 10-13; iii. 3-9; xi. 18-19.

baptized in large contrast to that of the old covenant. "For ye are not come unto a mount which might be touched, and that burned with fire. . . . But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, . . . to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn who are enrolled in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant."¹

If brotherly love, with its fruits of mutual helpfulness, characterizes the communion of saints, the practices of mutual intercession or of prayer one for another, and of common prayer and praise, are inculcated in Scripture not only as belonging to Christian duty, but as affording the normal religious expression of this same communion of saints.² And all Christian experience teaches us that no more effective procedure for cultivating mutual sympathy and fellowship between the saints can be adopted. Moreover, although death draws a veil between the living and the departed, the bond which unites them in one Church and Body of Christ abides; and it can still be kept in mind and made practically effective by prayer. This truth, and the forms of prayer here hinted at, will be considered in later sections.

§ 3. The communion of saints in prayer is on earth focused in the Holy Eucharist, called also Holy Com-

¹ 1 St. John i. 3; Heb. xii. 18-24.

² St. James v. 16; Acts ii. 42 and frequently.

munion. This is due both to the nature of the Eucharist itself and to the fact that it is the one common and permanently habitual action of Christians which was instituted and commanded by the Lord Himself. St. Paul infers from the truth that it is a communion of the body and blood of Christ, in whom our common life with God is centred, the further truth that our communion with each other has this sacrament for its method and instrument of renewal. "We who are many are one bread and one body, for we all partake of the one bread."¹

We find that the first Christians at once connected the celebration of this mystery with the maintenance of their mutual fellowship. St. Luke tells us that the first converts, after being added to the Church by Baptism, "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers," the prayers, that is, which accompanied the breaking of bread.² The definite article seems to indicate that at least as early as St. Luke's writing these prayers had already assumed a somewhat distinctive and stereotyped substance which justified such a method of reference to them, as if "the prayers" could mean only one recognizable form of prayer of preëminent authority and established use. This inference gains strong confirmation from the fact that, with all their variations of phrase and minor divergences of arrangement, the later

¹ 1 Cor. x. 17. Cf. *The Sacraments*, pp. 196-198.

² Acts ii. 42.

catholic liturgies are strikingly alike in their main substance and order, as if developed from one original norm.¹

In these liturgies intercessions for the living and the departed are gathered around the two oblations, the minor oblation of bread and wine and the major oblation of the sacramental body and blood of Christ, the sacrifice being made their heavenward vehicle, so to speak; and the mystery of communion thus liturgically expressed is brought to climax by all partaking of the one bread. The whole is a magnificent functioning of the communion of saints, and embodies in action and phrase the entire doctrine thereof.

It is an act of communion of the whole mystical Body of Christ; and the communion of saints is just this, a communion between those who by Baptism have been gathered into the fellowship of saints because thereby incorporated into the Body of Christ. It is a feeding on Christ's body and blood whereby our union and vital communion in Him is renewed and celebrated. It is a partaking of "the bread of God" "which cometh down out of Heaven and giveth life unto the world,"² by uniting men vitally with God in Christ. The communion of saints obtains its nature and effect from being also a corporate communion with God and a sacramental participation in His eternal life. This communion with God

¹ Cf. *The Sacraments*, p. 157 and refs. there.

² St. John vi. 33.

becomes available to us in the Mediator, Jesus Christ His eternal Son incarnate, and through the Body of Christ by our baptismal union therewith. Finally it is renewed, celebrated and most perfectly expressed on earth by eucharistic action, in which we feed on Christ, offer ourselves in effective oblation to God and unite our prayers for each other in one divinely appointed and prevailing mystery. Alas, that existing Christian divisions, patently inconsistent with the communion of saints, should prevent the concurrent enjoyment of it in the sacrament of unity by all who wear the Christian name!¹

§ 4. In a previous volume we have shown that the Church of Christ, wherein the communion of saints is found, is not limited to its earthly membership, but includes a multitude of those who have passed into the other world. The reason is that the Church is the mystical Body of Christ.² As such it includes Him and all who have been engrafted into Him by Baptism. Nothing can break it into dissociated fragments, for it is inhabited by Christ's Holy Spirit, who gave it life on the day of Pentecost, and who does not permit the union which He then established between it and Christ to be broken or reduced in compass by the dissolution of our bodily frames. Some of the members of the Church are serving their

¹ Cf. J. G. H. Barry, *Prayers to the Dead*, pp. 54-58; H. B. Swete, *Holy Cath. Church*, pp. 178-181, 188-191. Cf. *The Sacraments*, pp. 196-198.

² *The Church*, pp. 83-85, 94-96. Cf. H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-143.

probation and working out their salvation in this world, some are being perfected in an intermediate state, and some, we believe, are already enjoying a foretaste in Heaven of the beatific vision. Accordingly we speak of the Church Militant, the Church Expectant, and the Church Triumphant; but we do not signify three Churches, for these names denote one mystical Body of Christ in three stages and spheres of the advance of its members towards their perfect consummation.

The dead who die in the Lord rest from their earthly labours and have entered into new experiences of the benefits which are successively enjoyed by the members of Christ's Body. None of the faithful is ever cut off from the true vine and Body; and even the unfaithful remain in the Body, although without enjoying its blessings, until they are cast forth in the day of final judgment.¹ The faithful remain in the Body, and in time will have part in the blessedness that comes when the whole Body is assembled in glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing. For the Church into which we enter in Baptism is immortal. It is even now the communion of saints, and the medium of eternal life here entered into; and it is to grow through the ages, in spite of the shortcomings, sins, corruptions and schisms of its members and ministers on earth, into the eternally designed perfect society, civilization and fellowship of God and His saints.

¹ St. Matt. xiii 24-30, 47-50. Cf. St. John xv. 1-6.

In brief, death modifies temporarily the conditions of the communion of saints, but does not nullify either its basis in the Body of Christ, its effective continuance or its practical implications. The communion of saints, once inaugurated in the Church Militant, remains effective forever, and for all the faithful, through every stage of progress here and hereafter. It is an inseparable part and aspect of eternal life; and ever deepening in power and blessedness, it is consummated and abides in eternity. From the outset its earthly participants "are compassed about with . . . a cloud of witnesses," and "are come unto the mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn who are enrolled in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant."¹ The nearness of this great company cannot be declared by us in spatial terms; but the plain implication of the passage quoted is that we are vitally one with it, and that from us all, both here and there, one great chorus of united prayer and praise continues to ascend to the throne of God.

II. *Communication with the Dead*

§ 5. We have assumed thus far that prayer is the normal and appointed method of enjoying the com-

¹ Heb. xii. 1, 18-24.

munion of saints as between the living and the departed. We now come to the question as to how far, if at all, direct communication between us and those hidden from us by the veil of death is possible and permissible. In discussing the basis of our belief in immortality we hinted at reasons for uncertainty as to the genuineness of at least the majority of the communications from the departed which spiritualists allege, their non-edifying value and their evil associations.¹ Something further needs to be said with regard to their relation, real or unreal, to the communion of saints. But first we ought to reckon with the fact that God Himself has on certain occasions lifted the veil, and has allowed saints to appear to men in this world.

None the less, the messengers sent by God from the unseen world, judging from biblical accounts, have as a rule been angelic rather than human. Such were the spirits who appeared respectively to Abraham, to Lot, to Manoah, to Elijah, to Zecharias, to the Blessed Virgin, to the shepherds and to St. Peter.² A likely explanation is twofold, the undesirability for ourselves of communications from the dead, witnessed to by the scriptural prohibition of necromancy,³ and the probability that the interests of the departed also forbid their communicating with us.

Taking up the instances of apparition of the de-

¹ In ch. i. § 8, where refs. on spiritualism at large are given.

² Gen. xviii. 1; xix. 1; Judges xiii. 3; 1 Kings xix. 5; St. Luke i. 19, 26; ii. 9, 13; Acts xii. 7.

³ See pp. 108-109, below.

parted to the living, that of Samuel to Saul stands by itself as a case of unjustifiable effort by Saul to gain from necromancy what God had refused to him.¹ Those who were raised from the dead by our Lord either had no memory of their short experience in the unseen or appear to have had their lips sealed; and we read of no communications from those who came forth from the grave and appeared to many after our Lord's resurrection.² Moses and Elijah appeared to Christ on the mount of transfiguration in the sight of certain disciples, and conversed with Him concerning His prospective death. What they said is not reported. Finally, our Lord Himself appeared to Stephen and subsequently to St. Paul after His ascension, and spoke certain words to St. Paul which are duly reported in the Acts of the Apostles. The later rapture of St. Paul and the visions of the Apocalypse are not relevant to our purpose.³ The records of hagiology contain instances of alleged apparitions of the Blessed Virgin and of other saints, as well as of communications from them. We do not feel called upon to determine how far these instances are genuine. In any case, they are ordinarily related to religion, and the alleged communications are of a consistently Christian nature.⁴

¹ 1 Sam. xxviii. 6-20; 1 Chron. x. 13-14.

² St. Luke vii. 11-15; viii. 52-55; St. John xi. 11-44; St. Matt. xxvii. 52-53.

³ St. Luke ix. 28-31; Acts vii. 55-56; ix. 3-6; 2 Cor. xii. 1-4; Revel. *passim*.

⁴ Spiritualistic messages frequently contradict Christian doctrine.

A survey of these instances, especially of the biblical ones, brings to light certain distinctive marks not found in spiritualism.

(a) Except in the case of Saul's necromancy, a significant exception which accentuates the rule, these apparitions and communications were not sought after by the living, but were vouchsafed by the will of God.

(b) They were very rare, and afforded only for extraordinary reasons connected with God's kingdom.

(c) To no human individual was the privilege of receiving such apparitions and communications permitted to become habitual, so as to upset the normal conditions of his earthly probation.

(d) They did not serve as means of enlarging the content of human knowledge concerning the other world. Even if we accept the alleged revelations of hagiological record, they are seen mainly to have a private and passing aim. In any case, the Church refuses to recognize their public authority for ecclesiastical doctrine.¹

§ 6. Clearly God does not will that our probational conditions shall under any but the most extraordinary circumstances be disturbed by direct communications from the dead. And in the case of deviations from this rule, evidences of divine sanction and of exceptional ends in view, connected with the Kingdom of God, are afforded. The enlightenment afforded by spiritualistic communications, assuming

¹ Roman writers acknowledge this. See S. J. Hunter, *Outlines of Dogm. Theol.*, Vol. I. p. 22; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Revelations, Private."

for argument's sake only that they are trustworthy, has not in practice fortified men's hold upon true religion, and has not deepened their sense of responsibility for meeting the duties of their earthly pilgrimage here and now. On the contrary, it has absorbed their controlling thoughts in matters which are extraneous to present duties and to the working out of their salvation in the Church of Christ.

Its failure in these regards reminds us of the solemn warning which Christ embodied in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead."¹ If we do not faithfully attend to the God-given opportunities of light and guidance afforded by the Church on earth, our unfaithfulness to the sufficient enlightenment thereby given will preclude our being able to profit from occult channels of information, resorted to in the face of evidence of divine disapproval. The fact is notorious to faithful pastors of souls that those who resort to spiritualistic practices are mainly such as have not taken seriously the doctrinal and practical teaching of God's Church. Perhaps they have been bereaved, and either for this reason or from vain curiosity, seek to snatch quickly, and by specious methods requiring no true self-surrender to God, the knowledge and comfort which they have been too careless and undutiful to gain by the prescribed and devout practice of true religion.

¹ St. Luke xvi. 31.

The knowledge which they suppose themselves to obtain is not certain at best, and is so overshadowed by a mass of trickery on the part of earthly agents, and of frivolity and worse on the part of mischievous spirits, that they incur the gravest of spiritual dangers in seeking it. Moreover, this supposed information is not in harmony with the teaching of Christ and His Apostles concerning the other world. It precludes, if accepted, belief in the divine claim of Christ, in the Trinity, in the final punishment of the wicked, in the destined personal relations with God through Christ wherein eternal life consists. In brief, the truth of the Christian religion precludes the truth of what spiritualism teaches; and if spiritualism affords sound guidance, Christianity is false. The two systems cannot be received together, except at the cost of subverting the Christian hope and of incurring religious shipwreck.¹

These considerations, which are borne out by ages of wide experience, sufficiently justify the scriptural ban placed upon the use of necromancy and the resort to familiar spirits. The Old Testament contains several such prohibitions. "Regard not them

¹ On the dangers and anti-Christian results of spiritualism, see Geo. Longridge, *Spiritualism and Christianity*, pp. 34-52 (popular, scientifically correct, clear and sane); J. Godfrey Raupert, *Dangers of Spiritualism*; J. A. V. Magee, *The Broken Barrier*. Quite a few scientific believers in the reality of communications from the dead warn amateurs against the mental and spiritual dangers of spiritualism. E.g. Sir Oliver Lodge, *Raymond*, p. 342; Sir Wm. Barrett, *On the Threshold of the Unseen*, ch. xx.

that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God." Among those specifically condemned are "necromancers," those who seek to consult the dead. St. Paul predicts with pertinent warning that "the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." St. John says, "Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they be of God. . . . Every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh."¹ The context of the epistle at large shows that by confessing not Jesus he means rejecting His divine claim, a frequent incident of spiritualistic communications. The Christian Church has fallen into line with biblical writers in sternly prohibiting by many canons all practices connected with necromancy.²

From all this it can be perceived that the communion of saints is a higher and holier thing than necromancy. It has God in Christ for its centre and atmosphere. It is grounded in Christian faith and hope, and is inspired by love — not carnal or exclusively human love, but the love which fulfils itself in the glory of holiness, in the Body of Christ and in the life with God. This holy communion is cultivated

¹ Levit. xix. 31; Deut. xviii. 10-12; 1 Tim. iv. 1; 1 St. John iv. 1-3 (cf. Gal. i. 8-9; v. 20).

² They are usually classed in such legislation with divination. See *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Necromancy"; W. O. E. Oesterley, *Immortality and the Unseen*, ch. x.

by prayer — not by unspiritual mediums and controls, not by ouija boards, rappings and tiltings of tables. And the genuine closeness of communion which prayer secures affords comfort and holy inspiration such as puts entirely out of consideration any resort to the vulgar inanities and uncertainties of necromancy.

III. *Communion by Prayer*

§ 7. The proposition which we shall elaborate and apply in the rest of this chapter is this. The communion of saints,¹ so far as it is expressed and cultivated by mutual intercourse, can be properly practiced and developed only by prayer. This is so because the *πολιτευμα*, or common citizenship and living interest, of the saints is in Heaven, where Jesus Christ their King and bond of union abides.² For us on earth, it is true, prayer is as yet imperfect, and does not at once afford the joyous satisfaction which it is destined to give, when we become fullgrown in the assurance of faith in which its value is grounded. But the practice which we are called upon to make of it gradually reduces its imperfection, and with growing faith and love we are enabled by grace to verify the law that practice makes perfect. Even in early stages, patience in prayer is at times rewarded by joyous insights and assurances that we are gaining

¹ On which, see refs. given on p. 94, n. 1.

² Phil. iii. 20 (R.V.).

effective touch with the other world, with God and His saints. In any case, we know that by prayer we are rightly orientating ourselves and our minds for enjoyment of the kind of intercourse which pertains to the communion of saints. And we ought to understand that the privilege of such intercourse is necessarily based upon, and conditioned by, our growth in fitness and spiritual capacity for it. Resort to mediums cannot do duty for this law.

It is needful to realize that prayer is more than petition. It includes every form of conversation heavenward. Even wordless meditation on heavenly things is prayer, is conversation that is too rich to be brought within the limits of verbal expression. In prayer we roam through the whole realm of what we would feel and say when we hold intercourse with Heaven. In it we give utterance to our contrition for sin and our desire for pardon and for emancipation from our weakness and foulness. We make confession of our faith with joy proportioned to our growth in assurance. We render adoring homage to the triune God and offer ourselves in eucharistic union with Christ "as a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice." We praise God for His wondrous majesty and holiness. We give humble thanks for His infinite love, His redemption and sanctifying grace, and for the multitudinous benefits which He continually showers upon us. We give utterance to holy aspirations and heavenly desires. Finally we send up petitions to the heavenly throne, remembering that whatever we

may rightly desire God wills us to ask for, provided that in doing so we place the whole matter in His hands and trust to His loving wisdom.¹

The *terminus ad quem* of all prayer is the triune God. But this law does not at all shut out the antiphonal or mutually responsive aspect of the prayers of the Church. Our relations to God are not private in the individualistic sense, but corporate and social, determined to a vital degree by the fact that by His ordering we come before Him as members of the mystical Body of Christ. So it is that our prayers gain their appointed unity and power by being related to the corporate worship and intercessions of the whole Church. And in that worship all the members of the Body share, those in the other world as well as ourselves. All gather according to their several states around the great throne of the Lamb, with the elders and the holy angels. The Church on earth unites with the heavenly chorus in the "one, true, pure, immortal sacrifice," saying "with Angels and Archangels and all the company of Heaven . . . Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord Most High. Amen."

But the antiphonal aspect is found not only in the fact that there is a united chorus in the prayers and

¹ On prayer in its fuller sense, see A. J. Worlledge, *Prayer*, chh. i, x; W. E. McLaren, *Practice of the Interior Life*, chh. xx-xxi; W. J. Carey, *The Life in Grace*, chh. xii-xiii; H. P. Liddon, *Some Elements of Religion*, Lec. v.

praises of the saints. The saints also responsively challenge each other in their psalms and versicles; and they not only pray for each other, but also call upon each other for help in their praises and petitions, and for each other's intercessions. In so far as they address each other in relation to prayer, they may be said to pray to each other; but the Godward reference of all is clear, and the exclusive honour of God is not impugned, but rather is coöperatively celebrated. For the whole burden is this, that God shall be prayed to, and had recourse to, for the welfare of His saints and for the advancement of His Kingdom. As we shall illustrate in the following sections, this antiphonal and mutually responsive aspect of the prayers of the saints is not nullified by the fact that death draws a veil between the living and the departed. The mystical Body remains one on both sides of the grave. Prayer resounds throughout that Body, and its interacting unity and power cannot be nullified by the veil of death.

§ 8. Praying for the departed¹ was a widespread custom among ancient gentile peoples; and the custom is abundantly justified by the principle that

¹ On prayer for the dead, see R. J. E. Boggis, *Praying for the Dead* (full history); H. M. Luckock, *After Death*, Pt. I (with early Christian witness); A. P. Forbes, *Thirty-Nine Arts.*, pp. 312 *et seq.*; H. B. Swete, art. on "Prayer for the Departed in the First Four Centuries," in *Journ. of Theol. Stud.*, July, 1907; F. G. Lee, *Christ. Doctr. of Prayer for the Departed*; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxiii; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Dead, Prayers for the"; Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Prayer for the Departed"; E. H. Plumptre, *Spirits in Prison*, Study ix.

whatever we may rightly desire we may also pray for, and by the consideration that the assurance at death of a soul's final beatification does not eliminate from its intermediate state the contingencies of progress which afford occasions for prayer. But it appears to have been part of the backwardness of the chosen people's attention to the future state that the Jews did not develop the practice in question until a comparatively late period. The first clearly recorded instance occurred in the second century before Christ, when sacrifices were offered by Judas Maccabeus for certain slain Jews who gave evidence of having died in sin.¹ The apologetical nature of the narrative seems to indicate an innovation rather than an established custom; and the next mention of Jewish prayers for the departed occurs after our Lord's time.

Whether Christ came in contact with the practice or not, we have no record of His referring to it either favourably or unfavourably. There is but one example of such prayer in the New Testament, that of St. Paul for Onesiphorus, who is referred to in a manner implying his death: "The Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day."² It has been said that the Apostle merely gave utterance to a desire. The answer is simple. His words read like prayer, and in any case a desire which he could rightly express to man he could rightly express to God in prayer. This is a truism, for all our desires

¹ 2 Macc. xii. 40-45. On Jewish use, see R. J. E. Boggis, ch. ii.

² 2 Tim. i. 16-18.

ought to be such as we can dutifully refer to God, that is, under the limitation which belongs to all Christian prayer as subject to God's will in the result.

In post-apostolic history, the custom of praying for the departed emerges as early as the second century and is generally adopted, being found in all the ancient catholic liturgies. The first serious opposition to it, in the protestant revolution, was due to its association with the "Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory" and the practical abuses connected therewith. The Anglican reformers shared to a degree in this reaction, but not with the result of prohibiting prayers for the departed, or even of excluding from the Prayer Book every phrase susceptible of being thus understood and used. The ambiguity which in many particulars characterizes the *Thirty-Nine Articles* is also found in the public prayers in which such phrases remain.¹ The Commendatory Prayer, ordered to be said "at the point of departure," and therefore concerned with what is to follow death, does contain an unambiguous prayer for post-mortem washing of the departing soul in the blood of Christ, "that whatever defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, . . .

¹ For example, the end of the Prayer for the Church Militant; the phrase, "we, and all Thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins and all other benefits of His passion," in the Prayer of Oblation. Explicit prayers for the departed are included in the proposals for Prayer Book revision now before the American Church. On the changes at the reformation, see H. B. Swete, *Holy Cath. Church*, pp. 229-230; S. C. Gayford, pp. 58-60.

being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before Thee." The rubric in the American Burial Office which permits any fitting prayers "in this book" to be added, opens the way to use of this prayer as for the departed. To-day the practice of prayer for the dead has become increasingly widespread among Anglicans, and is being adopted by quite a few Nonconformists.¹

It seems highly precarious to object to a practice thus supported by many ages of catholic consent, apparently used in one instance by St. Paul, and lying clearly within the application of the rule above cited that we may pray for anything which we may rightly desire. Surely the desire for a rapid progress of the faithful departed towards perfection and light eternal is not only lawful but ought to be cultivated. The objection that the future of the departed is unalterably determined by God's will and that prayer is presumptuous in matters which are no longer contingent, is based either upon the error that the saved soul's perfecting and consummation of bliss occurs in the moment of departure, or upon obliviousness of the continued elements of contingency which determine the condition of saved souls during their progress towards perfection. We cannot know how far any particular soul has advanced when we pray. But that the quickening of its prog-

¹ P. T. Forsyth (Congregationalist), *Person and Place of Christ*, p. 88. But see R. J. E. Boggis, ch. xiii. The bereavements of the World War have quickened the revival.

ress into perfect holiness and light is not beyond the range of things which we may desire, and therefore for which we may pray, has been a matter of catholic consent which no pleas of individualistic judgment, and no thought of possible abuses, to which the best things are liable, can sufficiently offset. In conclusion, to pray for each other is the most effective method and support of the communion of saints, and if the barrier of death does not, surely it does not, break the mystical bond between the living and the departed, the living should pray for the departed.

§ 9. It follows also that the saints in the other world should and, in view of their growth in love, will pray yonder for the living.¹ To what extent they know our circumstances, if at all, is uncertain. But the constant accession to their ranks of those who come from us suggests that they do gain information about us; and it is possible that they have higher means of knowledge in Christ. In any case, their memory gives them more adequate general knowledge of our earthly conditions than that which we have of their state.² Indeed, our thesis hardly requires argument, for apart from possible fear of being led on to further inferences no thoughtful Christians deny the continuance of prayerful activity of the saints departed, and of their prayers for those still struggling with earthly temptations.

¹ On prayers of the departed for the living, see H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, Pt. II. ch. i; Wm. Forbes, *Consid. Modesta*, Vol. II. pp. 142-185; W. Rede, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-115. ² Cf. pp. 122-123, below.

The New Testament says very little on the subject, but the implications of what it says are confirmatory of what we are maintaining. That by the "cloud of witnesses" or martyrs, about us, to which the Epistle to Hebrews refers, is meant those who actually watch our struggles, we do not maintain. But the Apocalypse pictures the faithful departed as addressing God in praise and in prayer. The saints under the altar pray for the triumph of the Church Militant over its enemies. And even the rich man in torment for his past sins is pictured by Christ as praying on behalf of his brethren in this world. Our Lord's perpetual intercession for us, a larger mystery than mere prayer, is surely accompanied by the incense of the prayers of the saints who are with Him.¹ In the second passage of the Apocalypse referred to the censer is cast upon the earth with results pertaining to the triumph of God's Kingdom, a picture suggestive of earthly reference of these prayers.

