

TRUTH FOR THE TIME.

DEATH AND BEYOND:

A CHRISTIAN'S REPLY
TO SIR HARTLEY WILLIAMS.

BY IRENÆUS.

SECOND EDITION.

"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear,
and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the
Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel."

I Samuel 17: 45.

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PRESS NOTICES OF FIRST EDITION.

"THE ARGUS"—29th Nov. 1902.

"An ably and forcibly written pamphlet by "Irenaeus" undertakes the refutation of Sir Hartley Williams's theories on the future state. It is the orthodox reply, and accepting the writer's point of view, may be considered most cogent. "Irenaeus" addresses himself rather to the teachable public, and asks them to choose between systems of vague guesswork and what he deems divinely revealed verities. The writing is extremely good, and a special merit of the pamphlet is that it puts lucidly and emphatically the orthodox view as regards death and resurrection, a view half lost sight of in these days, even by such critics as Goldwin Smith. Those who have been puzzled concerning Dives and Lazarus, the penitent thief, the "souls in prison," and so forth, will find clearly stated by "Irenaeus" what the churches once taught—and perhaps teach still."

"THE LEADER"—December 20th, 1902.

. "The pamphlet is ably written from the point of view with which its author deals with the subject. It may, of course, be said that he is prejudging the case, and applying a standard which is not accepted by those who are not willing to proceed on his assumption. But even making allowance for this preconception, he is able to score very effectively in his review of the inconsistencies and unrealities of his opponent's views. The pamphlet is well worth reading, even though it cannot be accepted as an entirely convincing abrogation of all philosophic doubt."

"WEEKLY TIMES"—29th Nov. 1902.

. "The pamphlet bears the stamp of earnest conviction ; it is plainly and clearly expressed, and shows intimate acquaintance with Scripture. Those who are interested in either one side or other of the controversy will find it well worthy of perusal. On Spiritism

the Forward School of Thought, and the Book of Job, there are some interesting and original comments. As "Irenaeus" quotes copiously from the reports of the addresses given by Sir Hartley Williams, it is easy to follow the arguments of the reply. "Truth for the Time" will be found not only vigorous, trenchant, and interesting, but rich in suggestive thought, even to the "final word" of a writer of whom we hope to hear again."

"THE HERALD," Melbourne—5th Dec. 1902.

. "The authorship is hidden under the *nom de plume* of "Irenaeus," but the merits of the little book are noteworthy. The standpoint taken is that of uncompromising opposition to Sir Hartley's views. The author's arguments are well reasoned and earnest, Biblical quotations being largely used. The published reports of Sir Hartley Williams' addresses are liberally quoted from, so that the reader practically has before him the reply and the statements replied to."

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

That the first edition is exhausted, and that copies are still required, form the author's happy excuse for the present re-issue ; but the intrinsic value of the truth set forth, may it is hoped, give to the publication a somewhat abiding interest, quite apart from the original controversy.

MELBOURNE, NOVEMBER 1908.

ADDRESS :

"IRENÆUS,"
CARE OF MR. M. L. HUTCHINSON,
LITTLE COLLINS ST.,
MELBOURNE.

ERRATA.

Page 13, Line 24. Instead of "Revelation 21 : 14,"
read "Revelation 21 : 4."

Page 16, Line 19. Instead of "a marginal," read "the
marginal."

Page 17, Line 14. Instead of "Ezekiel 14 : 4," read
"Ezekiel 14 : 14."

PREFACE.

The theological teachings of Sir Hartley Williams are the occasion, more than the object, of this little review. The setting forth of the positive truth of Christianity on the debated points, is more likely to be useful than dry controversy, and this therefore is aimed at. The Magazines and papers of the day, teem with articles in which Christianity is very haughtily dealt with, but they treat so much of mere externals, that in their wordy warfare, what Christianity is, becomes almost lost to the view; hence the importance of not merely answering petty objections, but of exhibiting in contrast the truth itself that is attacked.