Whether it is useful and permissible for us to address the saints, asking them to pray for us, as we would lawfully do if they were with us in this world, is to be considered in our next section. But whether we may do this or not, it is surely indisputable that we may ask God for the benefit of the prayers of the saints for us. We may do so because we may rightly desire such benefit, and may express

¹ Heb. xii. 1; Revel. v. 8-14; vi. 9-11; St. Luke xvi. 27-28; Heb. vii. 25 (cf. Rom. viii. 34). On Christ's intercession, cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, p. 317; B. F. Westcott, on Heb. vii. 25.

any lawful desire to God in prayer. Such prayer is called "comprecation."¹ It does not imply lack of trust in the sufficiency of our Lord's intercession, unless asking for the prayers of living saints has such implication, which it plainly does not have. The practice of praying for one another is divinely inculcated, and to ask for each other's prayers adds no new principle. The fact that we are set to work out our salvation in mutual dependence, as well as in reliance upon Christ, is writ large in Scripture; and the duty of mutual intercession is an obvious and scriptural inference from this fact, a divinely willed adjunct of Christ's intercession. The prayers of righteous men avail much.²

§ 10. The phrase "invocation of saints"³ appears to have denoted in a certain sixteenth century usage a method of address to the saints which implies their possession of a share in the mediatorial prerogative

¹ On comprecation, see D. Stone, *Invoc. of Saints*, pp. 3, 6-8; J. G. H. Barry, *Prayers to the Dead*, pp. 28-31; H. B. Swete, *Holy Cath. Church*, pp. 236-237; A. J. Mason, *Purgatory*, pp. 162-164; S. C. Gayford, pp. 68-69.

² St. James v. 16. Cf. St. Thomas, III. xxvi. 1.

³ On invoking the saints, see D. Stone, *Invoc. of Saints* (the best); J. G. H. Barry, *Prayers to the Dead*; Wm. Forbes, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 186-313; A. P. Forbes, *Thirty-Nine Arts.*, pp. 378-424; Edwin Bevan, *Invoc. of Saints* (Liddon Ho. Paper No. xxii). *Per contra*, John Wordsworth, *Invoc. of Saints and the Twenty-Second Article*; H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, Pt. II; H. F. Stewart, *Doctrina Romanensium de Invocatione Sanctorum*. For the present Roman position, see *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Intercession," II; H. Thurston, in Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Saints and Martyrs (Christian)," pp. 54 et seq.; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxii vel lxxiv.

and power of Jesus Christ.¹ In that the probable sense of article XXII, "the Romish doctrine concerning . . . invocation of saints is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God." We need not labour over this point. The truth that there is only one true Mediator between God and men, and the further truth that the saints yonder are still creatures, and can come to our help only by praying for us, these truths are Christian axioms, acknowledged theoretically even by those who seem to disregard them practically.

The invocation of saints with which we are here concerned consists simply of asking the saints to pray for us. These invocations may indeed be phrased with a certain rhetorical or poetic license, and in terms which, when literally pressed, imply that the saints themselves are sources of divine help. We are here concerned with such invocations only when their real intention is simply to enlist the prayers of the saints to God for the help that is mentioned.² The question before us is this: Is it permissible, safe and useful directly to address the saints with requests for their prayers? The practice may be called "praying to the dead," but not in any sense that implies their being treated as above the

¹ Cf. D. Stone, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

² The Catechism of Trent says (IV. vi. 3-4) that when we ask the saints to "have mercy upon us," we mean "by praying for us." Cf. D. Stone, pp. 20-23.

creaturely rank. The word "praying" here means simply requesting; and that we may make requests of living creatures at least will not be disputed, even though we request them to pray for us. Does death end the lawfulness and value of such requests?

The invocation of saints is not mentioned at all in Holy Scripture, and has never been prescribed by the universal Church. Therefore the practice is not to be described as of either Christian necessity or catholic precept; and abstention therefrom does not necessarily imply the slightest deviation from catholic doctrine concerning the saints and our communion with them. Whether we are free to practice invocation or not, we are certainly free as Christians and Catholics to omit the practice. On the other hand, the practice became customary both East and West as early as the close of the fourth century, and was universally followed throughout Christendom for a thousand years. It still prevails in over two-thirds of the Christian world, and is wholly repudiated only in consistently protestant communions, this repudiation being causally connected with abuses not necessarily attached to the practice. The Anglican Churches have removed invocations from all public services, and have officially repudiated what is described as "Romish doctrine concerning . . . invocation of saints,"¹ with the result of greatly discourag-

¹ D. Stone, pp. 30-40. In spite of the late Bishop John Wordsworth's argument to the contrary, Dr. Stone clearly proves (Pref. to Reissue of *Invoc. of Saints*) that art. xxii cannot have been directed

ing any kind of invocation of saints even in private devotion. The opinion of Anglican writers since the reformation has been, at least until recent date, very generally opposed to it. To-day an increasing number have reconsidered the whole subject, and the practice is reviving in many directions. Canonically speaking at least, this revival is perfectly lawful, and is supported extrinsically by the plea that by returning to the practice we shall draw nearer to our separated catholic brethren. Such, in brief, is the authoritative state of the question. The chief alleged objections to the practice are as follows:

(a) The lack of biblical authority for it is said to make the practice unlawful. Such an argument proves too much. If valid, it would make every religious practice unlawful that had not arisen and gained scriptural record before the Apostles passed away.

(b) A second objection is that we have no assurance of our invocations being known by the saints whom we invoke. It is true that we have no authoritative revelation to that effect, and that the belief that the saints are aware of our invocations is merely a pious opinion. It is, however, a credible one; and the explanation usually given, that the saints become aware

against the doctrine of Trent. The subject of invocation was not taken up by that Council until about ten months after the article was subscribed by the English Convocations. On the "Romish" doctrine really rejected, see E. B. Pusey, *The Church of England a Portion of Christ's One Holy Cath. Church*, pp. 99-114.

of earthly requests for their prayers through their contemplation of God in Christ, is not absurd.¹ In any case, it is a reasonable supposition that the Lord will *somehow* make known these invocations to those to whom they are addressed. He too wills that the saints above should pray for us. But neither the lawfulness nor the value of invoking the saints is necessarily and wholly dependent upon their knowledge of our invocations. These invocations may be, and have been, regarded as oral and rhetorical methods of cultivating the communion of saints, grounded in the assurance that what we ask them to do specifically they are in fact doing impliedly in general intercession for the Church Militant. If we may rhetorically and profitably say, "O ye spirits and souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord: praise Him and magnify Him forever," so we may with similar profit, and with enhancement of our communion with the saints, say, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us." To many, no doubt, such rhetorical aspirations appear vain. To them their subjective value is nil. They are free not to adopt the practice. It is a matter of spiritual imagination, and very often of freedom from traditional prejudice.

(c) Finally, it is urged that experience proves the practice to be subject to very grave abuse, and to

¹ St. Thomas, III. Suppl., lxxii *vel* lxxiv. 1. Cf. D. Stone, pp. 19-20; H. M. Luckock, *op. cit.*, Pt. II. chh. v-vi; A. J. Mason, *op. cit.*, pp. 145-156; H. Percival, *Invoc. of Saints*, ch. v (gives valuable quotations).

lead on to forms of cult of the saints which are indistinguishable from idolatry. We acknowledge that approximate idolatry has developed among the ignorant in connection with the invocation of saints, and that for this reason there was some excuse for the violent recoil from even the most guarded continuance of the practice among Protestants. But these abuses were not necessary attendants upon the invocation of saints, so much as fruits of superstition having other causes. The conversion of pagan races was too sudden to be entirely effective; and pagan superstition, thus introduced, corrupted the invocation of saints rather than was a fruit of it. Multitudes have made use of the practice without the slightest tendency either to ascribe superhuman powers to the saints or to yield undue honour to them.

The practice has certainly been of great comfort to many, and has immensely deepened their hold upon the communion of saints. It is of too weighty a sanction to be carelessly dismissed; and the excessive caution and prejudice with which the whole subject is apt to be approached by many is not favourable to well-balanced judgment. We are not pleading for a general adoption of the practice, certainly not for one that springs from any other motive than sincere devotion to God. The practice is certainly not an original and necessary requirement of such devotion and of loyal catholicity. Our concern is to show that, although subject to abuse by the superstitious, when calmly regarded and sanely

used the practice is perfectly consistent with sound doctrine, and is one of the methods by which the communion of saints has been lawfully, and often very effectively, cultivated—an earthly branch of the antiphon of prayer and praise in which the Church Militant is united with the Church Expectant and Triumphant in one great acclaim before the throne of God.

§ 11. What degree of honour can we pay to the saints who have gone before without running into the peril of idolatry and thus detracting from the peculiar honour which we owe to God?¹ That honour is rightly given to creatures who are worthy of it is not open to doubt among reasonable people. In any case the practice of giving it is practically universal. Howbeit we do not normally intend by giving it to acknowledge any superhuman rank in being. We rightly honour all men in so far as they are made in God's image and for the glorious destiny of life with God;² and such honour should be given without respect of persons, for all men reflect the same image and are alike dear to God. But without inconsistency we give special honour to particular men either because of their social and official rank or by reason of their personal achievements and characters.³ Such honours are relative, and are really paid

¹ On honouring the saints, see W. Carson, *Reunion Essays*, ch. ix; H. Thurston, in Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Saints and Martyrs (Christian)"; A. T. Wirgman, *The Blessed Virgin and All the Company of Heaven*, pp. 101-107. Cf. *The Incarnation*, pp. 99-101.

² 1 St. Pet. ii. 17. Cf. Gen. i. 27.

³ Rom. xiii. 7; 1 Tim. v. 17; vi. 1.

to the social order, to honourable office, to worthy action and to character. Moreover, in ultimate reference, they pass over to Him whose gracious providence, holy will and adorable character are reflected in these things. The instant that we make such honour absolute, and cause it to terminate wholly in creatures, we begin to be guilty of idolatry. In brief, the final limitation of honour lawfully given to creatures is that it shall be relative and subsidiary to the supreme honour due to God.

In the state we honour those in authority and those especially who have served the commonwealth with notable sincerity and success. In the Church likewise we honour those who are placed over us in spiritual concerns, and especially those whose works and characters reflect the grace and holiness of God. In all these cases the honour redounds to God. Moreover, in both the state and the Church we honour the dead. Because of their share in human nature and destiny we treat their bodies with reverence, we treasure their relics, remember their anniversaries, and perhaps give their portraits a place on our walls. And these methods of honouring the dead gain especial solemnity and coöperative method when the persons thus honoured have been peculiarly worthy of honour for their achievements and characters while on earth. This is the proper meaning of saints' days, of acts of thanksgiving to God for what the saints did and became while with us, of the dedication of churches and of the treasuring of

relics. And while these things are subject to abuse, they are one and all proper customs when sanely followed. Superstition has its distinctive source, and when once developed will corrupt things which in themselves are right and susceptible of restoration to proper use.

In technical language, *latreia*, or absolute worship terminating in the being addressed, is due exclusively to God. On the other hand, *douleia*, or honour to creatures which is relative and does not reduce or divide the worship due to God, is allowable and consistent with true Christianity, is an inevitable and necessary adjunct of it.¹ *Hyperdulia*, the technical designation of honour paid to the Blessed Virgin as highest of saints, means simply the highest honour that can rightly be paid to a creature. It differs from *douleia* only in degree; but from *latreia* it differs absolutely in being relative and in not finally terminating in the Blessed Virgin. These distinctions are axiomatic in Roman theology — not less so because in practice superstition has often converted the honours paid to the saints into approximate *latreia*, especially in connection with the cult of the Blessed Virgin.

It is to be noted, however, that it is not the *degree* so much as the *kind and motive* of honour paid to our Lady that is a source of danger; and the motive must be concordant with the principle that all things be done to the glory of God. If we observe this principle,

¹ Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, s.v. "Latria"; Jos. Pohle, *Mariology*, p. 134; S. J. Hunter, *Outlines of Dogm. Theol.*, Vol. III. pp. 470-472.

we need not hesitate to honour the saints very highly. And we accept Bishop Pearson's *dictum* when he says,¹ "We cannot bear too reverend a regard unto the 'Mother of our Lord,' so long as we give her not that worship which is due unto the Lord Himself. . . . Let her be honoured and esteemed, let Him be worshipped² and adored.'"

¹ *Apos. Creed*, fol. p. 179.

² The word "worship" is sometimes used, however, for honour lawfully paid to creatures: e.g. in the English Marriage Service, where the bridegroom says to the bride, "with my body I thee worship."

CHAPTER V

THE DAY OF THE LORD

I. *The Second Advent*

§ 1. That at the last day our Lord will “come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead,” is a solemn and formal dogma of the Catholic Church, never deviated from, and decisively confirmed by the teaching of Holy Scripture.¹ This is certain although in every age, especially in modern days, some professing Christians have said in effect, “Where is the promise of His coming? for from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”²

The thought that Christ is always coming for judgment, in that through our consciences and otherwise He is continually making up a judicial record, which effectively and cumulatively manifests its nature

¹ On the second advent, Bishop Pearson, *op. cit.*, on art. vii; J. A. Beet, Pt. II; W. O. E. Oesterley, pp. 22-28, 86-97, 130-133, 172-176, and chh. ix-x; H. A. A. Kennedy, ch. iv; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, on ii. 18 and pp. 377-381; *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, and Blunt, *Dict. of Theol.*, q.v.; Hastings, *Dic. of Bible* and *Dic. of Christ*, s.v. “Parousia”; V. F. Storr, *Christianity and Immortality*, pp. 132-150; R. G. Macintyre, *The Other Side of Death*, pp. 103-115.

² 2 St. Pet. iii. 4.

without need of formal procedure in the inevitable results of our lives upon ourselves, is a half-truth which becomes a whole error when taken alone.¹ A cumulative judgment, indeed, is continually working and producing inevitable results; but it is revealed that the process will terminate in a formal judgment at the last day. Moreover, to judge mankind is not the only purpose of our Lord's second advent. He will then raise men from the grave, transform the cosmic order, and bring His Kingdom to its final triumph.

Christ's predictions concerning the end had to be given in apocalyptic imagery, for the transition to the new order of which He spoke is not susceptible of literal description in the terms of this world's experience; and our understanding of His apocalypse can at best be only incipient and partial. But the unmistakable subject-matter of His prophecy is a definite and cataclysmic event, His coming in the clouds of Heaven to complete both judicially and cosmically this world's drama. Not only repeatedly to His disciples, but under solemn oath before the High Priest, He bore witness to the truth, "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of Heaven." Moreover, this was to be no private coming to individual souls, one by one, "For as the lightning cometh forth from the East, and is seen

¹ It is prominent in the fourth Gospel, but not without witness to a determinate second coming. Cf. v. 28-29; xiv 3; xxi. 22. Also 1 St. John ii. 28.

even unto the West; so shall be the coming of the Son of Man.”¹ The signs of His coming were, indeed, to take time for their fulfilment, but the coming itself was described as sudden and to men at large unexpected.² This teaching is not an incidental *obiter dictum*, but a chief subject of discourse and warning and a postulate of various parables and allusions. His emphasis was given its final accent, after His ascension into Heaven, by the angelic message sent back to His gazing disciples, “This Jesus, which was received up into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into Heaven.”³

The assurance of His coming again sank deeply into the apostolic mind, and its certainty is not only declared in apostolic writings but is the obvious premise of much of their teaching. St. Paul tells the Athenians that God “hath appointed a day in which He 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.” To the Corinthians, referring to Christ’s coming again, he says, “Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power.” To the Thessalonians he writes, “The Lord Himself shall descend

¹ St. Matt. xxvi. 64 (cf. St. Mark xiv. 62); xxiv. 27 (cf. St. Luke xvii. 24).

² St. Mark xiii. 36; St. Luke xxi. 34-35; St. Matt. xxiv. 42-44; xxv. 5-13.

³ Acts i. 11.

from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." The writer of the Apocalypse seals the New Testament witness by the words, "Behold He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they which pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him."¹

It is a striking evidence of the primitive certainty as to the main point in our Lord's apocalyptic teaching, that He would come again at the last day, that the shock of disillusionment concerning the time of His coming, caused by its unexpected delay, did not in the least weaken the confidence with which the doctrine of His second advent was handed on and carefully retained by the post-apostolic Church. Instead of discovering a mistake as to the time on our Lord's part, and of thus losing confidence in the main purport of His prediction, Christian writers initiated the task, continued ever since, of interpreting the relevant parts of His apocalypse in harmony with the fact of delay.

The solemnity with which Christ warned men of His future coming to judge the world should make us realize that we need the warning, and that His admonition to all to watch, since we know not the day and hour of His coming,² should never be either

¹ Acts xvii. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 23-24; 1 Thess. iv. 14-17 (cf. 2 Thess. i. 7-10; 2 Tim. iv. 1; Tit. ii. 13); Revel. i. 7.

² St. Matt. v. 13; xxiv. 42; St. Mark xiii. 33, 35; St. Luke xx. 36; etc.

forgotten or treated lightly as remote from practical consideration.

§ 2. Christ repeatedly asserted that we cannot know beforehand the day and hour of His second coming. He even disclaimed His own possession as Man of such knowledge.¹ It is alleged on plausible grounds of literal exegesis, however, that He predicted His coming before the passing away of the existing generation. Certain of the words ascribed to Him, when taken in the immediate context of the apostolic reports do seem to point that way, and in the light of nineteen centuries of delay raise a troublesome problem.² This problem has been considered in previous volumes,³ but it is well to remind our readers of certain data which should control our conclusions *ad rem*.

Being personally divine, and inspired in His Manhood for the task of giving final and authoritative enlightenment to those on earth, He cannot credibly be thought to have gone astray in matters directly pertaining to a chief subject of His teaching. This holds whatever tenable conclusion we may reach as to the limits of the knowledge of His human mind.⁴ What He intended to *teach* must in any case be true.

Again, in other connections than that under con-

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 36; St. Mark xiii. 32.

² St. Matt. xxiv. 34. Cf. St. Mark xiii. 30; St. Luke xxi. 32.

³ *Incarnation*, pp. 298-303; *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 281-284. Cf. E. C. Dewick, pp. 174-186; H. A. A. Kennedy, pp. 168-174, 220-221; W. O. E. Oesterley, pp. 195-199.

⁴ On which, see the writer's *Kenotic Theory*, ch. x.

sideration, our Lord speaks of happenings and consummations previous to His second coming which seem to require a considerable lapse of time before that event.¹ Moreover, His alleged revelation of His coming within the then existing generation does not fit naturally with His emphasis upon the necessary ignorance of all, including Himself as Man, concerning the day and hour. He says, "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within His own authority."²

Finally, our Lord plainly wished to impart to His Church a deep and vivid sense of the impendingness of His second coming. With this end in view, He apparently followed the prophetic habit of foreshortening the future, of contemplating it from the divine standpoint, from which a thousand years is as one day. In His main purpose He succeeded, but His listeners may have forced His words into literally historical perspectives. They may also have brought together in their reports words that were spoken on different occasions, and thus have changed the original contexts and bearing on the question of the time of His coming. In any case, the Lord could not have blundered, and the actual delay of His advent requires us to emphasize its ever important im-

¹ Cf. the parables of growth of the kingdom (St. Matt. xiii. 31-33; St. Mark iv. 26-29), and the references to the large task of preaching to the Gentiles (St. Matt. xxiv. 14; xxvi. 13; St. Mark xiii. 10; St. Luke xxi. 24). See E. C. Dewick, pp. 183-186; R. H. Charles, pp. 333-335; R. G. Macintyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-136.

² Acts i. 7.

pendingness as distinguished from its approximate date. We are not intended to know the time, and it is an undutiful curiosity that impels men to ascertain it beforehand.

The signs of His coming have repeatedly appeared in successive generations — such as wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes, and disturbances in the heavens, all indicating the transitoriness of cosmic and human conditions. They show the irreversible progress of this world's things towards their cataclysmic end, but do not determine the date of that end. The more obscure signs of anti-christ and of the recovery of the Jews are also incipiently emerging, and along with the other signs declare in inerrant and universally intelligible language that the day of the Lord is surely coming. When regarded in the large time perspectives of the divine drama, they signify that it is truly "at hand." This is the thought that Christ meant to write upon our minds in terms never to be obliterated or reduced in admonitory meaning.¹

§ 3. How and where will the Lord come? In all Christ's pictorial descriptions certain particulars stand out in determinative emphasis and reiteration. He will come in glory as from Heaven, in the clouds, with saints and angels, and in such wise that all men

¹ On the signs of the second coming, see W. O. E. Oesterley, pp. 14-22, 77-85, 128-130, 170-172; Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, s.v. "Second Advent," I; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxv; Jos. Pohle, *Eschatology*, Pt. II. ch. i.

together shall somehow see and hear Him as He judges the world. No true picture of His coming can be framed by us which does not in effect embody these elements. The apocalyptic setting or framework of this picture, borrowed as we have said from the analogies of our available experience, can be seen to be symbolical, because obviously impossible to be taken literally without absurd results.

There is no place of assembly on earth, no "valley of decision,"¹ vast enough to receive the multitude which is to be judged in that day. The description "sheep and goats"² represents, of course, an obvious difference in the spiritual self-manifestations of the righteous and the wicked; but a thousand hills would be insufficient for their array, except under the indescribable conditions which follow the great change in our bodies at the last trump. The picture of a great assize, analogous to that of earthly courts, is so vast, and so complicated by problems of time and multitudinous circumstance in the procedure, that we are driven to see in it only a symbol — the best available, of course — of a non-picturable process, one in which what is done imperfectly and on a limited scale in earthly trials, will be accomplished perfectly, promptly, and in a manner convincingly intelligible and finally determinative for all.

The problems of space and time involved should not trouble us, for they are artificial creations of our own. They arise from our habit of resting wholly

¹ Joel iii. 14.

² St. Matt. xxv. 32-33.

in the imagery which Christ had to employ, and from our failure to realize that its truth is the truth of imagery rather than of literal description. In the history of Christian thought and art the symbols referred to, also those supplied in connection with New Testament teaching concerning Heaven and Hell, are given a realistic enhancement which has obtruded these problems, and has seemed to justify the negations of modern "liberalism."

Thus a justifiable rejection of literalism has become a rejection of the New Testament symbolism itself, that is, of the substantial teaching which it was clearly designed to convey and preserve in forms adapted to our present apprehensions. If there are "forms of sound words" which in spite of their limitations continue to be the authoritative means by which our imperfect apprehensions are correctly orientated, so also there are pictorial symbols which serve as long as the world lasts for final and trustworthy forms of imagination. They afford safe and essentially true picturings of what is to come. They can be trusted, for they have been appropriated and transmitted to us by Christ and His Apostles. By permitting our imaginations to be controlled by them — that is, as authoritative symbols of things not susceptible of literal description — we shall be prepared to adjust our outlook to the new perspectives which will suddenly confront us in the great day of the Lord.

§ 4. Amid all these symbols there is little difficulty in discerning the prediction of certain great events

which will occur at the last day. That day is deferred until the purposes of this dispensation are fully accomplished. The number of the elect must be made up. The forces of evil must be given their appointed opportunity to exploit themselves in ways which will lead to their inevitable and final overthrow. When that will be we cannot know in advance. God makes haste slowly according to our measures, but there will be no useless delay. At last the day will come with great suddenness upon an unexpecting world. It will come like a lightning flash, with great convulsions and with fiery destruction of whatever needs to be destroyed in the final transformation.

(a) The trumpet shall sound and all, even "all that are in the tombs, shall hear His voice," the voice of Christ, the Son of Man.¹

(b) The great bodily change will then occur, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed," even those who have not died.²

(c) This change will constitute also a cosmic regeneration. Heaven and earth, as we now see them, will pass away. This does not appear to mean their substantial annihilation, but a regenerative transformation into a new heavens and earth³ — one in which existing measures, whether temporal or spatial, will apparently be revolutionized, and

¹ St. John v. 28.

² 1 Cor. xv. 51-52.

³ Cf. St. Matt. xix. 28; 2 St. Pet. iii. 10-13; Revel. xxi. 1, 5. See ch. viii. §§ 1-2, below.

will be adapted to the endless purposes of the consummated Kingdom of God. In it the glorified spirits of men will obtain the final and complete mastery of their material environment and resurrected bodies which they are divinely intended to have.¹

(*d*) The Lord will appear in glory as in the clouds of heaven, where His saints among the quick and the dead, after their transformation, will be gathered to Him, and all, both bad and good, will see Him, surrounded by His angels.

(*e*) All will then be judged according to their deeds — not under the limitations of this world's conditions and procedures, but with immediate and ineffable clarity and loving justice, resulting in universal perception that the Judge of all the earth has done right.

(*f*) The wicked will be sent away to everlasting punishment, and the righteous will be taken into life eternal to abide together with God forever.

(*g*) The Kingdom will be established in ever-enduring perfection, all creatures being subjected to the Son, and through Him to the Father.

Such, in brief, appear to be the successive consummations of the great day, as they are symbolically pictured and authoritatively indicated in the New Testament.²

¹ Foreshadowed in man's present probationary sovereignty. Cf. Gen. i. 28.

² These particulars are discussed in the following chapters.

II. *Incidental Questions*

§ 5. In connection with the Christian doctrine of the second coming certain questions have assumed some prominence: In particular those of the so-called "millennium," of the appearance of Antichrist, and of the prospects of moral and spiritual progress of human society at large in this world. We proceed to consider them severally.

The idea of an earthly millennial reign of the Messiah,¹ followed by the consummation of His Kingdom in another and better world than this, appears in Jewish apocalyptic literature. It apparently represents a survival with modification of the political interpretation of messianic prophecy (which looked to a universal earthly kingdom centred at Jerusalem), after the conviction had begun to be developed that this world is unfitted for the final consummation of God's purpose. Our Lord did not sanction the notion of a political millennium at all. But He did plainly intimate that He was the promised Messiah, and that His Kingdom was immediately at hand, having its beginnings in this world. He described it, however, as a spiritual kingdom, sharply contrasted to the kingdoms of this world. He appears

¹ On the millennial idea, see J. F. Bethune-Baker, *Introd. to the Early Hist. of Christ. Doctrine*, pp. 68-71; J. A. Beet, Pt. II. Lec. viii; H. A. A. Kennedy, pp. 322-324; R. H. Charles, pp. 349-352; R. G. Macintyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-161; Hastings, *Dic. of Bible, Schaff-Herzog Encyc. and Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Millennium"; Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Second Adventism."

to have predicted that it was to come with power during the existing generation. This interpretation of His words seems to be justified at all events by the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost upon the Church which He had established to be the visible and sacramental machinery of His Kingdom. In the meantime, He taught His disciples to look forward to the end of the world as bringing with it an abolition of earthly arrangements and the final consummation of the Kingdom in a higher and eternal order of things.

Apostolic teaching adheres to this general view of the divine plan, and does not leave room for the Jewish conception of a millennium. In the Apocalypse, however, the pictorial elements of Jewish apocalypses are freely employed, and in one passage their millennial descriptions are appropriated.¹ The writer describes a binding of Satan for a thousand years "that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a time." During the thousand years, the martyrs reign with Christ. The inception of this reign is "the first resurrection," the participants in which are especially blessed, and are immune from the power of "the second death." At the end of the thousand years there follows a release of Satan and a period of persecution of the saints, this being followed in turn by an overthrow of the devil's hosts

¹ Revel. xx. 1-10. See H. B. Swete, *Apoc. of St. John*, and I. B. Beckwith, *Apoc. of John, in loc.*

by fire from Heaven, and their everlasting torment in a lake of fire and brimstone.

Out of a literal interpretation of this picture grew the millennial ideas of certain early Christian writers. These ideas were not generally adopted, being incongruous with the general trend of the New Testament. St. Augustine discussed the passage at large;¹ and, making the justifiable assumption that the Apocalypse is to be interpreted in harmony with the rest of the New Testament, he set forth the interpretation which in substance has prevailed among catholic writers since his day.

The sacred writer is picturing the whole drama of the Kingdom from our Lord's first advent, the Incarnation, to His second coming and final triumph at the end of the world. Accordingly, the millennial reign is the present Christian dispensation, whereby the powers of darkness are somewhat restrained and the saints obtain their victories over error and sin. The thousand years, in the then recognized symbolism of numbers, represents the whole duration, whatever it be, of the Christian dispensation on earth. That is, the millennium is now going on. The short revival of Satan's freedom and power is the revelation of Antichrist, pictured as coming only in the last days, because then assuming its most malignant and seemingly triumphant form. But, having in mind the well-established limitations of apocalyptic description, we need not treat the millennium and the

¹ *De Civ. Dei*, xx. 7-14.

revelation of Antichrist as mutually exclusive. The devil is always working and showing his hand, although for the present his power over the saints is held in check. The first death is the sin from which baptismal regeneration, or the first resurrection, recovers us. The second death is the fate, on the last day, of those who obstinately relapse into sin. The second resurrection is the bodily resurrection of the saints in glory.

§ 6. "Antichrist"¹ is the designation given in St. John's Epistle to him who, according to prophecy, is to fight against Christ in the last days. He does not limit its application, however, to one person, but says that "even now have there arisen many antichrists," and thus stigmatizes every one "that denieth the Father and the Son."² In general Christian use the name has come to denote the arch-enemy of mankind, or a malignant person who in the last days will be inspired and empowered by the devil to deceive the nations with lying wonders and to persecute the saints.

In the last section we reckoned with one of the several apocalyptic descriptions of this final outburst of evil, and it is referred to elsewhere in the New Testament. It is involved in our Lord's descriptions of the signs of the end. He says, "There shall arise

¹ On Antichrist, see Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig. and Dic. of Apos. Church, Cath. Encyc.*, and Blunt's *Dic. of Theol.*, q.v.; Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, s.v. "Man of Sin"; B. F. Westcott, *Epp. of St. John*, on ii. 18 and pp. 92-93; H. A. A. Kennedy, pp. 207-219.

² 1 St. John ii. 18, 22; iv. 3; 2 St. John 4.

false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect." He even raises the question as to whether the Son of Man, when He cometh, shall "find faith on the earth."¹ St. Paul prophesies of "the man of sin" to be revealed, "the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God." He describes this "mystery of lawlessness," however, as already at work. Temporarily restrained, "that lawless one" shall in time be revealed, but him "the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth."²

It will be observed that the New Testament does not connect the revelation of Antichrist exclusively with one person, or even with one period, although the prediction of a peculiar climax of malignity against Christ in the last days is clear. But the history of Christian speculation brings to light many futile attempts to interpret prophecy on this subject in more specific terms than either an unbiased examination of its tenor or the facts of subsequent history justify. For example, polemical interests have led men to identify the Pope with Antichrist,³ and much vain wresting of Scripture has been indulged in for the establishment of this identification. Prophecy does not admit of such handling. It teaches us,

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 5, 24; St. Mark xiii. 22; St. Luke xviii. 8.

² 2 Thess. ii. 3-12.

³ E.g. Chas. Hodge, *Syst. Theol.*, Vol. III. pp. 813-823.

and experience confirms the teaching, that under the instigation of Satan antichristian forces are working in every age. It also teaches that these forces will make a final and unified demonstration of malignity in the last days, only to be permanently overcome when Christ comes again. With such teaching we have need to content ourselves until the consummation, taking advantage of it not to gratify curiosity but to put on the whole armour of God against the manifold wiles of the devil and his agents.¹

§ 7. Whatever allowances we ought to make for the figurative nature of New Testament predictions concerning Antichrist and the evils that are to arise in the last days, they preclude for those who believe in their divine inspiration any acceptance of the optimistic theory that human civilization is destined to develop in this world to an ideal perfection, so that justice, decency and comfort will abidingly prevail for the common advantage of every class of men. Three factors have to be reckoned with in considering the possibilities and prospects of progress for human society at large in this world.²

¹ Ephes. vi. 10-16.

² As contributory to understanding the standpoint of this section, see the writer's "This Miserable and Naughtly World," in *Anglican Theol. Rev.*, May, 1921. Cf. R. L. Ottley, "Christian Ethics" (in *Lux Mundi*), esp. I, V-VI; G. W. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, ch. v; E. Griffith-Jones, pp. 203-206; E. C. Dewick, pp. 216-218; H. R. Mackintosh, pp. 134-144. Whatever modifications in detail Christian experience suggests, the underlying conception of St. Augustine's *City of God* as opposed to the world is central in biblical teaching concerning the meaning of this life.

The first of these is human nature, the nature with which the children of each successive generation are born and which is not at all altered either by the limited and passing effects of heredity or by men's previous progress in scientific knowledge and material civilization. This progress does indeed modify the forms of human wickedness, and in periods of settlement between its more innovating stages brings about conditions which are favourable to external peace and decency and to the temporal prosperity of the efficient. It also works for the promotion of general education, of philanthropy and of the reduction of crime. But it in no manner removes man's native selfishness; and because this selfishness continues to be the deeper motive even of much practical idealism, the balance of society is certain to be upset ere long by some change of conditions and by an emergence of new problems of adjustment. The malignity which made the recent world war possible is a permanent factor in this world's developments, and precludes the establishment of conditions which can assure abiding righteousness, justice and peace for all.¹

A second factor is the very temporary and subordinate purpose and function of this world's arrangements in the larger plan of God. This world is not its own end, and its social order is not perfectible after the manner of final and permanent arrange-

¹ We do not deny either the need or the possibility of international action which will for the time reduce the evils of war. But the success of these efforts is necessarily limited.

ments. The divine purpose of its making is the preliminary education, discipline, and probation of those who are being prepared for higher developments and social conditions in another, larger and final world. It is in this larger world that the limitations and defects of existing world society are to be transcended, and the dreams of a perfect society are to be actualized. The excellence of this world is that of a school, not that of Utopia. Its limitations, hardships, inequalities and ever-recurring crises of temporary adjustment are abiding necessities of the school and of the fulfilment of its disciplinary end. Commencement day is graduation day, and to that day is deferred the enjoyment of true life. To labour for the common welfare in this world is indeed a part of true Christian service, but the true goal and purpose of such service is other-worldly; and the conditions which try men's souls on earth must continue to arise, if this world is to continue to be God's school of saints.

Finally, there is the clear intimation of Christ that instead of advancing to a condition of stable perfection, this world is to end in disaster and in fearful demonstrations of evil. These demonstrations He will overcome in a mystery of cosmic transformation, followed by the final establishment of a supernatural kingdom, wherein righteous love and peace will eternally abide. Then, and only then, will "the Kingdom of the world . . . become the Kingdom of our Lord," in the sense under discussion.¹

¹ Revel. xi. 15.

III. *The Resurrection of the Dead*

§ 8. The final judgment of mankind, we are told, is to be preceded by a bodily resurrection of all the dead, the bodies of those then alive being changed at the same time. This doctrine is at once of central importance and for many of peculiar difficulty. We have already handled certain aspects of it in treating of our Lord's resurrection, and this will facilitate our present discussions.¹ In the Apostles' Creed the doctrine is expressed in the words *resurrectio carnis*, translated in the Anglican version "the resurrection of the body."² The Nicene Creed says, "the resurrection of the dead." The Athanasian Symbol reads, "At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies," *cum corporibus suis*. It is permissible to understand the phrase *resurrectio carnis* as asserting a continued identity of the risen body with our present fleshly body, without the added notion that its carnal nature and content will

¹ *Passion and Exaltation*, chh. vi-viii, *passim*. On the resurrection of the body, TRADITIONAL, see Bishop Pearson, *op. cit.*, on art. xi; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 306-315; H. P. Liddon, *Easter in St. Paul's*, xxiii; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxvii-lxxvii; MODERN, Wm. Milligan, *Resurrection of the Dead*; S. D. F. Salmond, Bk. V. ch. iii; B. F. Westcott, *Gospel of the Resurrection*; W. J. S. Simpson, *The Resurrection and Modern Thought*, chh. xxii-xxix; H. B. Swete, ch. v; V. F. Storr, *Christianity and Immortality*, ch. iii; the Encyclopedias, *q.v.* C. F. D'Arcy, *Christianity and the Supernatural*, ch. viii, is very discerning; and J. T. Darragh, *The Resurrection of the Flesh*, gives much material from patristic sources.

² H. B. Swete, *Apos. Creed*, pp. 89-98; and his "Resurrection of the Flesh," in *Journ. of Theol. Stud.*, Jan.-Apr., 1917.

remain unchanged. Indeed the change of our bodies from their present psychic or animal state to a pneumatic state is as truly a part of catholic doctrine as is the proposition that the body which is sown in corruption is the body that will rise in incorruption. These two particulars of identity and change make up the catholic doctrine, the basis being that "Christ hath been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep." ¹

But although the primary sense in which our Lord is "the firstfruits" pertains only to the resurrection of the just, and their resurrection is the usual subject-matter of scriptural treatments of the subject, the fact that all men will rise at the last day, their resurrection being for joy or sorrow the sequel of Christ's resurrection, is undeniably taught. In the second century B.C. the fact that some are to be raised "to shame and everlasting contempt" was declared in the Book of Daniel. Our Lord is recorded in the fourth Gospel as saying, "The hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice; and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment." St. Paul tells the Roman governor that he has "hope toward God . . . that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust." To the Corinthians he says, "We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 20.

done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”¹ The implication is, and our moral sense ratifies it, that we ought to be judged, and if need be punished, in the composite human nature in which we have done good or ill.

The fullest New Testament account of the resurrection of the righteous is given by St. Paul to the Corinthians.² After showing that our resurrection is dependent upon that of Christ, who is “the first-fruits of them that are asleep,” and in whom “shall all be made alive, but each in his own order,” he proceeds, after a digression, to consider how the dead are raised, and with what manner of body. Death is the condition of quickening of the grain that we sow, and the body that springs up is other in form, such as God gives. And the diversity which characterizes fleshly bodies, and celestial and terrestrial ones, is patent, as is also their glory. So in the resurrection of the dead, the body is sown in corruption, dishonour and weakness, and is raised in incorruption, glory and power. Sown a psychic body

¹ Dan. xii. 2; St. John v. 28-29; Acts xxiv. 15; 2 Cor. v. 10 (cf. Revel. xx. 12-13).

² 1 Cor. xv, esp. verses 12-23, 35-57. Of recent expositions, see W. Milligan, *op. cit.*; W. J. S. Simpson, *op. cit.*, pp. 326-332; C. S. Gerhard, *Death and the Resurrection*, ch. x; H. L. Goudge, *in loc.* They all fail to do full justice to the identity of what is raised — this body — in their unbalanced stress on the truth that the body will be changed and adjusted to the resurrection life. This is a natural, although insufficiently guarded, recoil from the older habit of one-sided emphasis upon the body's continued identity. Both truths are obviously maintained by St. Paul, and each is vital to sound doctrine. Cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 179-183, 224-227.

(*σῶμα ψυχικόν*),¹ it is raised a spiritual body (*σῶμα πνευματικόν*), the psychic preceding the spiritual. It is true that flesh and blood are without power to pass from corruption to incorruption. But we shall all be changed at the last trump, it being necessary that this corruptible and mortal shall put on incorruption and immortality, the victory being through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this argument three particular points require careful attention. The first is that when St. Paul speaks of the upsprouting grain as having another body, he plainly has in mind a changed form, not a breach of organic continuity with that of the sown grain; and he proceeds to ascribe the future putting on of incorruption and immortality to the very *σῶμα* which is sown in corruption and mortality. The second point is that the change of the body from *σῶμα ψυχικόν* to *σῶμα πνευματικόν* is not a transubstantiation of matter into spirit.² St. Paul is not thinking of the nature of the body's substance. One and the same *σῶμα* is delivered from its present subjection to the animal *ψυχή*, and is subjected to the higher *πνεῦμα* or spirit,³ this change making the

¹ The translation "natural body" is misleading.

² The exegesis of K. Lake in his *Hist. Evidence for the Resurrection*, pp. 20-23, a book which illustrates how far astray negatively critical presuppositions can lead an acute scholar.

³ Cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 181-182; H. B. Swete, *Life of the World to Come*, pp. 85-86; and many. The ancients saw this: e.g. St. Athanasius, *De Incarn. c. Apoll.*, I. 8; St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, xiii. 20; xxii. 21. Cf. also H. M. Gwatkin, *Knowledge of God*, Vol. I. p. 188; W. Milligan, *Ascension*, pp. 19, 178.

σῶμα incorruptible, immortal, glorious and powerful — perfectly adapted to the life of the world to come. The third point is that the assertion that flesh and blood cannot inherit incorruption has reference exclusively to the native power and present limitations of the *σῶμα*. The proof is that he proceeds to assert that this corruptible will in fact put on incorruption, although by a change wrought in a mystery from above. The failure of certain modern scholars to notice this appears to be due to their presuppositions rather than to their scholarship.

§ 9. That the body which we now possess (the existing limitations and corruptibility of which are painfully experienced by all) will be raised, although wondrously changed, is the unvarying doctrine of the Church. That such doctrine raises difficult questions is not a modern discovery. The ancients, for example, sought to meet the difficulty that death dissolves and disperses the constituent elements of the body, which often become parts of other human organisms. How, it was asked, can each of several bodies, which die in partial possession at least of the same material particles, resume its own substance without impossible absurdity? With their imperfect physiological science, the ancients took for granted that a literal recovery of each body's original particles of matter is involved in its resurrection, and they took refuge either in denial that men really assimilate the substance of other men's bodies — for example, in cannibalism — or in appeal to the almightiness

of God.¹ Both explanations are of course incredible. The same substance does enter into the make-up of more than one human corpse;² and almightiness does not mean power to do what is from the nature of things really impossible.

Moderns realize that the continuity and numerical identity of the human body does not lie in its continued possession of the same material content, which changes continually. It lies in a mysterious individuating principle and law which preserves the uninterrupted identity and distinctive properties of each *σῶμα* through all changes of substantial content and form.³ The modern difficulty is to believe that what looks like a complete dissolution and destruction of the bodily frame permits the continuance of the body in any real sense. Of course, if a body altogether ceases to exist, it cannot be raised from death; and if the human spirit is to be reëmbodied hereafter, this will require creation *de novo*, the new body being other than the old, and possessing no continuity with it except the fact that the personal spirit which successively has the two bodies referred to is one and the same. Some Christian

¹ Cf. Athenagoras, *Resurrec. of the Dead*, chh. ii *et seq.*; St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 20. Modern Roman theology has not wholly escaped the error referred to.

² The quantity of matter available for use in bodily structures is far short of the accumulating totality of human bodies, if they are regarded as having mutually exclusive content.

³ Cf. B. F. Westcott, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-145; V. F. Storr, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

writers have adopted this conclusion, and reduce the dogmatic phrase "resurrection of the body" to a figure of speech. It should mean, they say, that the person whose body is dissolved after death is given another body suited to its new environment. This conclusion means that there is no true "resurrection," and that this corruptible does not put on incorruption. The effort to explain the Christian doctrine has thus resulted in explaining it away.

Beyond the general statement that the victory which is signalized by our resurrection is achieved through our Lord Jesus Christ, St. Paul does not attempt to explain at all. The change which at the last day will raise this corruptible and make it incorruptible is "a mystery." Thus he leaves it, and thus in final analysis we have to leave it. Our method of meeting the modern difficulty above described is simply to show that modern science does not and cannot prove the non-continuance of the human *σῶμα* after the dissolution and cessation of its present frame and functioning. On the contrary, it supplies analogies which, while they neither explain nor prove the Christian doctrine, do militate against the opinion that the body's continuance and resurrection by divine power is impossible. From the nature of the case we must look to supernatural revelation, rather than to natural science, for positive grounds of belief in such continuance and resurrection.

The analogies referred to are connected with the propagation of species. St. Paul's analogy of the

grain which is sown, dies and rises again in new form is drawn from this direction. In an important respect the new plant is a new body, different from that of the seed. But it has grown, none the less, out of the seed that has died; and the physical continuity of the seed remains unbroken in the plant which springs from it. Modern science has furnished another analogy, more directly germane, perhaps, because drawn from the sphere of animal and fleshly life. In the higher species, including the human, each organism originates as a germ derived from the mother's bodily substance, and the body thus germinated continues in uninterrupted identity through all its embryonic and subsequent stages of change. The parental frame may be dissolved, but the offspring's body lives on by virtue of the immortality of the germ-plasm that is transmitted. That the germ-plasm is truly immortal we do not venture to assert; but within the limits of the phenomena which we are considering, it lives on and connects each living body with an organism that has long since been dissolved. The connecting link or germ-plasm is both an invisible residuum of the old organism and the germinal basis of the clothing upon which the new organism represents.¹

We do not advance this analogy as an explanation of the manner in which the human body that dies is raised and glorified at the last day. It is indeed not complete, and cannot be pressed in some of its details.

¹ Cf. p. 71, above and refs. there.

We use it merely to show that the corruptible nature of bodies like our own does not demonstrably preclude their continuance in some residual form after dissolution, and their being again clothed upon¹ in resurrection. The fact of such continuance is an implication of revealed doctrine. It is not susceptible of scientific proof. What the form of this residuum is in the intermediate state we do not know, and we need not say more about it than has been said already in a previous chapter.² But the germ, if we may use such a term, of the resurrection body of the saints is given life in Baptism, is nourished by the Eucharistic food of immortality, and is clothed upon in glory at the last day.³

It may be asked why we insist upon the continued identity of the body, as distinguished from that of the personal spirit which inhabits it. The only "why" that can be given with confidence is the plain teaching of divine revelation. The Christian doctrine of resurrection is not one of transmigration of souls into new bodies, but of resurrection of the body. "This mortal must put on immortality." There are, indeed, confirmatory thoughts. The man is not a disembodied spirit, but lives in a composite nature the several parts of which seem necessary to the man's continuance. The utter annihilation of the body would seem to be fatal to this continuance. Again, justice seems to require that a man shall be

¹ 2 Cor. v. 2-4.

² In ch. iii. § 5.

³ Cf. *The Sacraments*, pp. 18, 191-192.

judged and punished or rewarded in the selfsame body in which he has done the things of which he is to reap the consequences.¹

§ 10. That this *σῶμα* will rise again at the last day is only half of the doctrine of our resurrection. Biblical and catholic teaching requires us also to believe that the resurrection includes a great change in our bodies. From being carnal, corruptible, mortal, dishonourable and weak, the bodies of those who rise in Christ will become plastic instruments of their spirits. This change will be accomplished in a mystery, by divine power, connected in method with our being members of the Body of Christ, who is "the firstfruits of them that are asleep."

The properties of the resurrected bodies of the saints, as St. Paul describes them,² are four: (a) Incorruptibility, involving, of course, emancipation from pain and disease, and apparently non-dependence upon physical nourishment; (b) Immortality, or freedom from death; (c) Glory, or splendour beyond all analogies of our earthly experience; (d) Power, or capacity without weariness to fulfil every dictate of their spirits. It is to be observed that these properties are conditioned by the perfect-

¹ Cf. C. F. D'Arcy, *op. cit.*, p. 84; B. F. Westcott, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-182; A. P. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 311-312.

² 1 Cor. xv. 42-43, 52-53. In theology the conventional terms are "subtlety, agility, impassibility and glory." Cf. St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxxiii-lxxxviii; Vacant, *Dictionnaire Théologie Cath.*, s.v. "Corps Glorieux" (very full); *Catechism of Trent*, Pt. I. ch. xii. q. 11; Chas. Hodge, *Syst. Theol.*, Vol. III. pp. 780-785.

ing of our spirits and their possession of heavenly virtues, on account of which they rightly acquire that enlightened liberty and power for the ultimate exercise of which they were created. In their triumph God is all in all.

With obvious wisdom God has not revealed to us the properties of the resurrection bodies of the wicked. Bodily immortality appears to be implied in the revelation of their everlasting punishment, and is probably to be inferred from the requirements of human personality. It is safe also to infer that whatever properties are consequences of the glorification of the saints will be lacking. Beyond this we can assert nothing with any confidence.

That our bodies will be susceptible of recognition by those who have previously known us can hardly be doubted. Other questions, for example, as to what age of physical growth will be represented in our resurrection bodies, and as to whether wounds and what we now call deformities will be retained, we prefer to leave as purely speculative matters. It is enough to believe that nothing will appear to mar the utility and beauty of the bodies of the saints. In any case those who awake after Christ's likeness will be satisfied with it.¹

§ 11. Apologetical interests have caused more thought to be given to the doctrine that our ex-

¹ Psa. xvii. 15. Cf. 1 St. John iii. 2. On the questions mentioned, see St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxxii-lxxxiii. In Christ's case, of course, His wounds have abiding value and glory.

isting bodies are to be raised, than to the doctrine that they will be changed and perfectly adapted to the part which they have to fulfil in the other world.¹ This in turn has drawn much attention to an objection based upon the fact that within our present experience the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit and often hampers it. Even among Christian theologians some have come to think that bodies of material substance are not suitable for the more perfect activities of our spirits hereafter. This conviction is enhanced by remnants of the Manichæan belief that matter is intrinsically evil. At least a suspicion survives that when united with the human spirit a material body necessarily hampers spiritual activity, its imposition upon us in this world being explained by the disciplinary purpose of this life. So it is that many who would not deny in formal terms the doctrine of the resurrection of the body resort to descriptions of the glorified body which practically tend to exclude its being anything else than pure spirit. This really nullifies the distinction between body and spirit in the future life, and leads on to the idea that the saints in glory will be disembodied spirits.