Few have noticed how large a part of the New Testament is occupied with confuting error; the truth which the writers brought out in their replies being so valuable and weighty as to have eclipsed the ephemeral errors by which it was elicited. When we read the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians,—the wonderful revelation there made about the Resurrection, so occupies the mind, that we quite forget that controversy gave occasion for the profitable instruction; and the opponents of the truth, who loomed so large in their day, are now only remembered by their defeat. When error is so dealt with, evil is changed into good—the enemy's guns are turned upon himself.

The writer earnestly trusts that nothing here written, may give personal offence to Sir Hartley Williams, for whom—as an upright and fearless judge, as a private gentleman of worth and benevolence, he shares the esteem of the community. As a religious teacher, however, he is in another character—with his teachings it is difficult to be severe enough: but the responsibility of the teacher himself, is not to man, not merely to his

own conscience, but to a still Higher Authority. Heavy is the responsibility of rejecting Christianity. But the responsibility of leading others to reject it is tremendous.

The writer is at a disadvantage in not having had before him the full text of the Addresses criticised. From the same cause an occasional injustice may unintentionally have been done to their learned author. However, for good or evil certain abstracts of addresses were published: these are what have been given to the world, and these it is that form the incentive of the following pages.

MELBOURNE, OCTOBER 1902.

ADDRESS: IRENÆUS,

CARE OF THE PUBLISHER.

POSTSCRIPT.

Since the above was printed, the Addresses themselves have been published. Their actual text and the newspaper reports do not however exhibit such divergence, as to necessitate any substantial change in the following pages: but where called for, an explanatory note has been added *in loco*.

DEATH AND BEYOND.

CHAPTER I.

TRUTH AS TO DEATH.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1. False teaching uncertain : Christianity positive | 7 |
| 2. 'The true view of Death | ... |

CHAPTER II.

TRUTH AS TO RESURRECTION.

- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 1. 'The Passage in Job | ... | ... | ... | 15 |
| 2. Sir Hartley Williams' refutation of the Christian | | | | |
| Doctrine | ... | ... | ... | 17 |
| 3. 'The Christian refutation of Sir Hartley Williams' | | | | |
| doctrine | ... | ... | ... | 25 |
| 4. Resurrection the corner-stone of Christianity | | | | 30 |
| 5. 'The significance of Resurrection and its moral | | | | |
| necessity | ... | ... | ... | 33 |

CHAPTER III.

SUNDRY POINTS.

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 1. Spiritism | ... | ... | ... | 38 |
| 2. 'The Forward School of Thought | | | ... | 42 |
| 3. CONCLUSION | ... | ... | ... | 45 |

CHAPTER I.

TRUTH AS TO DEATH.

FALSE TEACHING UNCERTAIN: CHRISTIANITY POSITIVE.

The daily papers have reported Addresses delivered by His Honour Sir Hartley Williams, on the subject of "DEATH AND BEYOND."* To those who may be captivated by the speciousness of the discourses, it may be well to point out that they have, in Sir Hartley Williams, a most dangerous guide. For it is no detraction to say that, on this solemn matter, on which he sets out to teach, he has, himself, no positive knowledge. Indeed he does not claim it: his teachings are only put forward as:—

"*Views*, in which he has a substantial amount of honest belief."

("Argus," 12th May, 1902.)

It is a simple deduction from this, but one of highest moment,—that His Honour's theological teachings *may* therefore be absolutely and totally wrong. They are merely human reasonings; in which, of course, error may exist. Uncertainty inheres in the teaching. The learned lecturer may reach one conclusion; my reader another: indeed we may say: "*quot homines tot sententiæ.*" Again: if we give credence to Sir Hartley to-day, there may arise to-morrow a cleverer than he, who may show that he was quite in error; and then another, to prove that both were wrong. Are we then left to grope, with no more light than the guesses of the acute? The Christian answers: No! There has been ONE in the world who could say:—

"We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

(John 3: 11.)

and who could attest His doctrine with a declaration which no mere human being could dare to make:—

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

(Matt. 24: 35.)