The tendency to deny the materiality of the resur-

¹ On their adaptation to the spiritual world, and their usefulness there, see *Passion and Exaltation*, ch. vii. §§ 9-12. Contributory matter is contained in S. C. Gayford, pp. 78-87; W. J. S. Simpson, *op. cit.*, chh. xxiv-xxix; E. D. la Touche, *Person of Christ*, pp. 321-323. E. Griffith-Jones, Pt. III. ch. vi; B. F. Westcott, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-156; and J. A. Beet, Pt. II. Lec. ix; are helpful.

rection body is unnecessary, and in Christian theology is confusing and misleading. It is unnecessary because the difficulty of belief which is sought to be met is more specious than real. Matter is not evil, for God created it, and the divine Redeemer assumed and glorified it for holy purposes. Even in this life, the human body is made to be a temple of the Holy Spirit, and it is by right use of the body that the human spirit advances to perfection and to eternal life with God. For the present the body is subject in significant degree to vanity, and is the seat of unruly affections, of pain and of much spiritual servitude. But there is a twofold explanation of this passing condition of things. In the first place, the present imperfection of our spirits is a chief cause of our failure rightly to use the flesh, a fact repeatedly confirmed by progressive victories over fleshly passion of those who by God's grace faithfully exercise holy self-discipline. In the second place, those disadvantageous limitations of the flesh over which we have no present control are imposed upon us for disciplinary reasons, and pertain to the excellence of this world as a probationary school, the thing which God has willed it to be. These limitations, belonging as they do to a passing dispensation, are to give way in the future providence of God. In the meantime, the spirit's present groaning is the incident of waiting for the promised redemption of the body; and so far from trampling upon the body as necessarily an encumbrance, we discipline it in

order to use it for the holy ends which it is created to subserve.¹

For a Christian writer to deny the materiality of the resurrection body is also confusing and misleading. Inasmuch as in established terminology non-material substance means spiritual substance, such denial will be widely understood to imply that that body is pure spirit — not what the term body means at all. The grossness and resistant inertia of the body as instrument of the spirit are indeed to be banished in the resurrection, but not the bodily nature of what is raised. To insist that the resurrection body is a material body need not, in our argument does not, mean more than that it is a true body, as distinguished from spirit. And it involves no pre-judgments concerning the problems involved.

The ultimate nature of matter has not been ascertained by scientists, and the natural possibilities of its adaptation to new environments and uses certainly exceed our knowledge and imagination of them. We know, however, that even in the present order matter exists in a striking variety of states, and is susceptible of astonishing changes and uses — astonishing, that is, when we take pains to reckon with them. Amid these uses is that of the human body by its inhabiting spirit. And the fact that our spirits

¹ Cf. 1 Cor. vi. 19; Rom. viii. 20-23; Gal. v. 17; 1 Cor. ix. 27. St. Augustine says that "it is not the body, but the corruptibility of the body, which is a burden to the soul." *De Civ. Dei*, xiii. 16.

do now use their bodies with an increasing degree of success, both for action and for self-expression, is fully as wonderful, intrinsically considered, as is the prospective enhancement of this use in the higher order of the new heavens and earth. Man is so constituted by nature that every line of the spirit's receptivity and expression is conditioned and accomplished by the use of matter; and no evidence exists that the supernatural elevation of human nature hereafter will bring this law to an end.¹

One who assumes the point of view of naturalism will of course regard the Christian belief in a future and supernatural change of the body for perfect spiritual use as altogether incredible. The difficulty in his case is due to his point of view, which is not really scientific but the fruit of philosophical speculation. Until this point of view is changed, the Christian argument will not appeal to him. But those who accept the supernatural, and who believe in the great change at the last day, have no standing ground for being doubtful as to the doctrine that this mortal body, without ceasing to be a real body, will put on immortality and by the change involved will become a suitable instrument of our spirit in the other world for its heavenly activities and self-expression.

¹ *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 227-230.

CHAPTER VI

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT

I. *The Judge*

§ 1. That Jesus Christ is to be the Judge of all men at the last day is the universally accepted doctrine of the Church from the beginning, and is clearly taught in the New Testament.¹ Among professing Christians the point is not disputed, except by those who, on "modernist" and "liberal" grounds, have departed fundamentally from the standpoint of historical Christianity.

Christ Himself claimed to be the future Judge. Designating Himself by a title which He habitually used, He said, "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then shall He render unto every man according to his deeds." This teaching He reiterated on various occasions;² and the apostolic writers repeat the doctrine. St. Paul told the Athenians that God "hath appointed

¹ On the judgment, see A. P. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-250; Bishop Pearson, *op. cit.*, on art. vii; S. C. Gayford, pp. 88-92; St. Thomas, III. lix; W. O. E. Oesterley, pp. 28-36; 97-101, 133-136, 176-177; H. A. A. Kennedy, ch. iv; A. H. Strong, *Syst. Theol.*, pp. 1023-1029; and the Encyclopedias, *q.v.*

² St. Matt. xvi. 27. Cf. St. Matt. xxv. 31-32; St. John v. 22, 27.

a day, in the which He 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."¹ St. Peter had already declared that Christ "charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is He which is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." In the Apocalypse Christ is represented as saying through His angel, "Behold I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each man according as his work is."²

This doctrine does not in any way infringe upon the scriptural teaching that God is the only one who is entitled to judge all the earth. It does not for two reasons: first, because Christ judges as God's representative, and by the Father's appointment; second, because He is the eternal Son, in whom the Father is, and who in His eternal nature is one with the Father. Because of His possession of the Godhead, God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself,³ and will be in Him when He judges the subjects of His redemption.

The fact that He is divine, and "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," guarantees His possession of full equipment for judging rightly in every case.⁴ He can, and necessarily will, exercise

¹ Acts xvii. 31. Cf. Rom. ii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1.

² Acts x. 42; Revel. xxii. 12. ³ 2 Cor. v. 19.

⁴ Col. ii. 9. On His equipment, see Bishop Pearson, *op. cit.*, fol. pp. 297-299; A. P. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-246; A. H. Strong, *op. cit.*, pp. 1027-1028.

omniscient wisdom in judging. He will discern every secret of men's hearts, will estimate without error all motives and personal attitudes of men in every thought, word and deed. No fact to be allowed for, no palliating circumstances of peculiar temptation or ignorance, and no general disadvantage under which particular men labour in this world, can escape His perfect understanding and just consideration. Moreover, He wholly shares in the love of God for His creatures, the love which moved the Father to send His Son into the world to die for us. In brief, not one difficulty that human pondering has discovered in reckoning with the unequal chances that men have in this world can fail to be understood by Him with a just and loving wisdom that transcends in perfection every measure that we can apply.

§ 2. As divine, Christ is fully possessed of the final authority, justice, love and wisdom which the Judge of mankind ought to have. But for our added assurance and comfort Christ expressly connects His office of judging with His being Son of Man, a human sharer in our sorrows and difficulties, who endured them to the point of death on the Cross that He might redeem us and draw us to Himself. He understands the fierceness of our temptations better even than we do; for not only has He personally experienced them, but by virtue of His entire and successful resistance to them has fully felt their painful brunt. We do not do so, because we yield before the pain of victorious resistance has been

completely borne. We do not resist unto blood. It is the sinless man who alone experiences *all* the pain and struggle involved in resisting temptation; and it is because Jesus Christ was this that He has a complete human understanding of the difficulties which make our lives so imperfect.¹

Moreover, He was not an involuntary sufferer, who thereby acquired a grievance against those whose sins occasioned His struggle and passion. He submitted to human limitations, and to the consequences of righteousness in a sinful world, voluntarily and with complete acceptance of the cost. He did so because He loved us, and His love did not expire in the accomplishment of His suffering, which gave it human form. His passion is the human sign of His love, the method of His redemption, and the ever-continuing basis of His perpetual intercession and saving work. That love is never exhausted; and therefore His earthly experience at human hands affords to Him no motive of vengeance, but one of peerless sympathy. And, in a manner consistent with justice, that sympathy will perfectly manifest itself in the day of judgment. Proper realization of this ought to remove, or at least much reduce, the difficulty which some people feel in believing that a final and irreversible judgment of mankind can be fair to all.

Moreover, we are not setting forth the humanly sympathetic disposition of the Judge without ade-

¹ Cf. *Incarnation*, pp. 252-257.

quate authority. The New Testament bears ample witness to it. Christ declares that He "came to seek and to save that which was lost." To this end we are told that, so far from treating His equality with God as consisting in grasping after honour among men, "He effaced Himself, taking the form of a servant and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the Cross." He was willing to be made perfect humanly through sufferings, and was not ashamed to call those for whom He suffered "brethren." So He was made in all things "like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God . . . for in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." Accordingly, "we have not a High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are."¹ Needless to say this High Priest is our Judge, and He will not be changed in the sympathetic disposition which He has demonstrated at such great human cost when He comes again.

§ 3. The two primary qualities of the final judgment are those of justice and mercy. They are really inseparable. The justice of Christ is merciful, and His mercy is just. Neither of these aspects of His judgment could be defective without reducing the

¹ St. Luke xix. 10; Phil. ii. 6-8; Heb. ii. 10-11, 17-18; iv. 15.

divine perfection of the other. They are not contraries, but are perfecting qualities each of the other; and neither one is reduced in fulness by the other in their inseparable union. Neither one gives way to the other, but both are completely fulfilled together. To press mercy at the cost of justice is to upset the moral order, and to press justice at the cost of mercy, is to convert justice into vengeance.¹ Christ is able, as we are not, to combine perfect justice and perfect mercy. And He certainly will do so at the last day; for He unites in Himself divine competence and holiness with infinite love, translated into the terms of the most representative human experience that ever has been or ever could be actualized.

By a perfectly just judgment we here mean one in which, with full knowledge of all pertinent circumstances and with unerring wisdom, the judge morally estimates all the relevant facts and apportions the consequent punishment or reward in entire and undeniable accord with the requirements of righteousness. If the relevant facts in Christ's judgment of us consisted only in what we have done and left undone in the flesh, justice would require the everlasting punishment of us all; for our earthly deeds and shortcomings represent personal characters which preclude our being justly rewarded with blessedness. It is because other facts are also relevant, facts grow-

¹ On divine justice, love and mercy, see *Being and Attributes of God*, pp. 296-299, 301-304. On the harmony of justice and love, *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 52-54, 69-83.

ing out of what God in Christ Himself has done for us, that justice permits a different judgment for many — a judgment in which mercy emerges, but which continues to be entirely just. Among these additional facts the initial one is that of our redemption by Christ's death. From this fact flow all the possibilities of regenerating and sanctifying grace and the mystery of justification, wherein we become subjects of growth in grace and of ultimate perfecting in righteousness. Because we have become such children of grace, we are treated for what we shall be when we are fullgrown, and our present backslidings receive more favourable judgment.¹ Justice is still rendered, however, for the postulate of justification is that we shall some day by God's help become wholly righteous; and it is the actualization of this postulate that secures a favourable final judgment for the saints in spite of their many earthly sins and shortcomings. Their consummated perfection justly exempts them from further punishment for their sins.

We say "further" punishment for it is another relevant fact, which Christ's perfect justice moves Him to take into account, that the sins which the saints by God's grace repent of and finally overcome, have already been punished with temporal consequences when the final judgment is rendered. Divine justice permits no sin to be left without its penal consequences;² but this same justice puts

¹ Cf. *The Church*, pp. 259-269.

² Cf. p. 87, above, and *Passion and Exaltation*, p. 50.

an end to punishment when these consequences have been penitently endured and the sinfulness of the sinner has finally given way to righteousness.

The conclusion of the matter is that the perfect justice of our Judge has a twofold bearing. For impenitent sinners it brings terror, for divine justice precludes escape from the consequences of sin until it is repented of, sufficiently punished, and wholly banished. The sinner must cease to be sinful before a term can be set to his punishment, and when the day of the Lord arrives the chance for such escape will have gone by forever. On the other hand, divine justice is essentially fair. No excusing circumstances that ought to be allowed for will be overlooked. The Judge of all the earth will do right.

§ 4. The merciful characteristic of our Judge is akin to His fairness, but is none the less quite distinct. Because the Judge is just He is fair to every man, whatever may be the limitations of his life. But His mercy makes Him more than fair. It moves Him to determine not only what is fairly due to each subject of judgment, but also what favour justice permits Him to grant as a free and unearned gift from the bountiful God, in spite of the subject's earthly sins. The wonderful nature of this mercy lies in the fact that it affords priceless blessings to many who have grievously sinned, without evading the requirements of justice in the slightest degree. Any form of mercy which did evade these requirements would be unjust mercy, and God cannot be unjust even for

mercy's sake. Such mercy is necessarily subversive of the moral order. It is not true mercy but supine and immoral acquiescence in wrong. The very glory of mercy is that it is right.

The mercy of Christ neither begins nor ceases on the day of judgment. It is an eternal attribute which has appeared in whatever He has done and suffered for mankind. And the merciful elements of His previous work lead up to and guard the perfect justice of His mercy in the last day. His redemption and saving grace, wholly undeserved by men, have created possibilities, above indicated, which explain how it is that, in spite of their earthly wickedness, many in the day of final judgment will have become fit subjects of entire acquittal and of the inestimable gift of beatitude. If they have then become fit to receive this gift, then every requirement of justice in their case is satisfied, and the gift can be justly bestowed—not as an earned wage, but as a gift which has rightly been pledged under such conditions and which can rightly be conferred under them by the loving God.

It is to be observed that divine mercy lowers no requirement of righteousness and exempts no man from the just consequences of sin and failure to become perfectly righteous. Without holiness, no man can see the Lord.¹ Indeed the unrighteous cannot endure the contact with God which is the central joy of eternal life. The requirement that if we would

¹ Heb. xii. 14.

enjoy God (and everlasting punishment is the only future alternative for enlightened Christians) we must have become by divine grace entirely righteous, is one that cannot be abrogated or evaded in any case. Heaven cannot be bestowed with easy-going indulgence. It is not a refuge for deficient weaklings, but is the goal of penitents who have used the help afforded to them and by such help have won the victory of righteousness. Mercy is unavailing to the obstinately sinful.

As we have seen to be the case with the justice of Christ, so His mercy has a twofold bearing. For our comfort and encouragement it assures us that He will consummate His self-sacrifice and saving work in our behalf not only by being absolutely fair, but also by freely awarding to us the highest good that our response to His saving ministry permits Him to award without subverting the moral and spiritual order of the eternal. On the other hand, the mercy of the Judge of all the earth is grounded in immutable right; and our future profit from it depends upon righteousness being triumphant in us when we appear before Him. This condition is absolute, because a remission of it would mean unrighteousness in Him who is the very seat and source of right — a subversion of ultimate foundations. The only ones who can gain justifiable assurance from considering Christ's mercy are those who repent of their sins, and avail themselves of the divine provisions for their growth before and after death into sinless righteousness.

II. *Those who are Judged*

§ 5. All rational creatures have to face divine judgment.¹ No elaborate argument is needed to show the credibility of such a proposition, which is the obvious premise of New Testament doctrine. We say all rational creatures, because all such are moral agents; and since God is the supreme moral Governor of creation, every created moral agent is accountable to Him for his use of the moral faculties imparted to him. Creatures are not self-sufficient sovereigns, although they are given a derivative and relative sovereignty within the larger and all controlling dominion of God. Their freedom and powers are given for a divine purpose, and in the furtherance of it lies the manner of conduct for pursuing which they are accountable to God. Moreover, their own future destinies depend necessarily upon the moral and spiritual dispositions and characters which their actions, especially their habits of action, develop. Character determines the destiny which a creature is fit to enjoy and which can rightly be awarded to him, and conduct is the road to character. It is not less so because perfectly righteous conduct depends upon divine aid for its possibility. This aid is given, and so the responsibility of moral agents for righteousness is complete.

That all men are to be judged in the last day is

¹ On the universality of the judgment, see Bishop Pearson, *op. cit.*, fol. pp. 300-304; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxxix.

revealed truth. "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, . . . before Him shall be gathered all the nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats." "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment."¹ The human universality of the judgment is implied in many allusions to the last day,² and is doubted only by those who deny that there is to be any such final and formal judgment as Scripture declares. Such are beyond any argument which can be given in a treatise of this kind.

The subject of the judgment of angels is several times alluded to in the New Testament, and in terms which forbid the supposition that they do not share in the necessity which men have, of submitting to final judgment and to its just awards. In the Epistle of St. Jude we are told that "angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation" He (the Lord) "hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." The second Epistle of St. Peter assumes that "God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell . . . to be reserved unto judgment." Our Lord describes the place to which He consigns wicked men in the last day as "the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." In the Apocalypse the description of the overthrow of evil

¹ St. Matt. xxv. 31-32; Heb. ix. 27.

² E.g. Acts x. 42; xvii. 31; Revel. xx. 12-13.

forces at the consummation includes the words, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."¹ The holy angels are also to be present and assist at the judgment, coming to it along with the Lord.² In view of these intimations, it appears that Christ is to judge all rational creatures, angels as well as men.

§ 6. Men are to be judged according to their deeds, that is, those which pertain to their probation and to the determination of the direction of their moral and spiritual development. As has been shown, these are the deeds done in the body and during men's earthly lives. So Scripture teaches. "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad."³ Moreover, we may not suppose that external actions alone are meant.

Natural experience and reflection teach us that the internal motives of our conduct determine its moral bearing, especially when these motives spring from our habitual and cherished disposition towards truth, right and duty. Accordingly, as St. Paul says, the Lord "will both bring to light the hidden things

¹ St. Jude 6; ² St. Pet. ii. 4; St. Matt. xxv. 41; Revel. xx. 10.

³ St. Matt. xiii. 41, 49-50; xvi. 27; xxv. 31; St. Mark viii. 38; xiii. 27; 2 Thess. i. 7.

⁴ 2 Cor. v. 10. Cf. Rom. ii. 6; Ephes. vi. 8; Revel. xx. 12.

of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts.”¹ Furthermore, because our internal disposition is reflected in our willingness to reckon with truth when the knowledge of it enlarges our responsibilities, our inward disposition towards opportunities of such knowledge will have to be taken into account in the judgment. “Every one that doeth ill hateth the light, lest his works should be reprovèd. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God.”² And since the truths which determine our perceptions of duty include those by which we have to be guided in things pertaining specifically to our relations to God and our growth towards Him, this disposition towards light is reflected with vital moral bearing in our readiness or unreadiness to receive and assimilate the supernaturally revealed doctrines of true religion. Ignorance in this direction excuses only when not caused by our unreadiness to learn.³ We are justified by faith because the willing acceptance of religious knowledge which it represents is the condition and pledge of growth by grace in the righteousness of God.

The deeds according to which we are to be judged include our words. This is so not only because they lead on to our own action, and have moral influence upon the lives of others, but also because our words,

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 5.

² St. John iii. 20-21. Cf. 1 Cor. iv. 5; Revel. ii. 23.

³ Cf. St. John iii. 19; ix. 41; xii. 48; xv. 22, 24; Rom. i. 18-19.

especially our spontaneous utterances, reveal our moral dispositions and characters. Christ has said, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." The moral significance for just judgment of the spoken word is strikingly set forth by St. James, who says, "If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body."¹

We can readily perceive that the omissions of what we ought to perform, whether in thought, word or outward act, are as truly included in the data of just judgment as are the commissions of what we ought not to do. It also requires nothing more than attention to the difference between things done with deliberate purpose and those due either to insufficient forethought, to ignorance or to unintentional blundering, to perceive that the former are the most serious severally regarded;² although the latter also become very grave matters of judgment when they represent habits which we wilfully refuse to amend.

But, among the deeds which determine the significance of our lives for judgment, Christ will certainly attach especial importance to repentance and efforts to cultivate by holy discipline the habits which pertain to righteousness.³ And because the

¹ St. Matt. xii. 36-37; St. James iii. 2 *et seq.*

² Cf. St. Luke xii. 47-48.

³ Cf. Acts ii. 38; St. Matt. vi. 33; Heb. vi. 1-2.

fulfilment of righteousness is grounded ultimately in love, we are told that "love covereth a multitude of sins."¹

§ 7. A determinative reason for this is that love pertains to personal character, is indeed the central element of perfect character.² The moral value of deeds which the Judge is to determine lies not in their quantity, nor wholly in their intrinsic quality. It lies in the personal character which they reveal in their agent, the character, that is, which is growing in him when he passes from this world. What we are in the process of becoming when we die we shall surely be when we come to the final judgment. What God values in us is not our works *in se*, considered as achievements, but ourselves. He loves us for what His grace enables us to become, fit to be His friends forever. God does not say, "Son, give Me thy achievements," but, "Son, give Me thy heart."³ He made us for love's sake, that He might bring us into mutually congenial relations with Himself forever. Congeniality of character between God and ourselves, ourselves severally and unitedly, is necessarily the *sine qua non* both of our enjoyment of Him and of His pleasure in us. And our being prepared and enabled to have and to give joy in such a communion of saints with God is the purpose for

¹ 1 St. Pet. iv. 8.

² It is the summing up of the law: St. Matt. xxii. 37-40 and paral.; Rom. xiii. 8-10; 1 Cor. xiii. 1-3, 8, 13; 1 St. John iii. 14-15; iv. 16-17, 20-21. Cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 260-261.

³ Prov. xxiii. 26. Cf. St. John xii. 32.

which we are subjected to the trials of this probationary world.

This explains in part the truth of the seemingly opposed propositions that our works cannot save us, and that we are to be judged and finally rewarded according to them. We are to be judged *according to* rather than *on account of* deeds. To put this in another way, our personal selves are the real subjects of judgment, and we are judged according to works because, and in so far as, they reveal to the all-wise Judge our personal worth to God. In the earthly stage of our development our works afford a twofold manifestation of ourselves: of what we already are, and of what we are becoming. Our spontaneous actions and habits, for instance, flow from and reveal what we are — originally quite unfit for God. On the other hand, our purposeful actions and practices indicate what we seek to become and, if heavenly perfection is our aim, what we shall become by God's help, if we persevere in grace.

These considerations do not at all reduce the value for the judgment, and the Christian obligation, of acts of obedience to divine precepts, of good works, and of earnest service in behalf of our fellow men. Our attention to, or neglect of, these things reveals and develops character both in ourselves and in others, and for this reason has determinative influence in our final judgment. But obviously self-discipline, made successful by reliance upon divine grace, occupies a very central place in our preparation for judgment.

Self-discipline means the directing of our deeds towards character-forming, and holy character will be men's greatest asset in that day.¹

In the Apocalypse the results of the judgment are summarized in startling words: "He that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: . . . and he that is holy, let him be made holy still."² The thought, however, surely cannot be that men are made to continue filthy or holy by external compulsion or fiat. Only a rigid Calvinist can entertain such a doctrine. The meaning appears to be that the distinguishing marks which are brought to light in the judgment, and which forever separate the "sheep" and the "goats," are permanent and deepening foulness of character in those who are condemned, and ever-growing holiness of character in those who are beatified. It is the final crystallization of character which makes the award irreversible. But that crystallization is due to the working of unalterable laws of moral growth, not to the compulsory results of an unconditional divine predestination and election.³

§ 8. All sorts and conditions of men will be judged in that day, with due allowance in every case for the several degrees of light and of other advantages enjoyed in this life, and perhaps with consideration of differences between the several forms of beatitude which God has prepared for men of good will under

¹ Cf. *The Church*, pp. 270-278; *Creation and Man*, pp. 243-245.

² Revel. xxii. 11.

³ On predestination and freedom, see *Creation and Man*, pp. 19-38.

the various conditions of probation which are provided for them on earth. We allude to the speculative possibility previously discussed, that the "non-elect," if they are morally responsive to the opportunities and help actually afforded to them by God, will be rewarded in satisfying but unrevealed ways with destinies to which their non-Christian probations are suitable antecedents.¹ The purely speculative nature of this hypothesis we have carefully maintained.

(a) Those who have enjoyed the light of the Gospel will necessarily be judged in that light. The standard in their case will be most exacting, for since much has been given them, much will be required of them.² Yet Christians share in the universal and native sinfulness of men, a handicap which they did not create; and divine mercy will not fail to allow for this. But saving grace has been afforded to them, and according to their response to it and growth in it, according to their repentance and practice in holy self-discipline, they will surely be judged.

(b) The ancients who shared in pre-Christian covenants with God will of course be judged according to these covenants, and in the light of the inferior knowledge which was given to them. But since these covenants were introductory to that of Jesus Christ, we may be sure that faithfulness to them was intended to be rewarded with Christian blessings when Christ should have won them by His redemptive work. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob unquestionably

¹ See ch. ii. §§ 7-9, above.

² St. Luke xii. 48.

will enjoy the reward which will be sealed to faithful Christians in the last day.¹

There appears to be reason in the goodness of God for hoping and thinking that the same reward is in store for pious Israelites of later ages, who have missed the knowledge of the Gospel through no fault of their own, but have been faithful to the covenant which God made with their forefathers, at least so far as the changed circumstances permit them to understand and fulfil its requirements.²

(c) The Gentiles, and all who have missed the knowledge of Christ through blameless and invincible ignorance, will certainly be judged fairly and mercifully in the last day, and according to the light which is really available to them in this world.³ Of the nature of the reward which can and will be given them for faithful response to their inferior opportunities we have no means of being certain. But the deeds according to which they will be judged are those done in this world; and the characters which they will be responsible for developing are such as their providential conditions in this world enable them by God's unrevealed aid to cultivate. In this class of men must be included many in Christian lands whose ignorance and unbelief are due to causes for which they are not personally to blame.

¹ St. Matt. viii. 11; St. Luke xiii. 28. Cf. St. John viii. 56.

² This independently of the promise that the race of Israel, as such, shall be recovered to Christ. Cf. Rom. xi.

³ Cf. Rom. ii. 6-16, esp. 12-15.

(d) That Christ will not condemn to punishment those who have died in innocent infancy without being baptized, appears certain in the light of divine justice, which surely confines punishment to those who personally sin. It is a widespread pious opinion that such will receive some form of natural beatitude — not the supernatural vision of God.¹ The baptized who die in infancy are certainly to be admitted into Heaven, the manifold conditions and vocations of which afford places for them. “Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”²

III. *Aspects and Results*

§ 9. The final judgment is not to be regarded as if it were isolated and self-complete. It does indeed complete, round up, and once for all terminate the mystery of judgment. But what is thus precipitated, so to speak, in an irreversible determination of the destinies of creatures, is the closing act of a long drama of judgment. In that drama the individual actors of each successive scene, from moment to moment, are developing a moral plot. This plot is continually revealing a complex development of particular elements and tendencies, all of which, in mutual relation and together, reach their climax and

¹ St. Thomas, III. Suppl. lxxi; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. “Limbo,” II; P. J. Toner, “Lot of Those Dying in Original Sin,” in *Irish Theol. Qly.*, July, 1909.

² St. Matt. xix. 14.

decisive manifestation in the final scene, when Christ comes again. In that scene the moral of the drama will emerge into clear light, and the outcome for each character therein will be fully and correctly worked out and made manifest. The villain of the piece and his adherents will receive their due, and the righteous will obtain their reward. No appeal will or can be entertained after the closing scene has been enacted. It is determinative. More than this, because the conclusion is of divine ordering, all will be right; and the moral requirements of final judgment will be so abundantly satisfied that no room will be left for another scene. Justice and mercy, holiness and love, will be forever established beyond future cavil.

In the meantime, the audience is judging the play and its several actors from its beginning and at every moment of its continuance. No word or gesture is overlooked, and as the drama proceeds, the judgments passed at each stage accumulate and are coördinated in more and more determinate directions and tendencies. The audience referred to is a large one, constantly changing in individual members, but always formidable. It consists of all who witness our actions. Many of these witnesses are very imperfect and prejudiced judges; but when they agree they are substantially right with sufficient frequency to show that there is some truth behind the saying, *Vox populi vox Dei*. Such united judgments do at least make clear the inexorable nature of judgment

and the inevitable necessity of finally reckoning with it. Our neighbours make up a kind of chorus, and afford aid to each of us in rightly performing his part. No one can safely disregard entirely the judgments passed upon him by his fellows — by the society in which he lives. They are providential forms of admonition, not less needed because they have temporary bearing only and are fallible.

But these judgments, helpful though they be when humbly reckoned with and dutifully weighed, lack the note of decisive authority in the sphere of conscience. Conscience is a judicial faculty wherewith each man judges his own deeds, and its judgments have immediate authority. This is not because the conscience is infallible, for it is often insufficiently enlightened, and is liable to give mistaken judgments. The reason why it has authority, and ought always to be followed, is that its judgments invariably represent what we know or believe as to what we ought to do or refrain from doing under the given circumstances. To do in each issue what seems to us to be morally required, and to avoid doing what seems to us to be wrong, is too plainly an invariable duty to be seriously disputed. Our judgment may be mistaken, but to go contrary to it on that plea is to make what seems right give way to what seems wrong.

So it is that to judge ourselves, and to govern our lives accordingly, is the divinely given rule by which to anticipate, and prepare ourselves for, the final judgment. But the authority of conscience is a

delegated and fallible authority which requires careful education, and our attention to its education is an important part of the deeds according to which we are to be judged in the last day. The judgment of God in Christ is alone absolutely and finally authoritative. That judgment is being formed with cumulative force and effect during every moment of our earthly lives. When we pass from this world it will have been determined in the mind of God, but will not be pronounced and fully carried into effect until the last day. Not until then will the conditions be perfected for the consummation of judgment.

§ 10. We have need in discussing the final judgment to distinguish between its finality and the duration of its specific consequences. A final and irreversible judgment may or may not involve everlastingness of particular conditions resulting from it, this depending not exclusively upon its finality but also upon the nature of its awards. A final judgment is indeed permanent in its results broadly considered, but the specific penalties and rewards which it determines may conceivably have temporary form. In punctuating this distinction, the writer need not be suspected of rejecting the catholic doctrine of everlasting punishment. His sole purpose is to call attention to the limits of his immediate subject, which is the finality as distinguished from the specific consequences of the general judgment.

By the finality of Christ's judgment in the last day we mean that no appeal from it can ever be

entertained, and that its awards have abiding validity and effect. Its terms, whatever they may prove to be, will remain supremely determinative within their scope forever. Their validity is eternal, and therefore is not subject to expiration and nullification because of any imaginable *ex post facto* circumstances. If the Judge then awards everlasting punishment to the wicked, their punishment will surely be everlasting. If, on the other hand, He awards temporary penalties, to be followed either by restoration to divine favour or by extinction, that award will be insusceptible of reversal. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His word in that day can never pass away or cease to be supreme. The finality of that judgment is put beyond doubt by several considerations.

(a) The passages in the New Testament which are usually appealed to in support of the doctrine of everlasting punishment are said by objectors to that doctrine to be inconclusive, and to be offset by passages which have contrary implications. These will be reckoned with in our next chapter. But in any case they plainly represent final determinations in the last day, and controversies as to the nature of these determinations do not at all weaken this fact.

(b) A truly final adjudication appears to be necessary for the consummation of the Kingdom of God, the moral requirements of which must be absolutely triumphant within it, and the beneficiaries of which must be perfectly righteous.

(c) The law of moral growth visibly working in this world, because of which character gradually crystallizes beyond possibility of reversal, does not appear to be confined to this life. The final judgment assigns men to destinies suited to their characters, and it is rendered after this crystallization is complete.

(d) The divine nature and competence of the Judge assures us that His final judgment will not only have the fair, sympathetic and merciful quality which His human experience guarantees, but will be rendered from the divine standpoint. This standpoint is eternal. The Judge discerns the whole circumference of time and temporal circumstance, future as well as past, and His judgment will be determined by this discernment — omniscient and all wise as well as just, loving and merciful. Men are apt to think that, because no merely human judge can be trusted to render a judgment which will never need amendment, therefore Christ cannot be trusted to do this. And the present loss by many of real faith in Christ's very Godhead explains much of the modern difficulty in believing that He can render a judgment which is both forensically final and permanently in accord with all possible future requirements of right.

§ 11. The awards which will be given in the judgment are described in Scripture generically, rather than in specific detail, and to a great extent figuratively. Our earthly experience does not enable us to understand literal descriptions of what is to come, and we have no

need of them in apprehending the bearing of the future on our present obligations and responsibilities. In fact, precise knowledge of the other world, and of the conditions there in store for us, would surely distract rather than help us in fulfilling the duties of this life. Furthermore the content of revelation concerning the future destinies of men is limited also by the fact that it is given to Christians, and is primarily concerned with their future. What may be in store for those who have no opportunity of receiving the Gospel in this world cannot be learned except indirectly and partially — our specific opinions in this direction consisting largely of inferences from what we know of God Himself and of the fundamental principles of divine judgment.

But Christ clearly reveals to us that all men are to be judged together at the last day, and that the results are twofold. Every human being will be either everlastingly punished or everlastingly rewarded, according to his deeds done in the body. After every allowance has been made for the principles of judgment by which its fair and merciful qualities are assured, this doctrine remains as the undeniable teaching of Christ and His Apostles. And according to this doctrine "Heaven" is the future abode of those who are rewarded, and "Hell" of those who are punished. Both of these names designate regions of many habitations, no doubt, and may afford a very wide range severally of punishments and rewards. For example, the scriptural descriptions of Heaven

and Hell may not be as directly applicable to the future abodes of those who die in heathen ignorance as they are to those of the recipients of the Gospel, to whom alone they are addressed. But whatever may be the force and effect of these distinctions, we have the divinely authoritative and inerrant teaching of Christ that all the obstinately wicked will incur everlasting punishment in Hell, and that the righteous will be rewarded forever in Heaven. This doctrine has been transmitted to the Church by the Apostles and, in spite of the contrary views of individual theologians, is still the authoritative teaching of every part of the Catholic Church. The correctness of our definition of Christian teaching, and the objections which have been raised against the doctrine of everlasting punishment, will be considered in the next chapter.

§ 12. In the meantime we desire to indicate the limited scope of the doctrine of future punishment. There is abundant need of doing so, for Christian imagination and art have often mishandled the figurative descriptions of the New Testament, and by excessively literal treatment of them have enlarged the content of the doctrine, at the cost of greatly increasing the difficulty of accepting its truth.

(a) In the first place, it is not taught by Christ that those who do not learn of Him, and do not receive the Gospel in this world, will one and all be consigned to everlasting punishment. Such a doctrine is nowhere laid down in Scripture, has no

ecumenical authority,¹ and plainly violates the quality of fairness which we are compelled to ascribe to the Judge of all the earth.

(b) For the same reasons we must wholly eliminate the horrible belief that men are to be sent to Hell forever by reason of an eternal and unconditional foreordination of God. Every man will have a fair chance to escape everlasting punishment, and no man will be sentenced thereto who does not deserve such fate by reason of obstinate wickedness and rejection of God-given opportunities.²

(c) It is not Christian doctrine that all the wicked will suffer in the same degree. The Lord plainly indicates that the punishments of the wicked are distributed in diverse proportions, according to the degrees of their wickedness.³

(d) It is not asserted in Scripture that the subjective agony which will attend future punishment will retain its original acuteness forever. That Hell will grow more endurable with the lapse of time, and that a mitigation of suffering will be obtained, is the opinion of many orthodox Christians and is an allowable one. Endless punishment is not necessarily equivalent to endless agony.⁴

(e) The catholic doctrine does not require us to believe that the "fire" and "worm" of Christ's

¹ That it has been held by very many cannot truly be denied. Cf. ch. ii. §§ 7-9, above.

² Cf. E. B. Pusey, *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?* pp. 7-18.

³ Cf. St. Luke xii. 47-48.

⁴ We return to this in ch. vii. § 6, below.

descriptions of future punishment must be taken literally. Solid reasons for the contrary supposition are available.¹

(f) Finally, every description of future punishment which pictures God as vindictively inflicting tortures, and the saints as exulting joyously over the miseries of the damned, is the fruit of inadequate perception of divine character and of its reflection in the characters and dispositions of His perfected saints. The pictures referred to are truly abhorrent to those who have entered into the mind of Christ. As we shall endeavour to show, Hell does not lie outside the realm within which the mercy of God exhibits its universal sway.²

¹ The "fire" and the "worm" apparently cannot both be taken literally. They are mutually incompatible. Cf. E. B. Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-21.

² Cf. pp. 210-211, below. The saints do surely rejoice over God's triumph, but that is very different.

CHAPTER VII

FUTURE PUNISHMENT

I. *Its Duration and Nature*

§ 1. No one who takes pains to understand the reasons which lead many professing Christians in our day to reject the doctrine of everlasting punishment¹ will conclude that such rejection is invariably due to unworthy motives. Many very earnest and sincere people reject it in the interests of justice and fair play, believing that the God in whom Christians trust is incapable of torturing His creatures forever on account of the sins which they commit in this brief earthly life. The conception of future punishment from which such people very properly recoil, however, is a caricature of the true doctrine, which, as we hope to show, is not justly liable to the objections which they raise against it. We do not mean

¹ On future punishment at large, TRADITIONAL, see E. B. Pusey, *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?* A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 316-325; S. C. Gayford, pp. 93-113; D. Stone, pp. 268-274; E. M. Goulburn, *Everlasting Punishment*; H. N. Oxenham, *Cath. Eschatology and Universalism*; Jos. Rickaby, *Everlasting Punishment*; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. III. xcvi-c; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Hell." IN MODERN LIGHT, S. D. F. Salmond, *passim*, esp. Bk. VI. ch. iv; J. A. Beet, Pt. III; Jas. Fyfe, *The Hereafter*.

that it is free from difficulty. No teaching as to the final outcome of the mystery of evil can fail to leave troublesome questions unanswered. And our reason for accepting the catholic doctrine on this subject is not that it is easily accepted but that it came from Christ. It is divinely revealed. Moreover, its difficulties, which are often exaggerated, are not so baffling as are those of rival theories on the same subject.

No one is competent to estimate the credibility of the doctrine of everlasting punishment who does not realize the terrible meaning of sin, and its subversive effect in the moral universe.¹ A purely academic approach to the subject is futile. Sin is rebellion against God, upon whom the whole moral order depends; and unless somehow adequately remedied, it inevitably puts the sinner hopelessly out of gear with all possibilities of blessedness. This is so not because God arbitrarily and vindictively wills it, but because the moral order itself absolutely forbids the final prosperity of the wicked. Because of the costly mystery of Christ's redemptive death sin can, indeed, be remedied by the sinner's repentance and contrite use of saving grace and holy self-discipline. But until this remedy is applied, until the sinner repents, his sin is a fatal bar to his adjustment to the conditions of eternal life.

Unhappily there are many who do not repent; and such people fall into two classes. The first

¹ Cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 1-5; P. B. Bull, *Instructions on the Atonement*, ch. i; S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 527-528.

includes those who are undutifully disposed towards irksome responsibilities, and who wilfully evade knowledge of the consequences of their course. Being unwilling to be convinced in matters that involve penitential self-surrender and hardship, they are not open to persuasion. They have brought judicial blindness upon themselves, and have put themselves wholly out of court. The fundamental condition of susceptibility to light and of capacity for blessedness is absent. The second class consists of those who realize to some degree the sinfulness of sin and the conditions of future blessedness, and whose consciences are disturbed, but who are morally inert and fail adequately to repent. They make much of God's readiness to forgive, and by exclusive consideration of this fact persuade themselves that somehow a place for repentance and reconciliation will finally be afforded to them. They have a sense of sin, but a pitifully inadequate one; and their ruling spirit is one of evasion of the moral order. At best they do not repent, but merely feel remorse and discomfort.

The sum of the matter is that both of these classes of men are hopelessly prejudiced. They do not clearly apprehend the enduring effect of unremedied sin, and therefore cannot perceive the justice of everlasting punishment. Every opportunity of enlightenment in this direction is afforded to them, but unless they turn and repent their opportunities leave them blind. The penitent alone understands the abiding horror of obstinately cherished sin; and therefore

he alone is competent to perceive the fundamental reasonableness of Christ's teaching as to everlasting punishment.

This teaching, in brief, is that unrepented sin is a fatal barrier to eternal life; that the opportunity for repentance will have forever gone by when Christ comes again; and that in that day impenitent sinners will incur endless exclusion from the blessedness which by repentance they might have attained, with the several forms and degrees of misery which such exclusion will necessarily involve for each.

§ 2. That the Christian Church has always taught that terrible and endless punishment is in store for those whom Christ condemns in the last day is certain. And it is not less so because no formal dogma on the subject has been set forth by ecumenical authority, and because from time to time individual theologians of repute have either explained away the endlessness of future punishment or have repudiated it.¹ In all parts of the Church the allusions to the subject in prescribed forms of prayer clearly imply that the wicked will receive everlasting punishment. *Lex orandi lex credendi*. The clause of the Athanasian symbol, "They that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire," is representative of pertinent liturgical phraseology everywhere and in every age. Whether the "fire" is literal or not has

¹ See E. B. Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-284 (with large catena of the fathers); H. N. Oxenham, *op. cit.*, ch. iv. and app. II-III.

been an open question. But that in the traditional "orthodoxy" of the Church the word everlasting has always been applied in the same sense of endlessness both to the reward of the righteous and to the final punishment of the wicked is too clear to unbiased historical students to require argument in these pages. Origen, St. Gregory Nyssen and Theodore of Mopsuestia among the ancients supported the contrary doctrine of final restoration; and Arnobius maintained the theory of conditional immortality.¹ But these writers gained no extensive following. They were generally recognized to be exceptional in their contentions, and in the sixth-century synodical condemnation of Origenism the restorationist theory was impliedly, if not explicitly, involved.² Only in modern days has there been among professing Christians any considerable number of dissentients from the traditional doctrine that future punishment is endless. In every age of Christian history a denial of its endlessness has been generally understood to involve a break with the traditional doctrine on the subject. Conservatism has always stood in this matter for the doctrine of endless punishment, a fact which is clearly apparent when we consider how completely the relevant popular imagination, art and literature have been dominated by this doctrine.

As post-apostolic centuries have rolled on, however,

¹ See §§ 9, 11, below.

² E. B. Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-149; J. F. Bethune-Baker, *Introd. to Early Hist. of Doctrine*, pp. 152-154.

a combination of causes and motives has impelled many Christian writers to place disproportionate emphasis upon the doctrine of Hell, to favour a literal interpretation of our Lord's descriptions of future punishment, and to develop these descriptions in language which has caused the belief in its endlessness to imply a veritable nightmare of divine vindictiveness. This unhappy result has been accentuated by the unwarranted opinion that the majority of mankind will be damned,¹ and by the Calvinistic doctrine that this is due to an eternal and arbitrary divine fiat. Modern reactions against such ideas are natural and to a degree justifiable. Both the justice and the love of God obviously require their repudiation. But unfortunately their rejection has been too indiscriminating. Many have made no patient effort to consider whether the original doctrine of future punishment, shorn of unwarranted accretions, is justly liable to the objections called forth by the horrifying mediæval and modern caricatures of it.

§ 3. Those who deny the catholic doctrine have to oppose nineteen centuries of general Christian consent, a consent which, in view of the unwelcome nature of that doctrine in any form, can be explained only by supernatural causation. But they also have to explain away the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, which after every result of defensible criticism has been allowed for, appears to confirm this catholic consent. In considering our Lord's teaching,

¹ An Augustinian inheritance.

we should reckon with the fact that the Jews of His time certainly believed in an endless and terrifying future punishment of at least the wicked Gentiles, and were therefore likely to understand His language in that sense if naturally susceptible of such interpretation. The presumption is strong that, if He had not agreed with current Jewish doctrine on the subject, He would have made His disagreement clear; for He certainly attached great importance to the need of true knowledge concerning the final fate of obstinate sinners. The fact is very significant, therefore, that even among those who deny the doctrine of endless future punishment the acknowledgement is frequently made that the traditional interpretation of Christ's teaching is plausible and natural.

The precise meaning of *αἰώνιος* in our Lord's utterance, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life",¹ has been in dispute. The word certainly varies in meaning according to the context; and while it usually implies duration, the context determines whether endlessness is involved. In St. John's use of the word,² however, divine relation and quality appears to be in mind rather than duration; and this is advanced as a reason for thus interpreting the word in the utterance referred to. But whichever meaning is

¹ St. Matt. xxv. 46 (R.V.). Cf. St. Mark iii. 29; 2 Thess. i. 9; Heb. vi. 2; etc.

² Occurs seventeen times in the fourth Gospel, and always in connection with life: e.g. xvii. 3.

taken, the implication of endlessness remains. The punishment and the reward are described in the same context by the same adjective "aionian" — obviously without change of its meaning. If the description is durational, the meaning must be "endless" in both applications, for the life referred to is indisputably this. On the other hand, if the description is qualitative, it appears none the less to have reference to final states, without either hint of, or discoverable room for, anything beyond; and if "aionian life" admits of no sequel, the same must be said of "aionian punishment."¹

But our understanding of the Lord's teaching *ad rem* is not exclusively dependent upon the use which He makes of the adjective "aionian." Hell is described as the "unquenchable fire," "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" and this plainly implies endless duration not only of the fire and worm, whatever they may symbolize, but of the punishment to be endured therein. Again, when our Lord says of a certain climax of wickedness, "It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in that which is to come," the inevitable inference

¹ A good account of the several interpretations of Maurice, Kingsley, Pusey, Farrar and Plumptre, with critical examination of classical, Septuagint and New Testament uses, is given by H. D. A. Major, in *Jour. of Theol. Stud.*, Oct., 1916, pp. 7-21. But cf. E. B. Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-45; and E. H. Plumptre, *op. cit.*, Study xiv (for durational sense); and E. C. Dewick, pp. 187-189, 224-225; and V. F. Storr, *Christianity and Immortality*, pp. 159-162 (for qualitative sense).

is that it will never be forgiven, and this is explicitly declared in the parallel citation given by St. Mark, "hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin." In the Apocalypse it is said, "And the smoke of their torment goeth up forever and ever, and they have no rest day and night."¹ We have, of course, to avoid pressing apocalyptic descriptions literally; but no reasonable interpretation can eliminate the doctrine here of endless punishment.

Against this evidence of our Lord's teaching we have certain passages depended upon by restorationists, and others which are said to imply the final extinction of the wicked. No one of them rightly bears the construction thus put upon them, but they will be more conveniently considered when we treat of the theories of restorationism and conditional immortality.² The fact remains that, contrary to the natural desires of men, the doctrine of everlasting punishment has held the field in Christendom for nineteen centuries, as the inevitable inference from Christ's teaching.

§ 4. The difficulties which prevent many moderns from accepting the traditional doctrine owe their gravity primarily to the hideous descriptions of its nature which have gained currency through literal interpretations of New Testament symbolical descriptions and through the unregulated imagination of

¹ St. Mark ix. 43, 48; St. Matt. xii. 32; St. Mark iii. 29; Revel. xiv. 11 (cf. xx. 10).

² In §§ 9, 11, below.

those whose impetuous zeal for orthodoxy results in exaggeration and caricature. The conventional distinction between *pæna damni* and *pæna sensus* will be followed in considering the nature, as distinguished from the duration, of future punishment.¹ By *pæna damni*, literally the penalty of condemnation, is meant that of exclusion from the blessedness of eternal life, from the beatific vision of God and, in general, from the reward which is bestowed upon those who escape divine condemnation in the last day. The pertinent New Testament passages may be grouped under the three heads of condemnation, of forfeiture of heavenly rewards, and of banishment to Hell.

(a) The wicked are condemned. "He that disbelieveth shall be condemned." "He that obeyeth not the Son . . . the wrath of God abideth on him." "Unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation." "Vengeance belongeth unto Me: I will recompense, saith the Lord."² We should not think because God is wholly free from vindictive passion that there is nothing in His attitude towards sinners which can be called wrath, or that He will spare obstinate sinners. His wrath is indeed free from passion and consists in the necessary reaction of holiness against iniquity. His vengeance is the

¹ For this distinction, see St. Thomas, I. II. lxxxvii. 4; A. P. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 323-325. The *pæna sensus* is often applied only to bodily pain. We use the word more comprehensively as including all conscious sufferings.