Can our learned Judge offer this certainty to his followers? When officers failed to arrest that lowly Man, what was their defence? "Never man spake like this man." They, at any rate, had some sense of a

* See "Argus" and "Age" of 12th May and 2nd June, 1902.

Presence that awed them, a Being whom they could not fathom. (John 7: 46)

The point here submitted to thoughtful persons is, the difference in *essentiality* of these two teachings. One gives merely the conjectures of a man *who does not himself know* : the other,—not what He thinks may be, or what He reasons must be, but a distinct revelation of what positively is. This teaching is unique amongst the teachings of men ; its characteristic is **AUTHORITY** : “the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” (Matt. 7: 28. 29.) Which is the more likely to be correct : the One who could solemnly aver :—

“I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world.”
(John 16 : 28.)

or Sir Hartley Williams from the Supreme Court Bench ?

And why need the learned Judge claim for his belief that it is “honest,” if what he believes is the truth ? Is not this an admission that he may, after all, be wrong : and so he claims that at least he is sincere ? **CHRISTIANS** do not need to apologise in this way for the faith that is in them. *They* believe because they know that what they believe is the truth, absolutely and without qualification. But it would seem that in these matters, on which His Honour instructs the public, he is not quite certain himself. Let those, however, who may be disposed to adopt his doctrines, listen to the words of the Mighty Teacher already quoted : —“**IF THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND, BOTH SHALL FALL INTO THE DITCH.**”

Accept, Gentle Reader, a friendly warning against those who, under colour of liberality and enlightenment, would induce you to accept their private theories as the truth, and to shape your course for Eternity, on the basis of mere “views,” which are quite unauthentic, however sincere. The press reports say :—

“We could have a reasonable assurance, he thought, that in the future state we should have a body, and that body would not be material. He believed we should be the same individual without the physical body ; . . . He believed there were many stages through which we should gradually pass as we developed spiritual life ; and that the man who had lived a good life on earth would pass

rapidly to a plane suitable to his spiritual development."

("Argus," 2nd June, 1902.)

"The spiritual body would probably be under more favourable conditions for acquiring knowledge and making progress, and the drunkard, profligate, and sensualist, if they aspired would be helped to a purer and better life. There would be, he believed, successive spheres through which those fully developed spiritually would pass quickly, the average moral man or woman less rapidly, while the vicious and degraded would remain at the lowest stage till they sought for better and nobler ideals."

("Argus," 12th May, 1902.)

Besides individual identity, there is just one grain of reality in all this, namely, the idea of a spiritual body in the future, and for this the lecturer is indebted to Christianity, (1 Cor. 15:44). All the rest is simply an emanation from his own mind. The reader could no doubt frame another forecast; and a prize offered, might produce quite a crop of ingenious plans of Eternity; but what would be the value of them? One word of revelation is worth a ton of conjecture.

The first quality in a guide is that he should be certain of the way he takes us, and of the end. Should any reach Eternity, in expectation that it will be a series of progressive planes and developments as promised in these Addresses; and should they discover when there, that nothing of the sort exists, it will be poor consolation to know that their misleader was sincere. So far, as to the uncertainty of this teaching. Now as to its matter.

2. THE TRUE VIEW OF DEATH.

Sir Hartley Williams aims at altering the popular estimate of Death.

"Speaking of the conception of death, he did not hesitate to say that the generality of people, and the large majority of what were known as very religious people, held the erroneous view that death was something to be shrunk from and dreaded. . . They tried to stave off death; they shrank from it, and regretted the absence, and wished for the return of the dead. They looked upon death as a sudden and violent transformation and change. In both their professions and practices he thought they were erroneous and wrong. Death worked no sudden change, and we should not mourn for loved ones gone. We did not when we passed through the event called death necessarily pass to the happy land, These erroneous

theses were neither probable, reasonable, nor in accordance with the standards of Jesus. . . . Death was but an event similar to that which occurred when a bird broke through the egg and discarded the shell."

("Argus," 12th May, 1902.)

The view is erroneous, His Honour contends, that "Death is something to be shrunk from and dreaded." This is of deep moment. It is no mere philosophic thesis, but a matter of highest personal concern. He might discuss without harm the constitution of the Sun, and submit any theory he chose to favour. But what view we take of "DEATH AND BEYOND," affects our course here and our eternal future. If we may safely abandon Christianity, and adopt Sir Hartley's "views," one line of conduct—indeed many lines—may do : it is not vital which, for all may be set right "beyond ;" but if the declarations of Christianity have force, then in despising them we make an appalling mistake, and a shipwreck of our existence. The question therefore is—Which view is the true one ?

Now, in contending that death is not something to be shrunk from and dreaded, Sir Hartley has against him :—

FIRST, the universal voice of Nature ; and—

SECONDLY, the light of Revelation.

As to the former, men have only to look into their hearts. Every instinct prompts them to avoid death : to bear pain, disappointment, disaster ; but to shun death : to shun it as the climax of calamities ; and that, not only because it closes for us all the enjoyments of this scene ; not only because we then change the *status* of our being, and pass where no human heart or hand can help ; but by reason of an intuitive, shuddering dread, of something beyond. Who shall give us this voice of Nature better than Shakespeare, in the familiar, but still exquisite words, of Hamlet :—

"To die ;—to sleep ;—

To sleep ! perchance to dream ;—ay, there's the rub ;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause : there's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life :
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,

When he himself might his quietus make

With a bare bodkin ? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life ;
But that the dread of something after death,—
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns,—puzzles the will ;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of ?

—(HAMLET, Act III., Scene I.)

The ordinary feeling of mankind, as thus so well expressed, is based on highest reason and probability. What Shakespeare utters here, is sound sense, though in elevated and beautiful language. Suicide is the exception that proves the rule: the healthy mind recoils from death.

Before going further, let it be remarked that we have, in Death, the kind of testimony for which those are always crying out, who object to a revelation embodied in a book. Death, however, is a witness in external Nature, which speaks to men, and keeps on speaking to them, all along the pilgrimage of life. The dangers that each individual has been in, and has mercifully survived; the vanishing of acquaintances, old and young; the waning of personal powers in later life, are knocks that Death gives at our door. Here is a voice exterior to Scripture: let us be honest: is this a pleasant call that sounds in our secret souls, or "something to be shrunk from and dreaded"? Men boast of the book of Nature: how do they read this page of it? The present Addresses prove its plain meaning, or they would not be needed to correct a "popular conception." But the conception of, say—Stodge the ploughman—is far nearer the real truth, than the laboured reasonings of sceptic philosophers.

SECONDLY :

We come to the light of Revelation, or what Sir Hartley Williams (with no waste of reverence) terms "the standards of Jesus." Well: in Scripture, Death is presented as *the wages of sin* :—

"For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6 : 23.)

"Sin entered into the world, and death by sin." (Rom. 5 : 12.)

Historically this was so.* Man in Paradise was placed

*Moses, not Herodotus, was the "Father of History:" he wrote the oldest history in the world, 1000 years before Herodotus was born.

in a position of responsibility. He was encircled with all that he could want, a merely nominal test of fealty being established. One particular tree was forbidden to him : and the penalty of the law was—"Thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17.) The restriction imposed was no burden: but there was a personage at hand to say: "Ye shall *not* surely die." And what was this insidious counsel, but an epitome of the teachings we are now considering? The Tempter played the part that others are playing to-day: that is, to argue away the solemnity of God's sentence upon sin, loosening thus in men's minds the cords of responsibility to their Maker. If, however, His Honour appeals to "the standards of Jesus,"—this is what they teach doctrinally, and what they recount historically; namely, that Death is the judicial sentence pronounced by our Creator upon sin.