² St. Mark xvi. 16; St. John iii. 36; Rom. ii. 8; xii. 19.

retribution which immutable justice requires the Judge of all the earth to render to the obstinately wicked. It is without respect of persons and contains no element of personal vindictiveness. God does not desire the death of a sinner; but if the sinner will not respond to the saving provisions of mercy, justice must assume the form of retribution. The moral order requires it.¹

(b) The rewards for the enjoyment of which God destined men in their creation are forfeited. This is necessarily so, for only the pure in heart can see God; and the "sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord" is fundamental to the protection of divine holiness. So it is that he who by self-centred ambition "shall gain the whole world," shall "forfeit his life." Although our Lord here speaks of *ψυχὴν*, the present physical life, the unexpressed reference is to the loss of the *ζωήν*, the life with God for which this life is preparatory. "He that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life" (*ζωήν*). It is for this *ζωή*, eternal life with God, that men were made; and Christ came into the world that they might have it.² To forfeit it is to lose all that beatitude comprehends.

(c) Banishment from the Kingdom, casting forth from Christ's visible presence into Hell, is the in-

¹ *Being and Attrib. of God*, pp. 297-299; *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 69-80. Cf. pp. 212-213, below, and refs. there.

² St. Matt. v. 8; Heb. xii. 14; St. Matt. xvi. 26; St. John iii. 26; x. 10.

evitable sequel. Christ warns us that He will say, "Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." The wicked among "the sons of the Kingdom shall be cast forth into outer darkness." At the end of the world, "the Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire." The bad fish shall be cast away. Those who refuse to put on the garment of righteousness provided by the King for the wedding feast of His Son will be cast out into outer darkness. And this casting out is not arbitrary, for he who falls away from his appointed place or vocation must necessarily "go to his own place," the place of his deliberate choice.¹

§ 5. The *pœna sensus* is the penalty of conscious suffering which is involved in, and attends, exclusion from Heaven and consignment to Hell.² The most determinative revelation of this comes from Christ Himself, who perhaps willed to spare His Apostles the odium of promulgating such an unwelcome doctrine. The result is that the sternest teaching comes from the tenderest, from Him who died to save men from the woes against which He warned them.

But we should carefully keep in mind three limitations under which His teaching was given. In the

¹ St. Matt. vii. 23; viii. 12; xiii. 41-42, 48-50; xxii. 12-13; Acts i. 25.

² On Hell sufferings, see E. B. Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-21, 23; C. S. Gayford, pp. 94-95.

first place, in order to be intelligible He had to describe the sufferings of Hell in analogical terms, in figures borrowed from our experience in this world. From the nature of the case, no direct and literal description of these sufferings appears to be possible, for they belong to another world-order, in which all things will be made new — unimaginably changed. In the second place, Christ described Hell and its miseries from the standpoint of intrinsic spiritual values, from that which He wills us to assume, His own standpoint. Regarded from this point of view, His figures are plainly free from exaggeration. In fact the intrinsic horror of Hell cannot be exaggerated by any available descriptions, although the nature of its miseries may easily be misrepresented when we venture to elaborate Christ's symbolic descriptions. The point is that the extrinsic aspect of future punishment to those who will have to endure it, or the several degrees of subjective misery which they will consciously suffer, may be more endurable than a Christianized imagination pictures. The wicked will be to a degree callous and blind to those aspects of their state which are most terrifying to sanctified minds. Perhaps it is in this direction that the mercy of God, which is a necessary aspect of every divine work and judgment, will be actualized even in Hell.¹

¹ We need not, in admitting this, commit ourselves to the caricature of "Happiness in Hell," suggested and defended by the late St. George Mivart in a controversy which ran through several numbers of the *Nineteenth Century* in 1892 and 1893. Cf. *Church Qly. Rev.*, Apr., 1894, art. ix.

Finally, if Hell suffering is everlasting, it must also be everlastingly endurable. Those who in their zeal for orthodoxy picture the wicked as suffering the intensest degree of conscious agony, through endless ages and without either a moment's interruption or any final mitigation, endanger belief in our Lord's teaching by making it inconsistent with apparent possibilities. Unendurable agony is unendurable, impossible *in se*; and to ascribe the prediction of it to Christ is to forget His discriminating truthfulness.

The leading figures by which the sufferings in Hell are symbolized by Christ are those of everlasting or unquenchable fire and the worm that dieth not.¹ It is, of course, permissible to interpret these figures literally, but such interpretation appears neither reasonable nor easy to reconcile with the credibility of the description. But even when taken figuratively they indicate the intrinsic horror of Hell punishment in Christ's own unerring estimate, and imply conscious misery for the wicked. This misery is indicated clearly by our Lord. "There shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth." The wicked man is to be "delivered . . . to the tormentors." Of Judas it is said, "Good were it for that man if he had not been born."² The fact that the wicked are to be punished itself plainly implies conscious suffering of some kind. And it is not safe to exclude bodily suffering.

¹ St. Matt. xxv. 41; St. Mark ix. 43, 48; etc.

² St. Matt. viii. 12 (with xiii. 42, 50; xxii. 13); xviii. 34; xviii. 24 (cf. St. Mark xiv. 21).

The figures point that way; and, if our Lord had mental suffering alone in view, He could easily have indicated this. Bodily suffering seems to be directly suggested when He says, "It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into Hell."¹

We have need, in view of the considerations given early in this section, to be very cautious in reducing the teaching of Christ here summarized to formal categories. Devotional and poetical literature enjoys a licence in which technical theology cannot safely indulge, and Christian belief in the doctrine of future punishment has been made unnecessarily difficult by the assurance with which many writers have particularized the miseries of Hell. It would seem, however, that the wicked will inevitably suffer consciously in the following ways at least.

(a) In spite of their spiritual callousness, they will suffer to some degree from the *pœna damni*, the loss of their intended destiny.

(b) Their consciences will be sufficiently active to accuse them in the day when God judges them, and thereafter. That is, they will suffer remorse, the more so that saving repentance will be no longer possible.²

(c) They will undoubtedly suffer from memory and loss of the earthly goods and bodily pleasures of this life, and from consciousness that in these things

¹ St. Matt. v. 29-30 (cf. St. Mark ix. 43-47).

² Because they will have become incurably hardened against the appeal of divine love.

they have already had the reward they sought,¹ never to be recovered.

(d) They will be shut up to evil associates, from whose selfishness they can gain only abiding disillusionment and nostalgia.

(e) As to whether the lost will receive bodily tortures from external sources, and as to how far devils will be able to afflict them, we have no means of determining and assertions are rash. We may, however, safely and utterly reject the unwarranted notion that God Himself will inflict tortures upon them.²

§ 6. Our treatment will be seriously misleading if we fail to notice the indications given by our Lord that the lost will not all suffer to the same degree, but in just proportion to their deservings. "The uttermost farthing" will certainly have to be paid by each. The rendering to every man will be "according to his works," in perfect justice. In particular, our Lord distinguishes between the "many stripes" inflicted upon the more consciously wilful and the "few stripes" visited upon those who sin less malignantly.³ We may rest entirely assured of the falsity of the notion that Christian doctrine requires us to think of those who have barely missed the heavenly reward as tortured with every imaginable degree of misery

¹ St. Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16 (R.V.).

² Their Hell will be largely a "Frankenstein" of their own creation, which they cannot destroy.

³ St. Matt. v. 26; xviii. 34; Rom. ii. 6; St. Luke xii. 47-48. See S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 532-533; Jas. Fyfe, *The Hereafter*, Pt. II. ch. ii; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Hell," VIII. (I); Jos. Pohle, pp. 72-74.

in their fallen estate. God's mercy will undoubtedly protect them from the deeper forms of malignity of the devil and his fell associates. Hell surely contains many habitations, and affords a great variety of conditions.

The words of Christ under consideration raise the question as to whether any mitigation of suffering is possible to the lost. Their forfeiture of heavenly beatitude is of course permanent, and this alone makes their punishment endless. The question is, Does their punishment become less painful, subjectively considered, and more easily endured as time rolls on? Christ has not afforded information on this point, and the suggestion which we have just mentioned may have been wholly absent from His thought. The question is purely speculative. Yet the opinion that the sufferings of the lost are mitigated, perhaps greatly so, is not precluded by our Lord's teaching; and it does not at all modify the divinely revealed doctrine that their punishment contains terrifying elements and can never end either in restoration to eternal life with God or in extinction. It is a permissible opinion,¹ and has apologetical value in showing that some of the difficulties in connection

¹ St. John Chrysostom is said to have held it. St. Augustine says in *De Civ. Dei*, xxi. 24, *fin.*, "I am not to be supposed to affirm because I do not positively oppose it." In *Enchirid.*, 110, 112, 113, he leaves the question open. Modern Latins very generally reject it, while acknowledging that it is not heretical: e.g. Petavius, *De Angelis*, III. viii. 18; Jos. Pohle, pp. 68-69. Cf. D. Stone, *Outlines of Christ. Dogma*, pp. 270-271.

with the endlessness of future punishment may be based upon misapprehension. We are not compelled by the catholic doctrine to believe that the lost suffer endless agony of the most acute degree. We are indeed constrained by Christ's utterances, and by reflection on the natural consequences of final exclusion from Heaven, to perceive that the immediate sequel of their banishment to Hell will be unutterable misery.

But whether we consider what we know of human nature or what is revealed of God's mercy, we seem to find reasons for accepting the credibility of some theory of mitigation. All our experience teaches us that human nature is able to accommodate itself to painful and loathsome conditions, and as a rule does so with the lapse of time. If at all endurable, and unendurable pain is precluded in a future punishment that is to be everlasting, then the acutest misery may be expected gradually to be felt less excruciatingly. If a man of high culture is condemned to the galleys, or through misuse of opportunities is driven to occupations and surroundings which are both loathsome and irremediable, and lives long enough, he ultimately finds his fate more easily endurable than at first. He may even discover partially compensatory elements in his condition, from which he can derive a certain degree of comfort, however imperfect.¹

¹ It is not true, however, as some urge, that any permanent mitigation must accumulate to the point of entire cessation of punishment.

Then too, there is the mercy of God. As we have seen, divine mercy cannot reduce divine justice; and justice will never permit the bestowal of heavenly blessings on the obstinately wicked, who alone are finally consigned to Hell. But God's mercy is over all his works, and He will surely find ways of tempering the irreversible consequences of justice without thereby shortening the full satisfaction of its requirements. We are certainly free to think, therefore, that whatever good can still be given to the lost, without releasing them either from what is called the *pœna damni* of exclusion, or from the degree of suffering which justice demands, will be bestowed. This may involve gradual mitigation of their miseries, even compensatory comfort in some degree. No doubt they still will have work to do in God's universe, and in this work they may find a measure of relief. In any case, the wicked cannot survive in entire inaction; and even the worst inhabitants of Hell, whether willingly or unwillingly, will have their occupations overruled to good ends by the Lord of all. In this way righteousness overcomes evil in the world to come.

II. *Difficulties and Considerations*

§ 7. We have acknowledged, as truthfulness requires us, that the doctrine of everlasting punishment is attended by difficulties, some of which with our present partial knowledge cannot wholly be removed.

But some are due to mistaken accretions which have unwarrantably intensified the natural reluctance of men to receive what is in any case an unpleasant doctrine. We have now to reckon with objections. These are offered in many forms, too many for a separate treatment of each. But we believe that all which are of sufficient weight to require consideration, and have not already been met by clear implication in our elimination of unchristian caricatures, are reducible to the categories under which we are now to deal with them. We have no space for elaborate discussions, and can only indicate broadly the lines of thought by which they are to be met.

(a) It is objected that the word translated "punishment" in our Lord's description of the fate of the wicked (*κόλασιν αἰώνιον*) signifies a disciplinary and curative penalty rather than pure retribution. And on general grounds it is urged that there can be no place for pure retribution in the perfect justice of God, who inflicts suffering on His creatures wholly for their benefit. He is never vindictive.

In reply it has to be pointed out that the word *κόλασιν* is in fact used by Greek writers in contexts requiring its interpretation in a retributive sense; and if our Lord had referred to a purely curative penalty He could not consistently have taught, as He did in several ways, that it was final and endless. Curative punishment is necessarily temporary. As to the more general form of the objection, it is quite untrue that justice can be fulfilled without retribu-

tion as distinguished from corrective penalties. We have to acknowledge that so long as hope of correction remains, just punishment will have such correction in view as well as retribution; but permanent wickedness justly requires that the penalty shall be permanent and in final issue purely retributive.¹ We can see that this is so when we consider how monstrously unjust the situation would be if the incurably wicked were ultimately permitted to enjoy the happiness pertaining to the righteous. And to reduce the penalty to mere prevention or protection of the righteous is to import a meaning into the word justice which is patently absurd. Justice has to do with deservings, and suffering imposed because of ill-deserving is retribution. The notion that to inflict such justice is vindictive is to pervert the meaning of justice, and gains its plausibility only by our forgetting that God's justice is pure — not mixed with the imperfect passions that are apt to attend the human administration of punishment.

(b) It is urged that there is a wide disparity between the sins of a brief earthly life and the everlastingness of the punishment said to be inflicted on their account.

This objection errs in assuming that a purely quantitative equation between sins and their consequences determines whether these consequences are justifiable.

¹ Cf. R. C. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, ch. i; R. W. Dale, *The Atonement*, pp. 373-383; Jas. Fyfe, *op. cit.*, pp. 282-292; W. N. Clarke, *Outl. of Christian Theol.* (8th ed.), pp. 248-255.

If such a conclusion were valid the laws which control the observed consequences of our actions in this world could not be regarded as righteous. Many a slight deviation from right has brought life-long shipwreck to the fortunes of its perpetrator; and the permanent loss of opportunities for advancement is often recognized to be the just consequence of temporary failure worthily to fulfil some appointed duty. But the objection is based on a false premise — that the sins of this life, considered by themselves, account for the endlessness of future punishment. It is not so much “on account of” as “according to” their earthly deeds that the wicked are to be judged. And it is “on account of” their abiding wickedness, revealed in sins obstinately cherished and unrepented of, that they are abidingly punished.¹ Their characters have hardened on lines of unfitness for eternal life; and, because they are incurably unfit, the consequence of their unfitness is permanent. Our earthly deeds are regarded by the Judge in their character-forming and character-revealing aspects. Character is determinative because the Kingdom of God is constituted by personal relations, and in their proper maintenance personal characters are paramount.²

(c) How, it is said, can the blessed have the un-

¹ S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 528-529; David Macewan, in *Future Probation*, pp. 71-74; W. P. DuBose, *Gospel according to St. Paul*, pp. 50 *et seq.*; Jas. Fyfe, *op. cit.*, Pt. II. ch. vii. 5.

² Cf. ch. vi. § 7, above.

interrupted joy in Heaven which is pledged to them, when they contemplate the terrible miseries of the lost, especially if among the damned are some to whom they were bound on earth by close ties of relationship and affection? Will not the permanent loss of their dear ones be a source of grief to them?

In meeting this difficulty we eliminate from consideration the hideous notion that the saints in Heaven exult over the tortures of the damned. They no doubt rejoice over the triumph of God's kingdom and the utter exclusion of evil influences from its heavenly precincts; but that they contemplate the sufferings of their fellow creatures with exultation is not sound Christian doctrine. General experience teaches us that the more intense forms of joy are very absorbing and banish from men's minds every feeling inconsistent therewith. Moreover, the deeper degrees of mutual affection on earth, referred to in the objection under consideration, are conditioned by a sense of mutual congeniality, sometimes illusory. They cannot permanently survive the discovery of irreparable lines of radical uncongeniality. This is especially the case when saint and hardened sinner are mutually concerned. No doubt the saint will long after the sinner while hope remains, throughout this earthly life; but when hope of recovery is seen to be unjustifiable, the special personal affection in question must die away into a form of regret that will easily be overbalanced by the joys of heavenly fellowship. Only such ties as are congruous with the

heavenly life can retain influence over the spirits of the saints in glory. To one for whom God is literally all in all nothing reduces the joyousness of life in Him. That the saints in glory will witness the miseries of the damned is very doubtful.

(d) It is urged that "everlasting" is a temporal word, implying a succession of moments such as pertain to what is called "clock-time." But, the objection proceeds, such time will cease with the end of this temporal order, and we must find some other meaning for "aionian punishment," as our Lord describes it, than endlessly time-lasting. "Eternal" is a preferable rendering, and it should be regarded as a qualitative and intensive description rather than one of endless duration.

In reply, we admit that clock-time may give way in the last day to a mode of pure *durée*, to quote a description used by Henri Bergson,¹ in which the flowing current of an indivisible duration will be in evidence rather than such a series of successive moments as we now seem to perceive. But the aspect of temporal duration in some form appears to be absolutely inseparable from created life, being involved in its finitude. The word "eternal" is sometimes applied to a finite duration which has no end. In this sense it may be used to describe future punishment. It is applied to the life in glory not only in

¹ *Time and Free Will*, ch. ii. Cf. *Being and Attrib. of God*, pp. 353-356; Baron F. von Hugel, *Eternal Life*, pp. 288-302, 383 *et seq.* and in this volume, ch. viii. § 2, below.

this sense, but also as indicating that that life is essentially a relation to God, who is eternal in the strict sense — wholly timeless, although the determinative centre of the entire circumference of time. In this strict sense no finite creature's future can truly be called "eternal." The future aionian duration lies beyond our present ken, and we cannot describe it; but that it comes to an end is an incredible supposition, and the endlessness of future punishment is the point at issue. Our Lord's use of *αἰώνιος* has been treated of elsewhere.¹

(e) It is objected that the supposition of everlasting punishment, with its implied postulate of everlasting wickedness, involves that the almighty and righteous God will never wholly banish evil from His universe. This means, if He is righteous, that the resources of His power and love are finite, and raises the question of His righteousness itself in creating men with foreknowledge that they would become everlastingly evil.

We pretend neither to solve intellectually the problem of evil involved in the permanent continuance of the wicked, nor to deny that the difficulty arising from its consideration is grave — the gravest of all difficulties connected with the doctrine of everlasting punishment. The reason why its gravity does not justify our rejection of the doctrine in question is twofold: the clearness of the evidence that it is divinely revealed; and the fact that the

¹ On pp. 199-200, above.

difficulty under consideration is not removed by denial of everlasting punishment. It inheres in theistic belief and in the whole scheme of divine creation and providence as we imperfectly understand it. In other words, if the difficulty referred to nullifies the doctrine of everlasting punishment, it also nullifies the whole Christian position — a result which we have abundant reason for thinking to be subversive of fundamental truth. Inasmuch as the problem of evil at large is intellectually insoluble by us, we feel no added difficulty because it comes to the surface in connection with this particular part of divinely revealed doctrine. And we are not reduced to sheer stultification of thought. There are reassuring considerations. It is not the duration of evil that creates the problem but its present existence. That it does exist is an acknowledged fact — one which God can fully explain, even though we cannot. But we may feel assured that, if we could now assimilate His explanation of it, we could more fully handle the problem of its continuance through all time. We can see this at least, that long continuing evil is no more truly opposed to the righteous sovereignty of the Eternal than is momentary evil. We can also see that evil exists only to be defeated, and that Hell is the sphere and climax of its final defeat. In that defeat God overrules evil to the fulfilment of His own just and righteous ends. The wicked in fact have to serve Him entirely under all circumstances; and this appears to be the greatest of possible

victories. It appears to be this in view of the fact that the integrity of man's moral freedom cannot be violated even by the Almighty without reversal of the moral order — an unthinkable result.¹

§ 8. The sum of the matter is that, in spite of the difficulties which surround this, as well as any imaginable, description of the final outcome of the mystery of sin, the doctrine of everlasting punishment appears to be rationally the most credible of available descriptions. It also has the supreme evidence for its truth of divine revelation. But, as has been shown, this doctrine cannot be considered fairly, or with adequate realization of the data of experience which make it credible, except by those who clearly apprehend the subversive horror of sin and the resulting moral necessity of its retributive consequences. Inasmuch as all men have sinned, and have thereby become prejudiced by desire to escape these consequences, only those who repent can justly estimate the doctrine of everlasting punishment. They alone have an adequate sense of sin, and they alone seriously and with rightly cherished hope of escape face the consequences of their sins.

The point is often urged that, apart from the question of its truth, the proclamation of the doctrine of final retribution is not practically helpful. The wicked are apt to be hardened rather than brought to repentance thereby, because it exhibits God in terms apparently vindictive instead of loving. Only

¹ Cf. *Creation and Man*, ch. iv, on the problem of evil.

manifest love, many urge, can soften wicked hearts and bring them to repentance. This seems plausible to many, but the fact that God-incarnate has proclaimed the doctrine in very emphatic terms ought to make us suspicious of such an argument. God never reveals truth uselessly, but is always moved by love and by inerrant perception of what men need to know. No doubt hardened sinners are still more hardened by threats of punishment, but they are also impervious to divine love's appeal, made from the Cross, and have no just standing ground for complaint against any method of divine dealing with mankind.

The warning of retribution to come is addressed to men in general; and it is practically justified by its effect upon those who are not completely hardened, upon those who are still susceptible to saving mercy. The Church's experience in teaching the doctrine of future punishment has abundantly established the fact that such teaching does draw many sinners to the beginnings of repentance, and does fortify the endeavours of penitents in their struggles to overcome temptation. The truth is of course clear that servile fear, fear of painful consequences to oneself, is not an adequate motive for successful attainment of eternal life. Love is indispensable. But even servile fear has a needed part to play in turning men to God. A sinner, just because sin has gained entrance and is antagonistic to love, is chiefly open to appeals addressed to his self-interest; and when consequences

of sin that are painful to himself are clearly brought before him, he is often impelled — is certain to be, if still open to conviction — to remorse and revulsion from his sins. This remorse is not true repentance, of course, and cannot of itself avail either for final victory over sin or for reconciliation with God. But it may, and in countless instances does, make him listen receptively to love's appeal, the appeal with which God and His Church supplement the warning of future retribution. In brief, servile fear is a needed preparation of mind for the inception of love. It is the beginning of wisdom. It is not the perfecting of it, but is that without which the perfecting may fail to be gotten under way.¹

Penitents know that this is so, and that the motive of love on which they primarily depend for final victory requires in its imperfect stages to be fortified by the inferior motive of fear of sin's consequences. Therefore, instead of finding divine threats vindictive and useless, they discern in them proofs of God's love, and are filled with gratitude. The psychology to which we must look, if we are to understand the value of the doctrine under consideration, is not that of the resentful, who are apt to be impervious to every form of appeal which involves their will-surrender to God, but that of penitents and saints. Their motives are the ones which in fact have led men to God, and fear is one of them — at first servile, but becoming holy anxiety to please Him whom they

¹ H. N. Oxenham, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-188.

have learned to love.¹ If there were no clear knowledge of sin's consequences given to men, the ranks of the utterly blind and careless would assuredly include the bulk of mankind.

III. *Errors*

§ 9. Restorationism or universalism repudiates the endlessness of future punishment of any single human being.² St. Gregory Nyssen logically pressed its argument to the point of maintaining that even devils will finally be saved. Beside this writer the chief Universalists of ancient days were Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia.³ Modern universalism has grown largely out of recoil against certain caricatures of the catholic doctrine referred to in the end of the previous chapter, especially the notions that the bulk of our race is to be lost, that God has eternally foreordained this, and that all the lost will be forever tortured by God with the acutest agony. An elimination of these accretions reveals the argument for universalism in

¹ Cf. *The Sacraments*, pp. 55-56.

² On restorationism, see H. R. Mackintosh, Pt. II. ch. vii; Jas. Fyfe, *op. cit.*, Pt. II. ch. v; E. Griffith-Jones, Pt. III. ch. iii; S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 424-435 and Bk. VI. ch. iii; H. N. Oxenham, *Cath. Eschatology*; Hastings, *Dic. of Bible and Dic. of Christ*, s.v. "Restoration"; *Dic. of Apos. Church*, s.v. "Restitution"; Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, s.v. "Universalism"; *Schaff-Herzog Encyc. and Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Apocatastasis." IN ITS FAVOUR: A. Jukes, *Second Death and Restitution of All Things*; F. N. Oxenham, *What is the Truth as to Everlasting Punishment?* T. R. Birks, *Victory of Divine Goodness.*

³ S. Gregory Nyssen, *Orat. Catech.*, ch. xxvi; Origen, *De Princip.*, I. vi. 1-3, etc. Cf. *Cath. Encyc.*, as cited.

its true proportions, as chiefly *a priori*, as having formidable difficulties of its own, and as fatally weak in its biblical branch.