Now, this view is obviously a very different one from that in question. In the latter, Death is represented to be simply a natural event, as when a bird "breaks through an egg, and discards the shell." Pretty sentiment, no doubt; but an inversion of the truth: what takes place there, is birth—not death. The true analogue would be—that bird, fresh upon the scene of life, being slain or dying. Death is *not* a natural event, though from its constancy, men have come to so regard it; and many Christians have inadvertently fallen into the same error: but it is a solemn fact that every individual death of a human being,—or death at all indeed, is a witness of the abnormality of the present state of creation—the condition of sin in which it exists before God. That such a revolting phenomenon as death, is a part of Creation as it left the hand of God, is one of the difficulties which those are forced into who reject the Divine revelation in Scripture. When the beauteous form that has moved and sung and spoken, whose cheek-colour glowed, whose brightening eye and countenance bespoke the mind and soul, whose every movement and gesture was a charm: when that face lies discoloured in a coffin, soon to rot in the earth, will anyone say that Death is natural or normal, except to a fallen creation? Nay: it is God's sentence upon sin, which man cannot evade. On the brink of the tomb, he stands to surrender, baffled and defeated. The

highest and the lowest must bow. Science is foiled—cleverness cannot escape. Death remains to make good God's word in Genesis. Which was true : God who said "Thou shalt surely die" or the one who said "Ye shall *not* surely die"? Which to-day is true : The Scripture which says :—

"It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment."
(Heb. 9 : 27.)

or the modern prophet who denies it by a euphemism, saying: "The event *called* death"; and who adds : "We do not die—we are immortal"? But the Christian knows that :—

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ;
and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."
(Romans 5 : 12.)

It is a lame philosophy that accepts Death as normal. No wonder, perhaps, that poor man, with only the light of Nature, should form such an ideal ; but God's revelation in Christianity opens a brighter vista, exceeding in splendour all human thoughts. In God's scheme of things death is an enemy. Revelation makes known a sphere and a time in which "there shall be no more death . . . neither shall there be any more pain." (Revelation 21 : 14.)

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

(1 Corinthians, 15 : 26)

But to those who reject the only sacrifice so graciously provided by God :—

"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation."
(Hebrews 10 : 26-27.)

That is not quite like a bird bursting out of a shell ! In matters of the soul, we want truth, not illusions : and if Holy Writ be true, Death is, to the unsaved, the presage and the portal of judgment : whether viewed therefore, in the light of Nature, or of the Christian standards, it remains a rational subject of dread, except to those who are sheltered in Christ.

"The sting of death is sin" (1 Cor. 15 : 56), and unless there be found a means of removing that sting, it is there in awful reality. Sin and God cannot meet, except in judgment. A God who is not holy ; who can be complacent with sin—murder, theft, fornication, violence, or any other form or measure of evil, is a monster of the imagination, a fiction. There is

no such being. Believe not in such a fable, my reader. The language of truth, of Christianity, is :—

“GOD IS LIGHT, AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth : but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John 1 : 5-7)

The God whom every being of moral constitution will have to meet is HOLY. Dost thou tremble at the thought? Then the gospel of the Atonement meets thee in all graciousness and love, whereby God can “be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.” (Rom. 3 : 26.) But to those who reject the Gospel, death has the character of penal banishment. As for the successive planes and advancing developments after death, of which Sir Hartley Williams speaks, what foundation have they but his imagination? His soft assurances and pleasing words are only a mirage, which will mock the traveller to the eternal plains: when he arrives there—he will find the vision gone !

CHAPTER II.

TRUTH AS TO RESURRECTION.

Pass we now to the subject of Resurrection.

I. THE PASSAGE IN JOB.

Sir Hartley Williams is reported to have—

“Declared that in all the Bible there was not one sentence to justify the clause in the ‘Apostles’ Creed’ which said, ‘I believe in the resurrection of the body.’ The verse usually quoted from Job had been mistranslated. It actually read, ‘Without my flesh.’”

(“Age,” 12th May, 1902.)

This is pretty positive.* The passage in question is a famous and interesting one. Here we are considering, perhaps the oldest piece of writing in the world!—in all probability of the time of the patriarchs: before Moses, or perhaps even Abraham; for in the book of Job, there are references to Adam, to the Fall, and to the Flood; while there are none to later events of history, as the call of Abraham; Joseph’s history; the Exodus, or the Mosaic law: the language too, and the allusions—the historic “setting” as it were, of the book, are of the hoariest antiquity. It exhibits much of the traditional knowledge of God which lingered amongst the nations before that darkness which settled on men’s minds consequent upon their desire “not to retain God in their knowledge.” (Rom. 1: 28.) Is it not remarkable as bearing upon our present theme, that here, embedded in this eldest of books, while the traditional knowledge of God was not yet lost, we have the following striking testimony?:—

“Oh that my words were now written !
Oh that they were inscribed in a book !
That with an iron pen† and lead

* In the subsequent Address of 1st June, the full text of which is now published, His Honour does not take personal responsibility on the question of translation: he there says: “the verse in Job which is *stated* to be a mistranslation.”

† “Pen.” “Style” is perhaps the more correct word.

They were graven in the rock for ever !
 For I know that my Redeemer liveth,
 And that He shall stand up at the last upon the earth :
 And after my skin hath been thus destroyed,
 Yet from my flesh shall I see God :
 Whom I shall see for myself,
 And mine eyes shall behold, and not another."

(Job 19 : 23-27, Revised vers.)

The reader will observe, as an indication of antiquity, that graving words in stone-tablets is here passingly noticed as if quite customary—the very method which we know was later adopted in the giving of the law.

We need not wonder that this testimony, thus on record, should have its enemies. However : the words in dispute, are,—in the Authorised version :—

"In my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19: 26.)

with an alternative in the margin :—

"Out of my flesh shall I see God."

Most people know that a marginal rendering is one which is possible, but, in the judgment of the translator, not so good as that in the text; and the learned translators of the Authorised version preferred, as nearer the sense of the original, "in my flesh."

But since the production of the Authorised version, the whole Bible has been carefully revised, both as to text and translation, by a company of the most learned men—including some of the best Hebraists—in Christendom. They translate as already quoted :—

"From my flesh shall I see God."

Practically—"in my flesh," in the Authorised version, has the same meaning as "from my flesh" in the Revised version : for a man must be *in* his flesh in order to see *from* his flesh. Thus it will be seen that the learned Revisers agree as to the substantial meaning of the text, with their predecessors, while they place in the margin :—

"'Without' my flesh."

This last rendering, however, which the most erudite in Christendom, after deepest consideration, relegate to the margin, we are now told, is the right one !

The position is this : The Hebrew word, which it is alleged actually reads "without," occurs also, and often, in the sense of "out of," and "from" ; and the question is largely one of judgment as to

which meaning best suits the requirements of the passage. We have then Job saying that after death he will see God from his flesh. Are we to read this "from his flesh" or "without his flesh"? Well: he goes on to say:—

"Whom I shall *see* for myself and *mine eyes shall behold*," &c.

That seems to fix the real meaning: not that he should see God apart from his flesh, or having no body, but with his eyes, from, or out of the body. That he refers to a resurrection-body seems clear enough to a plain man.

The book of Job, is a veritable historic document of the greatest weight and value, attested by other scriptures in different ages (Ezek. 14: 4; James 5: 11); and this particular passage of it is not to be weakly given up as obscure, nor lightly abandoned to the adversaries of divine revelation. The overwhelming weight of evidence and literary judgment is that the passage means what it has always been understood to mean, not what is now so confidently stated: all which, is submitted to the candour and discernment of the reader.

2. SIR HARTLEY WILLIAMS' REFUTATION OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

Leaving now His Honour's remarks on the passage in Job, he is reported as speaking less positively as to there not being any Scripture to warrant the belief in the resurrection of the body.

"The Bible, he said, with some timidity, had, he believed, no text that bore out the theory of resurrection."

("Argus," 12th May, 1902.)

But according to another report he,—

"Declared that in all the Bible there was not one sentence to justify the clause in the 'Apostles' Creed' which said, 'I believe in the resurrection of the body.'"

("Age," 12th May, 1902.)