Positively considered the palmary arguments for the final restoration of all are two: the unconquerable love and power of God; and the alleged necessity, if the problem of evil is ever to be solved, that every trace of sin should be removed from God's universe. Divine love, however, is neither an irresistible force which can invariably break down opposing wills, nor an unlimited sentiment which must permanently have all rational creatures for its objects or beneficiaries.¹ Love is determinate and exacting in its nature. It presupposes mutual congeniality, either actual or potential; and when the possibility of such congeniality is extinguished by the final crystallization of creaturely wickedness, it forever ceases to be applicable.² The love of God for sinners is conditioned by their continued salvability from sin by divine grace, the efficaciousness of which depends upon a free response which the creature is capable of withholding to the end. The theory of irresistible grace has been shown in previous volumes to be utterly inconsistent with creaturely freedom and responsibility,³ and upon no other basis can the inevitable final triumph of love over obdurate hearts be maintained.

¹ H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-219, shows that when love is treated as a compelling thing or force a sub-moral line is taken.

² Cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 52-54, 69-80.

³ E.g. *The Church*, pp. 255-256, and refs. there.

Infinite power likewise is determinate; and, as power, it is applicable only to the possible.¹ If the Kingdom of God is to be filled up with perfected persons, as indeed it must be, this has to be at the cost of creating wills which can neither be forced nor be disregarded in final issues. The reality of creaturely susceptibility to saving grace carries with it the reality of creaturely power to resist this grace to the end. Moral development is essentially contingent, and cannot be made otherwise without nullification of its being moral.²

The contention that the problem of evil can be solved only by the utter exclusion of evil from every heart, from all the universe, is not so convincing when examined as it appears on the surface. We shall perhaps find that such a manner of subjection of evil as will overrule it in spite of itself, and compel it in every sphere and ramification to work out righteous ends of divine appointment, affords a higher solution than is hypothecated in the universalist argument. In any case, a solution which disregards human freedom, and the limits which its creation by God places upon the application of His power, cannot rightly be regarded as credible.

In their candid moments, Universalists sometimes acknowledge that the natural impression given

¹ *Being and Attrib. of God*, pp. 277-279.

² In his reaction from Calvinism, the Universalist does not in real effect banish absolute predestinarianism. He merely makes it work in one direction only.

by our Lord's teaching is against their theory. The fatal weakness of their biblical argument lies in grasping at disputable inferences from certain New Testament passages, all of which are readily susceptible of interpretation in harmony with the natural meaning of our Lord's main teaching *ad rem*. Those texts which declare the will and action of God to save all men ¹ do not imply an unconditional purpose and result. And even the most categorical pledges of God ² invariably presuppose men's free fulfilment of the conditions of salvation, conditions clearly set forth in divine revelation at large. Finally, the passages which look to the subjection of all to Christ ³ must be understood to permit the manner of that triumph to be consistent with our Lord's express teaching concerning everlasting punishment. Universal confession of His Lordship is not necessarily one that is spontaneous for every creature; and the reconciliation of all things is not necessarily the conversion and beatification of all. These passages have been so frequently and fully harmonized with the catholic doctrine of future punishment that we need say no more. That doctrine simply repeats explicit, iterated and unambiguous teaching of Christ; whereas universalism relies upon passages susceptible of other than restorationist interpretations.

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 4 (cf. iv. 10); Rom. v. 18-19; xi. 32; Tit. ii. 11.

² E.g. St. John xii. 32; Rom. v. 19; xi. 26, 32; 1 Cor. xv. 22. The last text does not mean that all shall be made alive, but that all who are shall be made so in Christ.

³ E.g. 1 Cor. xv. 28; Ephes. i. 10.

§ 10. Among those who perceive the difficulties of the universalist contention certain generous writers are led by their recoil from the doctrine of everlasting punishment as popularly understood to undertake the impossible task of vindicating a "wider hope" than Christ's teaching appears to permit. The late Archdeacon Farrar¹ found himself forced to admit that the finally irreconcilable must be permanently excluded from blessedness² — no others are excluded according to catholic doctrine — but cherished the hope that none would persist in such obduracy. He failed to realize the inevitable hardening of wills that have become habitually malignant. Dr. Plumptre seized upon the possibilities of future probation, which he alleged to be required by divine fairness and love; and was unwilling to contemplate an absolute closing of the door of hope for souls here hatefully wilful.³ James L. Clarke endeavoured to show by analogy that the eternal Priest must also be the eternal Judge, from which he inferred that our Lord's function of judging never completes its term.⁴ Upon this argument he based the *non-sequitur* that Christ's ever-continuing judgment will ultimately reconcile all, although without the full restoration of all. His conclusion reminds us of the tenable supposition of mitigation, above discussed, but differs from it in supposing a change of heart in the most

¹ In *Eternal Hope and Mercy and Judgment*.

² *Mercy and Judgment*, p. 482.

³ In *Spirits in Prison*.

⁴ In *Eternal Saviour Judge*.

obstinately wicked that is contrary to what we know of moral possibilities.

All that needs to be said of Archdeacon Farrar's argument is that it is indeterminate in conclusion and betrays conflict between his heart and his intellect. The fallacies which attend the efforts of Dr. Plumptre and others to extend the duration of probation, as distinguished from enlightenment, into the other world have been pointed out in a previous chapter.¹ The theory of an endless judging by Christ, purely *a priori* in its real basis, has no confirmation in Scripture, and is contrary to the teaching there given concerning the finality of the judgment to be rendered at the end of this world.

Generous souls can hardly fail to sympathize with those who make these efforts to soften the doctrine of future punishment; but in the face of Christ's teaching their attempts involve the risk of trying to be more loving and merciful than God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ. In actual result they blur His teaching without improving upon His mercy. Heart and intellect have to coöperate harmoniously in successful truth-seeking. Heartless intelligence and a heart that rebels against intellectual considerations alike lead to one-sidedness and caricature. The mercy of God, like His power, is a determinate reality, always perfectly accordant with His justice and with moral requirements. A boundless mercy is a monstrosity, and on searching scrutiny

¹ In ch. ii. §§ 5 *et seq.*

proves to be an absurdity, utterly impossible. None the less, we must believe that the fulness of true mercy, as such, is present in every divine dispensation of things. The doctrine of everlasting punishment, as we have tried to show, is perfectly consistent with the belief that God gives even to the lost the most endurable conditions which their unalterable moral state leaves possible. Revealed truth does not permit us to expect more than this, nor does essential right.

§ 11. The theory of conditional immortality,¹ set forth by Arnobius,² but not with important support until modern days, is that men are not immortal except by grace in Christ, grace withheld from impenitent sinners, who will sometime cease to exist. In its evolutionary form, immortality is said to be a result of survival of the fit, the unfit becoming extinct through inability to adjust themselves to the environment of the future life. This theory is advanced as a way of escape from the difficulties thought to inhere in the catholic doctrine, contemplated usually in its Calvinistic caricature.

Originally its supporters made much use of the

¹ On conditional immortality, see S. D. F. Salmond, Bk. VI. ch. ii; Jas. Fyfe, Pt. II. ch. iv; H. R. Mackintosh, Pt. II. ch. viii; E. Griffith-Jones, Pt. III. ch. iv; V. F. Storr, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-159; A. H. Strong, *Syst. Theol.*, pp. 1035-1039; *Ch. Qly. Rev.*, July, 1877, art. I; *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, s.v. "Annihilationism"; Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Annihilation"; the biblical dictionaries, s.v. "Life and Death." DEFENDED by Edw. White, *Life in Christ*; G. G. Stokes, *Conditional Immortality*; S. D. McConnell, *Evolution of Immortality*; and R. G. Macintyre, *The Other Side of Death*, chh. xi-xiii.

² *Disput. c. Gentes*, ii. 15-54.

New Testament passages which declare the final death and destruction of the wicked. In interpreting these passages, they have more or less confused the biblical conceptions of life and death with those of existence and its cessation, and have interpreted them as asserting the literal extinction of the wicked, their annihilation. In fact, however, none of the Greek words for destruction in these passages have such meaning. These words are *ἀπόλλυμι*, to slay or ruin;¹ *ἀπώλεια*, loss or waste;² *καταργέω*, to make useless;³ *φθείρω*, to ruin;⁴ and *ἄλθερος*, undoing.⁵ Death is opposed nowhere to existence, but always to life; and the life which the wicked are to lose is the knowledge and enjoyment of God. In the New Testament the horror of the second death, the final death of the wicked, is their final loss of blessedness with God, their permanent ruin. The idea of literal extinction nowhere emerges.

The conclusiveness of the rebuttal of their biblical argument has led the supporters of the theory in question to rely more and more exclusively upon *a priori* considerations. These also break down under scrutiny.

(a) The denial that man is naturally immortal is true in the sense that he is at every moment depend-

¹ E.g. St. Matt. x. 28 (cf. St. Mark iii. 6).

² Rom. ix. 22; Phil. iii. 19; etc.

³ 2 Thess. ii. 8.

⁴ 1 Cor. iii. 17.

⁵ 2 Thess. i. 9. On these words, see H. A. A. Kennedy, ch. iii; Jas. Fyfe, pp. 236-257; J. A. Beet, pp. 122-132; S. D. F. Salmond, pp. 489-495.

ent upon his Creator for continuance in being. God alone is immortal in the absolute or unconditioned sense.¹ But the belief that God made man for everlasting continuance is shown to be at least credible and probable by the so-called natural "intimations of immortality," upon which the traditional arguments therefor are based; it is everywhere taken for granted in the New Testament; and it is necessarily involved in the truth of what has been shown to be our Lord's teaching concerning future punishment. This last is decisive.

(b) The immortality which is a superadded gift, or the eternal life which the righteous are to enjoy in Christ, is not to be confused with continuance in being, but presupposes this. It is blessedness through the enjoyment of God. The loss of eternal life is not equivalent, therefore, to the loss of existence.

(c) Appeals to biological science are demonstrative only within the physical order of phenomena which such science is able to scrutinize and describe. Its evolutionary analogies prove absolutely nothing either for the new order which the last day ushers in or for the future of human spirits.² Moreover, no biologist regards the perishing of what is unfit to survive as equivalent to annihilation of its constituent substance; but this has to be hypothecated in the theory

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 16.

² They can be used, of course, to confirm the credibility of what is otherwise established; and we have thus used them in connection with the revealed truth that our existing bodies will rise again, in ch. v. § 9, above.

of conditional immortality. Organisms cease, but their particles remain. The human spirit, however, can only cease by real annihilation, a notion very difficult for thoughtful minds to entertain. Our spirits can indeed be dishonoured and reduced to abiding failure; and that is the fate of the wicked according to Christ's teaching.

(*d*) Although thought to remove certain difficulties alleged against the doctrine of everlasting punishment — we have reckoned with them in previous sections — this theory raises very formidable difficulties of its own. In particular, it implies that the lost have been created in vain, for their extinction can have no other meaning. The continuance of the wicked in service under God, which the catholic doctrine permits us to look for, is made impossible; and God would appear to be under the necessity of reversing His creative action so far as the wicked are concerned. An overruling of the wicked for righteous ends is plainly a higher triumph over evil than their annihilation.

§ 12. We are justified in concluding that the alternatives to the doctrine of everlasting punishment which have been maintained upon seemingly Christian grounds — those of restorationism, endless opportunity and conditional immortality — are each of them not only without biblical support, but intrinsically less credible than that doctrine. Unhappily a distinctly antichristian group of movements, mutually related by a common pantheistic basis and by

the use of Christian terms in misleading senses and contexts, is drawing many Christian folk to a standpoint which destroys belief not only in everlasting punishment but also in the Christian doctrine of sin, which justifies its imposition. We refer to Theosophy, Christian Science¹ and related cults, crudely reflecting in part East Indian speculations.

There is no place in a dogmatic treatise of this kind for an analytical consideration of these cults. Our purpose in referring to them is merely to draw attention to their non-Christian nature, and to the fact that their pantheistic conception of reality fully explains whatever degree of plausibility attaches to their elimination — it is elimination rather than rebuttal — of the Christian doctrines of sin and future punishment. If the pantheistic standpoint is true, there is obviously no intelligible basis left for these doctrines. But the still more radical inference has to be made that the Christian system as a whole, with its doctrines of a personal God, of the Incarnation and so on, is false. The claim of Theosophists, for example, that they do not reject Christianity but put it in the setting of more comprehensive truth, is simply to be rejected. It is based upon utter disregard of the primary characteristics of the Christian system. Our conclusion is that to reject the

¹ On Theosophy, see J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, pp. 208-291, 447-459. On Christian Science, *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, s.v. "Science, Christian" (the expository parts edited and approved by Mrs. Eddy, the founder); G. Milmine, *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy*.

doctrine of everlasting punishment on grounds derived from these cults is to reject Christianity *en bloc*. With those who do this there is no proper room for argument in a treatise based, as this treatise is, upon the assumption that Christianity is true.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GLORIOUS CONSUMMATION

I. *Its General Nature*

§ 1. All events whatever, whether those with which the physical sciences are concerned, or those which represent free personal action, human and divine, pertain to a drama, of which the plot, the overruling control and the final action are divine. But, when the stage—this natural order—has been sufficiently prepared and furnished, the successive scenes are enacted by free creaturely agents. These are given a certain discretion in playing their several parts, but in the consummation are subject to divine judgment according to the several degrees of their conformity or non-conformity to the specific requirements of the plot which each is set to fulfil. This combination of free and responsible action by each “character” with a divine overruling and consummation which is both judicial and finally satisfying is integral to the drama; and explains its marvelous complexity, and the frequent emergence during its course of problems defying our solution, of mysteries not yet fully revealed. These are to be laid bare in the final scene and consummated Kingdom of God,

in which the meanings of life, personal and social, of love and of righteousness will be unveiled by being openly, effectively and abidingly centralized in the triune God.¹

In the meantime the drama unfolds its plot, and advances towards the consummation, not only by what the creaturely players perform, but by special actions of the divine Stage-manager. The scenery is shifted from time to time for the introduction of new scenes or dispensations, and there is a prophetic chorus which by divine inspiration interprets the several scenes as they appear. In plain parlance, nature and natural law make up the stage, and the supernatural interventions of God are the shiftings of scenery, apart from which the drama would endlessly return on itself and advance nowhither. The most determinative of these changes of scenery, the one which has most fully disclosed the plot, is the series of events introduced by the Incarnation, by the coming on the stage of God Himself. What He then did and said determines the future course of the whole play, and unveils the plot so far as it can be unveiled before the end.²

¹ On the consummation and new order, see J. A. Beet, ch. xix; H. A. A. Kennedy, pp. 319-322, 333-337; P. G. Medd, *One Mediator*, §§ 194-195; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. xci vel xciii; Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, s.v. "New Creation"; Hastings, *Encyc. of Relig.*, s.v. "Eschatology," 16; and *Dic. of Bible*, s.v. "Salvation," iv. 3 (c); the commentaries on Revel. xxi. 1-5; Sanday and Headlam, on Rom. viii. 19-23 and pp. 210-212.

² Cf. *Introduction*, pp. 43-50.

The final scene, ending in the endless, is to be introduced by the second advent of Christ. In that advent God-incarnate again comes visibly on the world-stage, entirely reshapes and refurnishes it, redistributes the actors according to their merits to permanent parts, and once for all precipitates the eternal order of things for which all the previous course of events is educational and preparatory. "Behold I make all things new," "a new heaven and a new earth," displacing this.¹ But the change is not revealed in terms of annihilation. This heaven and earth pass away, but by regeneration and transfiguration. There is to be a restoration of all things.² This apparently means a final and harmonious adjustment of all things, forces and agencies to an eternal order, wherein each has its divinely assigned place, relation and function, and all minister to the glory of God and to the triumph of life over death, of love over selfishness, and of true righteousness and blessedness over every defective ideal and end.

§ 2. The future world order differs from this one too radically to be susceptible of description in terms derived from earthly experience; and no other terms are now available to us. Accordingly, all biblical descriptions of the world to come are figurative. They symbolize the glorious beauty and harmonious order of that world, the blessedness of those who are

¹ Revel. xxi. 1-5. Cf. Isa. lx. 17-22; lrv. 17; lrvii. 22; St. Matt. xix. 28; Rom. viii. 19-23; 2 St. Pet. iii. 10, 12-13.

² Acts iii. 21. Cf. St. Matt. xix. 28.

rewarded there, and their enjoyment of divine light and fellowship forever. To take them literally is to acquire unsatisfying ideas of the life to come. This can be seen in the dissatisfaction which many feel when they read or hear certain hymns wherein apocalyptic pictures are prominent, due to lack of the sympathetic imagination required if we are to apprehend their higher significance. If our thoughts terminate in streets of gold, in foundations of precious stones, or even in actions of worship uninterruptedly going on forever, we shall not appropriate the inspiring suggestions concerning the future heavenly kingdom which these pictures are designed to convey — suggestions which we cannot in this life adequately develop, but which turn our thoughts in the right direction in preparation for their assimilation and enjoyment hereafter.

In the meantime, problems confront us which, although not fully to be solved in this world, need to be approached rightly, if we would avoid reducing our conception of the future order to baffling incoherence. One of the most obtrusive of these problems has to do with the relations of space and time in the world to come. We call them relations because they are neither things nor events *in se*, but are the relations and, subjectively speaking, the forms of perception which emerge in, and condition, our apprehensions of them. They are objective relations in so far as the nature of the things and events of which we make them the measures involves

their validity independently of our minds; and they are subjective in so far as our minds are internally determined in manner of apprehension by them.¹

That these relations will be modified beyond present imagination appears to be an undeniable inference from what is revealed concerning the future world, and from the apparent necessities of an order in which eternal Spirit will be openly central. The present forms of time and space will be no longer.² The meaning would seem to be that clock-time and motion-limiting space will be translated into higher relations more obviously focused in the eternal immensity of God. To go further and say that time will be merged in, and utterly obliterated by eternity, and that space will lose its distinct reality in infinite immensity, is to incur the risk of pantheistically confusing finite creation in the other world with the infinite God. The difference between Creator and creature is forever ineffaceable, and some form of relations answering to what we describe as temporal and spatial appears to inhere in finite things as such and in their continuance.

Perhaps the concept of pure duration, indivisible but ever flowing, hinted at by Henri Bergson and guardedly used by Baron von Hugel, indicates the right direction of our thoughts on the time-branch of this subject.³ We say the right *direction*, for even

¹ Cf. *Being and Attrib. of God*, pp. 253-257, 264.

² Cf. Revel. x. 6. The R. V. margin substitutes "delay" for "time."

³ Cf. pp. 216-217 and refs. there.

when rightly directed our thoughts cannot safely venture beyond an incipient stage. If we live humanly, finitely, at all in the other world, we shall not live as simultaneously experiencing the totality of life's events, that is after the manner of divine eternity. There will be progress, and that means finite duration of some kind.

Perhaps also the direction in which to apprehend — imperfectly and incipiently — the new spatial order is afforded by the property of agility or mobility which we are taught to ascribe to the resurrection body, or its capacity to move instantly to whatever point its inhabiting spirit wills. That is, while the externality of one bodily thing to another, the forms of bodies, the relation of locality, and the reality of movement or change of locality, will apparently remain, as seemingly essential to finite bodies as such, the barrier of distance will somehow cease to be a barrier. No spatial relation will be a hindrance to the sovereignty of glorified spirits over their environment.

§ 3. This subjection of all the material order to spiritual control, or the mutually harmonious rule under God of perfected creaturely persons and their successful utilization of all to spiritual ends, is a clearly revealed and characteristic mark of the final order of things. For this consummation man was created from the first. He was made "in the image of God" that in the exercise of a derivative sovereignty reflecting that of God, he might subdue the earth and have dominion over all its contents. The sin

by which he fell, as symbolically exhibited in Genesis, was not his seeking to become as a god,¹ for that was his divinely intended destiny. It was his seeking it by a short cut, through the road of experiment with evil. It was not after all the short cut which the devil said it was, but a blind alley, escape from which involved the costly drama of redemption by the death of the eternal Son of God-incarnate.

The realm of spirits, the full glory of which belongs to the future order, is already existent on earth, for here human spirits live and function; and the assured fact that by God's will they do live and function in a bodily nature and material environment shows that these external conditions are not intrinsically inconsistent with spirit and its activity. Under these conditions our spirits do in significant degree receive and give, and are able truly and with increasing success, although not yet perfectly, to realize themselves in mutual self-expression.² If sin had not entered, their progress to perfect functioning and self-expression would have been more rapid, and would not have required the dread mystery of physical death as the condition of its consummation. The psychic stage of education and trial would have given way to the completely pneumatic or spiritual by a happier mode of transfiguration.³

¹ Gen. i. 27-28; iii 1-6.

² Cf. *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 227-230 and refs. there. Thus Origen, *De Prin.* I. vi. 4; St. Irenæus, *Adv. Haer.*, V. 36; and St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, xx. 14.

³ *Creation and Man*, pp. 185-190, 262-265.

As it was, and for the passing moment, "the creation was subjected to vanity," for until sin is remedied the spirit fails to rule the body and "the flesh lusteth against the spirit." But it was subjected to vanity "in hope that the creation itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption," and its present lusting against the spirit, "into the liberty of the glory of the children of God," into facile utility for their spiritual purposes and functioning. The present groaning of the whole creation and of ourselves, "which have the firstfruits of the spirit," is a "waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."¹ The outcome will be that those external and material conditions which now reduce the success of our spiritual functioning will be remedied neither by an annihilation of matter nor by its transubstantiation into spirit, but by transfiguration and perfecting in an order wherein every obstacle to the full spiritual use of the body and of visible things in general will be forever eliminated. Thus human spirits will fully enter into the sovereignty over creation which they were designed finally to exercise. The triumph of God's purpose is obviously greater in subjecting all things to spiritual ends than it apparently could be in a reversal even in part of His act of creating the material universe.

§ 4. In this triumph the eternal purpose concerning Christ, "that in all things He might have the preëminence," is fulfilled. It is so because the rule

¹ Gal. v. 17; Rom. viii. 19-23.

of the children of God means the rule of those who have been made members of Christ's Body, "the fulness of Him"; and the triumph of the Church, which is His Body, is the triumph of its Head, Jesus Christ.¹ And the consummation for which we are taught to look in the Kingdom of God is a final and unending triumph of right, of the eternal righteousness which is seated in God, and by which His will in all things is determined. But this triumph has a definite form, and is embodied in a determinate order, the order which, for present purposes and incipiently, is found in the Church Militant. In the earthly *ecclesia* the heavenly order is begun, and the Church's future triumph is the consummation thereof. In this Church we now practice the ways, individual and social, which, when practice has become perfect, we shall gloriously fulfil in the same Church Triumphant hereafter.

In the individual lines of this triumph, the natural and supernatural virtues which produce personal righteousness of life and character, based upon love, are here cultivated by holy discipline and sacramental grace, but attain their final glory and perfection hereafter. Moreover, in the Church we begin, in Holy Eucharist, to cultivate and enjoy the personal relations with God in Christ which constitute eternal life, and which are central elements of the eternal order of right.

On the social side, the future perfect society or

¹ Col. i. 9-22; Ephes. i. 10, 20-23.

communion of saints, wherein alone the cravings for an entire remedy of social ills can be realized, is already in the process of making in the Church on earth. This process, no doubt, will be attended by human resistance and corruption within the earthly part of the Body, so long as this world lasts. But the final emergence of a perfect social order hereafter will be due to a successful development of this humanly corrupt Church Militant into what it is destined to become in final and enduring glory.¹

From that blessed society all evil persons and influences will be permanently excluded,² and the entire triumph of right in the future order will somehow be apparent, no doubt, even in the regions of the condemned. We here approach once more the difficulties which attend any final solution by us of the problem of evil. We cannot fully solve that problem, but the direction of its solution is surely indicated in the thought that even the condemned will somehow be ministering to the perfectly righteous purposes of God. All things will work together in the triumphant and eternal order of right.

II. *The Mystery of Life*

§ 5. The mystery of life is the most central factor in heavenly blessedness, and has carefully to be considered if we are rightly to discuss the particulars

¹ Ephes. v. 25-27.

² St. Matt. xiii. 41. Cf. Revel. xxi. 27.

of that blessedness at large. Accordingly, at the cost of recapitulating certain germane ideas that have been given already in previous volumes,¹ we shall devote several sections to the subject.