Whether Sir Hartley Williams be timid or bold, the Lord Jesus declares unmistakably:

"The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice" (i.e., of the Son of God) "and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of

life ; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation " (judgment). (John 5 : 28-29.)

One would almost think that that taught the resurrection of the body ! If people coming forth out of the graves, is not the resurrection of the body, what is it ? But also, Paul says :—

" He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies." (Romans 8 : 11.)

There, then, is the answer as to the resurrection of the body not being in Scripture.

But His Honour further says :—

" The moment of dissolution of the physical frame was the moment of resurrection on the spiritual plane. . . . Resurrection took place at the moment of death."

(" Argus," 12th May, 1902.)

Now, it will be observed from John 5, as already quoted, that resurrection is out of the graves—not off the death-bed. Again : not merely are the dead quickened—but they "*come forth*" at the compelling summons of the Son of God : even as, at the grave of Lazarus, He stood and cried with a loud voice : "**LAZARUS ! COME FORTH :** and he that was dead came forth." But according to the lecture, Lazarus had already been raised—"at the moment of death." Now he is raised again ! Unfortunately for the new theory, it rather clashes with historical fact. Once more: the Lord says:—

" This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life : and *I will raise him up at the last day.*"

(John 6 : 40.)

When ? At the moment of dissolution of the physical frame ? No : *at the last day.*

Next notice, that, instead of resurrection being one by one, at the moment of death, there are simply two resurrections : a Resurrection unto life ; and a Resurrection unto judgment. This accords with the uniform teaching of Scripture. Only a few sentences before, the Lord had announced that believers are exempt from judgment: and now He shows, that they are, besides, the subjects of a distinct and separate resurrection ; while the wicked on the other hand, come forth to the Resurrection of Judgment. Consistently with this, the Apostle John speaks of **THE FIRST RESURRECTION**, all the

subjects of which he describes as holy :—

"This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection" (Rev. 20 : 5,6) ;

while he adds in the same passage, that the rest of the dead are *not raised* for another thousand years. Similarly in 1 Thessalonians 4, it is only the dead "*in Christ*" who are spoken of as raised at His coming : and in 1 Cor. 15, the resurrection at the coming of Christ, is *only* of those who are His,—as it says :—"They that are Christ's at His coming"—not every hour of every day,—but definitely at that epoch. (1 Thess. 4: 14-17; 1 Cor. 15: 23.)

Let us observe in passing : If Christianity be true, how precious to be a believer in Jesus !—to be exempt from judgment; to be allotted a part in a peculiar resurrection ; to spend a thousand years in bliss and glory, before ever the unjust are resurrected to receive their doom ! Who would not desire such a portion ? But,—to be Christ's then, we must be Christ's now.

To proceed: His Honour introduces a phrase into the discussion, which has no connection with Christian doctrine, arguing with great elaboration, against the resurrection of what he calls a "physical" body ; thus :—

"The body soon became a seething mass of corruption and putrefaction in a grave, and rotted away till at length it was merely represented by a few bones. In cases of explosion and cremation there remained not even this meagre memorial of the physical body. If there was to be a resurrection of the physical body, how were all the parts of the body to be recreated ? Then again, a man who had lived to 70 years of age, had had at least seven, and probably ten, different bodies during that time, and which of these was to be resurrected ? In the case of accident, causing deformity or mutilation, would the resurrected body be the physical body before or after accident ? If the body were deformed from birth, what then ? Were the bodies of the hugely fat man, or the emaciated man to be the same on resurrection as they were before death ?" ("Argus," 2nd June, 1902.)

Here, there is the logical fallacy of ambiguity. The Christian, when he speaks of the resurrection of the body, means that which is taught in the Scriptures on the subject : the learned Judge means something else : he refers to a physical body. But "physical body" is

not mentioned in Scripture, nor in the Apostles' Creed. Paul indeed speaks of a "natural body," which, however, he distinctly states is *not* that of the resurrection. Sir Hartley imports the phrase "physical body" into the doctrine, and then proceeds to argue against *that*; introducing with it a series of puerile absurdities, and very triumphantly refuting them: that is,—he raises up a man of straw, and bravely knocks him down.