What Henri Bergson calls "the creative push" of life has been the main observable factor in the long drama of organic evolution.² In one aspect this process has been one of differentiation, producing what to purely natural observation seems like endless divergence. To Mr. Bergson this divergence appears to exclude teleological interpretation, at least any common end or "far off divine event to which the whole creation moves." But such a conclusion is hasty. If life pushes in multiplying directions, it none the less produces a kingdom of life, a vital cosmos, in which interrelated meanings, therefore a common purpose, are increasingly apparent. The actual unity of life in rich diversity is more striking, and indicates an end of greater worth, than such unity as would emerge in the convergence of every line of development into drab uniformity. The branching tree has a higher unity and meaning than a cone, even though the cone embodied organic evolution. And life is the driving and controlling factor

¹ Cf. *Being and Attrib. of God*, pp. 267-271; *Creation and Man*, pp. 82-84; *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 128-131, 248-250, 252-256, 262-263; *The Church*, pp. 20-21; *The Sacraments*, pp. 15-19, 191-192.

² *Creative Evolution*, *passim*, esp. pp. 87-88. On life in its natural aspects, see Herbert Spencer, *Prin. of Biology*, Vol. I. pp. 59-81; J. Fiske, *Through Nature to God*, chh. viii-x; *Cath. Encyc. and Baldwin, Dic. of Philos.*, q.vv.

in the whole organic realm, so that in life's ultimate goal and dominating form lies the clue to the meaning of the whole kingdom of life and of the evolutionary process — the process which builds the world in its most determinative aspect.

As Herbert Spencer perceived, the trend of life in all its forms is towards adjustment to environment; and the distinguishing mark of a living organism is its more or less successful self-adaptation to the conditions of existence. When such adjustment of an organic species is successful, that species survives. Otherwise it perishes, ceases to live. Accordingly Mr. Spencer described life as "correspondence with environment." This is to describe the phenomenal results of life rather than to define life in itself, which is beyond our scrutiny. But the description is very serviceable, none the less; for such correspondence, or the observed capacity for it, is certainly the most significant common and distinctive mark of life which we can discover. More analytically we might describe life as a mysterious something which can organize and can bring what it organizes into self-adjusted and functional relations to environment. The higher the environment thus utilized the higher and more significant is the type of life which exhibits the adaptation.

In man the highest type of organic life appears to be reached, and the highest and most significant element of the environment to which life enables man to adjust himself is the unseen or spiritual world.

Man's spiritual life functions characteristically in this correspondence with spirit, with human spirits and, by the involution of supernatural grace in Christ, with the larger spiritual realm of an unseen universe. In such correspondence is obtained his highest satisfaction, his final destiny. And in it also is involved the effective relating and subordinating of his organism, and through this of the physical realm of which it is the crown, to the spiritual.¹ Man has become, on the one hand, visible nature's organic representative for the adjustment of all to the spiritual world; and, on the other hand, the minister in Christ of the spiritual world in enlisting the physical for spiritual service. Evolution thus terminates supernaturally in the unification of the visible and the invisible in one kingdom of spiritual ends. Of this kingdom God is the Creator, the hidden worker in its protracted making. He is also the Sovereign, whose eternal purpose is thus gradually brought to consummation in a diversified and enduring order, an order which is at one with itself in the unity of triumphant life, ever flowing from and into Himself.

§ 6. Eternal life is the effective correspondence of the righteous with the eternal God, and by it the much craved for perfect mutual correspondence of created spirits is also attained. God is the central and determinative reality in the spiritual realm, and true correspondence with our spiritual environment is correspondence with Him — a personal and conscious

¹ *Being and Attrib. of God*, pp. 199-201; J. Fiske, as cited.

adjustment, as we shall see, because it concerns relations of personal creatures to a personal Creator.¹

All this is involved in the teaching of Christ that eternal life is to know God.² It is not information *about* God that He means, although this ministers to it. But life is far richer, and intellectualism is foreign to the Gospel message. Christ is thinking of what in common parlance we describe as "personal acquaintance" and "friendship" or the direct and experiential knowledge which comes from being in effective personal touch with someone. Really to know a person means this kind of acquaintance. It means that we recognize each other on a friendly footing, and maintain open personal relations which are recognized on both sides as mutually acceptable. If these relations are broken we call it a cutting of acquaintance. In this sense a man may cease "to know" another just because, in a different or informational sense, he knows him too well.³

The knowing God, wherein, according to our Lord, eternal life consists, is then the highest and most significant form of "correspondence with environ-

¹ On the meaning of eternal life, see H. A. A. Kennedy, pp. 125-138; F. J. A. Hort, *The Way, the Truth and the Life*, Lec. iii; B. F. Westcott, *Epp. of St. John*, pp. 214-218; Baron F. von Hugel, *Eternal Life*, ch. xiii; A. Chandler, *The Spirit of Man*, ch. iii; Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, *Dic. of Apos. Ch.*, and *Encyc. of Relig. s.v.* "Life and Death."

² St. John xvii. 3. Cf. 1 St. John v. 20.

³ Cf. R. E. Hutton, *The Soul Here and Hereafter*, ch. vi, on friendship with God; and Hastings, *Dic. of Apos. Ch.*, s.v. "Love."

ment" — highest in the natural realm, because rationally conscious and free, personal beings alone have it; and highest in the realm of persons, because it is supernatural correspondence with God Himself. He who has eternal life is one who is alive to the Eternal, to God. That is, one who knows God as friend knows friend, or rather as child knows father, having effective mutual relations with God which He accepts and in which his own final blessedness is realized.

Eternal life is the plot of the whole world-drama, for the purpose which that drama is unfolding is the building of a kingdom of persons, the organizing and fructifying principle of which is an enduring fellowship, of which God Himself is the adorable centre. It is because eternal life is thus central that religion is the true organizing principle of righteousness in this world. Religion is the cultivation of relations with God wherein eternal life consists, and God wills that we should subordinate all our aims and efforts to this supreme end. Without its attainment all our ideals and achievements end in death. "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee, O God."¹

§ 7. Personal life, because consisting in correspondence with persons, is essentially social; and man is by nature a social being. In social relations alone can he gain adequate satisfaction, and in such relations completely and harmoniously established the

¹ St. Augustine, *Confess.*, I. i.

fullest joy known to man is realized.¹ Moreover, the social relation does not reach its perfection as a two-sided affair. Even the relation of man and wife, sacrament though it be of what is to come, is brought to its richest development when a child is brought forth. The unit of human society is threefold, in this respect reflecting the social aspect of God the Three in One. Upon this threefold basis social life expands and fulfils itself in an ever widening and deepening life of mutual relations and fellowship. It fulfils itself perfectly, however, only when it is given the organizing principle of religion, and develops into the common enjoyment of eternal life, life with God in Jesus Christ.

This explains why the Church is so vital in the Christian scheme. It is the actual beginning of the society wherein eternal life is hereafter to be enjoyed in all its satisfying fulness in the communion of saints.² It is the Body of Christ, the society whose members have been brought by baptismal regeneration into the relation with God in Christ, and with each other, which constitutes life, and which in the same Church is to become more abundant until consummated in the world to come.³ In it this life is sacramentally enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit, is renewed

¹ Even the selfish crave to be "in the swim," and their failure to gain satisfaction therefrom is due to the externality and insincerity of what is called "society." The mutual relations are unreal.

² Cf. ch. iv. §§ 1-2, above.

³ *The Church*, ch. iii. §§ 5-8.

and expressed by the body and blood of Christ both received and offered to God, is purged by the grace of remission and developed towards its destined fulness and perfection by community of privilege and holy discipline. In relation to the world-society, it is the leavening principle and the pledge that the Utopia now out of reach is to be enjoyed in another and better world. Therefore to those in the world it is the appointed haven of refuge, the seat of life that endures, and the city of God which cannot be overthrown — now, indeed, a sphere of many earth-born passions and sins, but destined to be purified of these forever when its earthly task is completed.¹

Moreover, the heavenly society includes the hosts of angels who already behold the Father's face, and labour in our behalf in order that we may share with them in the privilege of life. The gift of life abounds to all rational creatures who do not consciously reject it, and the great fellowship that will forever be enjoyed in Heaven will include angels and archangels without number.

§ 8. The most prominent marks of the life for which we are made are fellowship, love, mutual congeniality and character.

(a) Fellowship is but a name for what life is *in se*, or perfect mutual correspondence of persons and their enjoyment of each other, centred in God the author of life and Father of all, in open communion with

¹ Ephes. v. 23-27.

whom life in its perfection is alone possible and fully satisfying.¹

(b) Mutual love is the condition without which this fellowship and communion cannot satisfy its participants; for love *in se*, as distinguished from its manifestations and from the fruits by which it is often described, is the craving for, and capacity to enjoy, this fellowship and communion. By reason of it God wills our life with Him, and we meet His will with joyous conformity, this conformity being developed by the life of virtue and service to which true love necessarily impels us. By reason of it also we seek to enlarge the fellowship by Christian propaganda, made persuasive by abundant service in behalf of others, and to cultivate each other's love. A notable glory of love is its unselfishness, because the fellowship for which it craves is grounded in mutual self-giving. Only by giving ourselves to others can we enjoy their responsive giving to us.²

(c) Mutual congeniality is the *sine qua non* of love, for upon no other basis can persons enjoy each other. This congeniality is potentially present in every human being and is found in the image of God in which all are made. But its actualization is the fruit of moral and spiritual development, and

¹ Cf. 1 St. John i. 3, 6; 1 Cor. i. 9; Phil. ii. 1; Acts ii. 42; 1 St. John i. 7, for the several aspects of *κοινωνία* with the Father, the Son, the Spirit, the Apostles and with each other.

² Cf. *Being and Attrib. of God*, pp. 301-304; *Passion and Exaltation*, pp. 71-76. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law: Rom. xiii. 8; St. Matt. xxii. 36-40.

therefore the requirements of love wait on this development for final satisfaction. Accordingly, the Christian love which is felt in this world is incipient and conditional, based upon faith in the possibilities of mutual development¹ and conditioned in full enjoyment and permanence by the completion of this development. For the present our love, imperfect though it be, is the impelling motive of every form of mutual service which promotes the desired consummation by removal of sin, which is the chief hindrance to mutual congeniality, and by growth in grace.

(d) This congeniality is grounded in personal character; for it is the character of another that makes him congenial to us, and mutual affinity or congruity of character is what explains the joy of mutual fellowship. The affinity referred to is not that of uniformity. No two persons exactly reproduce each other's characters, and variety in personalities appears to be a contributory element in social enjoyment. The affinity grows out of conformity to a fundamental norm according to which all must develop, with whatever variety of individual traits, if they are to be capable of enjoying mutual fellowship. This norm, or Christian perfection, is the likeness according to which we were made, the likeness of God translated into human terms in the character of Jesus Christ. In the blessed society

¹ Christian doctrine requires us to have this faith in the possibilities of the worst sinners so long as this life lasts.

to come the bond of spiritual affinity and mutual congeniality is this, that each member of the fellowship in his individual way reflects without fault this divine character. No other norm can serve, for we are all made after that likeness.¹ Moreover, if the primary basis of the fellowship (which is mutually pleasing communion with God) is to be developed, the perfections which draw men together in all their variety must faithfully reflect the holiness of God.

These laws of life appear to be grounded in its very nature, and this makes them the inviolable conditions of its heavenly enjoyment. The exclusion, therefore, of the wicked, of all to whom the "correspondence with environment" which constitutes eternal life is impossible, is inevitable and irreversible.

III. *Heavenly Blessedness*

§ 9. We have seen that, amid other biblical uses of the word "Heaven," "it frequently denotes the place above which is at once the sphere of God's open self-manifestation, the region from which Christ came and to which He has ascended, the abode of the holy angels, and the everlasting future home of the righteous, wherein the Kingdom which Christ came to proclaim and establish in this world is triumphantly brought to its complete and permanent consummation."² Repeating an illustration given in the

¹ Cf. St. Matt. v. 48 (R.V.); Ephes. v. 1-2.

² In pp. 65-67, above. On the subjects of the rest of this chapter in general, see H. R. Mackintosh, Pt. II. ch. ix; H. B. Swete, ch. vi;

same context referred to, just as a four dimensional body cannot be described literally in terms of a three dimensional order, so Heaven cannot be thus described in terms of our present earthly experience. It is therefore described in Scripture symbolically, in terms which cannot be pressed literally, but which because of their divine inspiration have to be accepted as the final guide of our thoughts and imaginations on the subject until we go there. Happily, if we follow up the essential meanings of the symbols we shall gain an insight into the realities of Heaven which is sufficient for our present inspiration and guidance.

(a) Heaven is the place of God's manifest presence. This does not mean that He is there circumscribed, for not even Heaven can contain Him who is infinite and transcends all spatial relations. But God does for our benefit associate His presence with places. In earthly temples He places His name, and in Heaven He vouchsafes a visible presence locally centred for the apprehension of creatures who are subject to local conditions.¹ And God is the temple, the glory and the light, of Heaven.²

(b) God is apprehended in and through His Son

V. F. Storr, *Christianity and Immortality*, ch. viii; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 325-334; Baron F. von Hugel, "What do we mean by Heaven?" in *Ch. Qly. Rev.*, Apr. 1917; E. Griffith-Jones, Pt. III. ch. vi; St. Thomas, III. Suppl. xcii-xcvii; *Cath. Encyc.*, *Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, and Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, s.vv. "Heaven."

¹ St. Matt. vi. 9; Psa. xi. 4; cxv. 3 (with 1 Kings viii. 27-29; Psa. cxxxix. 7-10); Isa. lxvi. 1; Exod. xx. 24; etc.

² Revel. xxi. 22-23.

Jesus Christ, through whom alone men can come to the Father.¹ Accordingly Christ is there enthroned, and the locality of that enthronement is determined by the place of His glorified body. Where Christ is bodily present, there is the centre of Heaven, and the transparent veil of divine presence.²

(c) Christ in the midst of the throne, described as a living lamb that has been slain, and who is therefore our great High Priest before the Father, as well as God's manifestation to His saints, Christ is the centre of the heavenly worship, a worship participated in by a multitude of angels and by men without number of all peoples, tongues and nations, who make up the Church Triumphant, "the spirits of just men made perfect."³

(d) The splendour of Heaven is hinted at under the description of "the holy Jerusalem" with its golden structure four square and high walls, from which all are excluded whose names are not written in the book of life. The wall is of jasper with twelve foundations garnished with all manner of precious stones. From the throne which is in the midst of the city flows "a pure river of water of life," on either side of which the tree of life is again made accessible.

(e) "There shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face;

¹ St. John xiv. 6.

² Revel. iv; xxi. 5-7, 23; xxii. 3; St. John xiv. 8-10.

³ Revel. v. 6-14; Heb. xii. 22-24; viii. 1-2.

and His name shall be in their foreheads.”¹ In short, Heaven is the sphere of future blessedness.

§ 10. Before considering the several revealed particulars of this blessedness, it is desirable to reckon with the meaning of blessedness in general and its relation to man’s chief end. By so doing we shall incidentally avoid a widespread mistake as to the dominant aim of truly Christian endeavour in this world.² This error lies in making human happiness or welfare the organizing principle of man’s ethical conduct, as if man were his own end — an anthropocentric ideal. In Holy Scripture, on the other hand, the ideal is theocentric. Man is not made for himself, but for God. His chief end, and the organizing principle of true ethic, is that he should in all things promote God’s will and glory, and should enjoy Him in life eternal. That is, he should not seek happiness, whether egoistic or altruistic, unconditionally, but rather should make his happiness to consist fundamentally in the enjoyment of God and eternal life.

Man’s attainment of happiness is, of course, an inevitable concomitant of achieving his divinely appointed chief end, for to achieve this end is to win the satisfaction of his desires. If it were not so, we should have to reconsider our belief in divine righteousness. But it is a *particular form* of happiness,

¹ Revel. xx. 10–xxii. 5.

² See the Encyclopedias, *s.v.* “Blessedness”; Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, *s.v.* “Happiness”; St. Thomas, I. xxvi. 3; I. II. i–v; *Cath. Encyc.*, *s.v.* “Heaven,” V; the writer’s “This Miserable and Naughty World,” in *Anglican Theol. Rev.*, Oct. 1920, esp. pp. 105 *et seq.*

rather than happiness *in se*, which is thus obtained; and its acquisition is due to success in cultivating the capacity of enjoying the specific and objective consummation of things presupposed in it.¹ This objective consummation is the true chief end or thing which our duty, as distinguished from our cravings for happiness in general, requires us unconditionally to pursue. This consummation, according to Christ, is eternal life or the life with God;² and the pursuit of eternal life, both for ourselves and for others, is the organizing principle of Christian ethic, the one aim which we can rightly pursue without any reserves or provisos.

So it is that Christ makes the love of God the first and great commandment, one that is to be fulfilled without reserve, with all our hearts, souls and minds. The love of man is second — not first, although a vital adjunct of the first and “like unto it.” Moreover, it is limited by the qualification,

¹ St. Thomas and scholastic writers generally distinguish between the thing which we desire to attain and the use or enjoyment of it. If by our chief end we refer to the former (our objective end) it is God, “Who alone . . . can perfectly satisfy man’s will.” If we mean the latter, our chief end (subjective end) is “the attainment or enjoyment of the last end.” The chief end is called *beatitudo*. Unhappily this is usually translated “happiness” — a word which, thanks to the utilitarian point of view, has acquired another meaning and implication. The scholastic *beatitudo* should be transliterated “beatitudo,” which means the blessedness (*μακαρία*) that comes from directing our affections upon God and eternal life. Cf. St. Thomas, I. II. iii. 1.

² St. Matt. xix. 29 and parallels; St. John iii. 14-15; x. 10; xvii. 3; Rom. vi. 22-23; Col. iii. 3.

“as thyself.”¹ That is, true brotherly love moves us chiefly to secure for our neighbour what we ought chiefly to secure for ourselves. This is eternal life with God and, incidentally, the development in Christian perfection which alone enables men to enjoy it. Christian service is thus determined in form. It involves doing what we have legitimate opportunity to do for smoothing the earthly pathway of our neighbours, but always for the dominant purpose of facilitating their entrance into eternal life.

The truth of all this is confirmed by the fact that Christ never promises happiness in general (*εὐδαιμονία*) as the goal and reward of the Christian's triumph. What He promises is the eternal life (*ζωή*) which He came to purchase for men by His own death, and blessedness (*μακαρία*). Blessedness brings, indeed, a form of happiness, but a very particular one. It is that form of it which now attends the fulfilment of what we ought to do and suffer for the sake of eternal life, and which is perfected and everlastingly established when that life is fully consummated in Heaven.²

To conceive of Heaven exclusively or primarily in terms of happiness is to subvert true perspectives. The glory of Heaven is God and the triumph of His righteous and eternal purpose. Subjectively, and for ourselves, its glory lies in the fact that our entering there consummates the enduring control of our desires and happiness by the chief end which God

¹ St. Matt. xxii. 36-40.

² Cf. the Beatitudes: St. Matt. v. 2-12.

has given us to pursue — life with Him and to His glory. Final blessedness can be had only in this abiding orientation of our activities and joys. It is the state in which the eternal and objective order of right both determines what we desire and completely satisfies us.

§ 11. (a) The central and determining element of this blessedness is the *beatific vision* of God as He is.¹ This is not a sensible vision, for the spiritual essence of God precludes His being apprehended by our bodily senses. It is intellectual, although not exclusively this, for the human mind cannot exercise intelligence in any form independently of feeling and will. It is an act in which love and spiritual volition are essential conditions and aspects. In short, it enlists all the faculties of our souls in personal functioning for direct intuition of Him whom in this life we can perceive only indirectly, darkly and by faith, in the partial reflections of His handiwork and providence.² If we see God as He is, we must see Him as triune, contemplating the divine Persons severally, both in their distinctness and in those relations which are involved in, and which reveal, their indivisible unity. The transparent medium of this vision is the eternal Son-incarnate; the efficient enabler is the Holy Spirit; and the *terminus ad quem* in which the Trinity is

¹ On the beatific vision, see A. P. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 331-333; *Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Heaven," III; St. Thomas. III. Suppl. xcii vel. xciv; Blunt, *Dic. of Theol. and Schaff-Herzog Encyc.*, q.vv.

² Cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 St. John iii. 2; Revel. xxii. 3-4; Exod. xxxiii. 19-23; 1 Tim. vi. 16; St. Matt. xviii. 10.

unified and contained is God the Father.¹ To this vision of God all other particulars of heavenly blessedness are related, and upon it they depend.

(b) Love will have its exacting requirements finally and fully satisfied; and the happiness involved in perfectly developed and mutually congenial social relations will be established in an inviolable order. We shall then understand the ineffable joy of open relations with God, and in the unifying and transfiguring light and power of these relations our mutual relations will become complete and perfect. Our earthly ties, if sufficiently spiritual to survive in Heaven, will no doubt be deepened; and such as cannot thus survive will cause no painful regrets, being obliterated by the ever enlarging and mutually satisfying relations of that perfect society and communion of saints in the Church Triumphant.

(c) All our faculties will be emancipated and perfected, *in se* and in the conditions and scope of their exercise, by the change of our bodies and of our environment. They pertain to human nature; and blessedness would be unsatisfying if they were not employed in the world to come. Human intelligence will no doubt attain to heights, depths and breadths of knowledge and thought thereon more vast and inspiring than we can now imagine. The sense of beauty will surely be developed and satisfied in the contemplation of heavenly glories. The will, emancipated from sin and developed by grace and holy

¹ Cf. *The Trinity*, pp. 256-257 and the whole ch. viii.

discipline, will organize and direct our energies in the "perfect activity of a perfect life" which according to a great philosopher¹ constitutes happiness. No doubt there will be an abundant place for mutual service, perfected in mutual self-giving; and the natural desire for achievement will surely be fulfilled with a largeness which we cannot picture. It is reasonable to suppose that each will have his special work there, the work for which his native and supernatural gifts and previous perfecting have equipped him. No otherwise can we imagine a satisfactory carrying on of the social order.

(d) The worship of God, no longer irksome and difficult to perform with the concentrated and joyous completeness which its perfection demands, will be a central and pervading element of the blessed life; and will not be felt as an interruption of other concerns, but as their glorifying factor, for God will be all in all.

Christ hints that in all this blessedness there will be degrees of fruition, proportioned to the several grades of perfection and merit of each member of the heavenly kingdom.² It agrees with this that the heavenly order should be organized, should be

¹ Aristotle, *Nic. Ethics*, I. viii-x.

² St. Luke xix. 17-19. The differing number of stripes inflicted on the wicked (St. Luke xii. 47-48) suggests the same truth. The penny a day, which all alike receive (St. Matt. xx. 1-16), is eternal life; but some enter more abundantly than others into it (Cf. St. John x. 10). See Bishop Bull, *Sermons*, vii; A. P. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 327-328. Cf. also St. John xiv. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 41-42; iii. 8.

a hierarchy containing rank upon rank of men and angels, in perfect harmony and with full contentment of all. And we cannot reasonably eliminate the element of progress — progress in personal perfection and greatness of power, and progress in achievement to the glory of God.¹ In brief, the ideal which in this world is Utopia, meaning nowhere, will there be actualized and endure forever.

§ 12. God shall be all in all.² This is the consummation to which the whole drama of creation points; and it is such a consummation that makes the drama worth while in form and outcome. That this should be the end of God's external operations in time is not in Him an indication of selfishness, as we use that term in moral characterization. God is self-centred because the perfection, welfare and happiness of every actual or possible being depends upon this. His being God makes Him the only possible source and centre of blessedness. For Him to decentralize His creatures, and to give them any other controlling end than to be effectively related to Him in adoring love, would be to create a chaos of futilities, rather than a kingdom of blessed ones. The fulness of joy for rational creatures cannot be actualized in any conceivable way except in a theocentric order. God is the sole source of possible being, its sustainer, and both the pattern and nexus of all that is true, beautiful, and good. If He should fail to make Himself our chief end, life would not be worth living.

¹ H. B. Swete, pp. 105-108. Cf. 2 Cor. iii. 18. ² 1 Cor. xv. 28.

But He loves us, a twofold mystery of demand that we should give ourselves to Him in order that He may impart to us the greater gift of Himself; and in the triumph of this love lies the meaning and glory of life.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

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For necessary space-saving, the place of publication is omitted when it is identical with the last one previously named; and abbreviations are freely used, both of book-titles and of place-names. The titles of the several patristic works referred to are too numerous to be crowded in; but the author's names are given, with designations of the most available collections of their works in English translations and in the original.

The following abbreviations are frequently used:

A-C. Lib. for *Anglo-Catholic Libry.*; *A-N.* for *Ante-Nicene Fathers*; *M.P.G.* and *M.P.L.* for Abbé Migne's *Patrologia*, Greek and Latin respectively; *N.* and *P-N.* for *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Fuller titles of these collections are given in their alphabetical order.

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