The conception thus presented, and then refuted, is apparently that of the actual setting together again of the very same matter, the identical molecules, forming or having formed, the present body. But neither the Lord nor His Apostles teach that. On the contrary, as Sir Hartley acknowledges, the Apostle Paul definitely says:—

"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."
(1 Cor. 15: 44, Rev. vers.)

So that His Honour's effort is here somewhat wasted; he is beating the air: though by refuting *as* Christianity, what is not Christianity, he succeeds in presenting Christianity, for the moment, in a ridiculous light. That upon which he makes such a valiant assault is really Mahometanism. The Mahometan believes that in resurrection the body will be exactly as it died; and hence a Mahometan will never, under any circumstances, allow a limb to be amputated; he will suffer death in preference. Indeed this seems to be the clue to a good deal of Sir Hartley's discourse: he has mistaken the Mahometan ideas of resurrection for those of Holy Scripture.

What a family likeness, however, there is between the arguments of the Sadducees who denied Resurrection in old time, and those who oppose the doctrine to-day! A Sadducee brought to the Lord, as a dilemma, the case of a woman who had had seven husbands,—asking:

"Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven?"
(Matt. 22: 28.)

Is not this the prototype of Sir Hartley Williams and his man with seven bodies? In passing, notice the logical confusion. A man has in fact only one body, though the material composing it is every

moment changing, and in its totality, may in a life time, have changed seven times, or ten. The 11th Regiment was at Waterloo, in the Crimea, and the Indian Mutiny—it was the 11th Regiment always, though the *personnel* was always altering: London is London, though the people of the community are not for one day the same; even so will the man—every man—be in unchanged identity when called forth from death,—though *with whatever body it pleaseth God*. (1 Cor. 15 : 38.)

Similarly with the other objections,—as to the atoms of a body being dispersed in an explosion; as to whether a thin man would be raised thin, or a fat man, fat: need we wonder that Paul describes such objections as folly?

“But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou foolish one, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, *thou sowest not that body that shall be*, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him. . . . So *also is the resurrection of the dead.*”

(1 Cor. 15 : 35-42, Revised vers.)

Here, the Christian doctrine clearly is, that the body that is sown is not the body that is raised. How antiquated, then, are the present cavils! Nineteen centuries ago, a class of minds were boggling and stumbling at the Resurrection of the dead, just as they are now. Thus:—

1ST CENTURY.

How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?

20TH CENTURY.

How are all the parts of the body to be recreated? Will the thin man be raised thin, and the fat man fat?

How is the body to be recreated? How indeed! God has not seen it well to tell us. But are we to deny everything of which we do not know the *modus operandi*? “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Can some one tell us “*How*” that was done, and the limits of the power that did it? Then he may discuss whether God can raise the dead!

But whether we have the Sadducees against Jesus or the opponents of Paul; or Sir Hartley Williams in our own day; their reasonings all contain a fatal flaw which renders the conclusion worthless: like an operation in Arithmetic, in which a commencing error runs

through all the process—the result brought out is false. The error is that which the Lord pointed out to the Sadducees in connection with this very question :—

“Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” (Matt. 22 : 29.)

Because the natural body has been dispersed in an explosion or cremated, they think it is impossible for God to re-clothe the spirit in a resurrection body ! They do not see how the parts of the body are to be recreated, and therefore deny the Resurrection. But this ignoring of the Scriptures and the power of God, is common to all varieties of the Rationalist School. With them God—hallowed be His name !—is a dead God : the Almighty Being who created the Universe has exhausted His powers in the effort, and now can do nothing ! He has made a Universe. but cannot interfere with it. Your artisan shall make me a clock which *he* can control—it shall go for its limit of time : he can quicken, retard it : he can stop its action ; can smash it to pieces—God alone has become powerless ! It is useless to pray to Him or humble our souls before Him. His creation has got out of hand, and He cannot touch it ! The power of God and the light of revelation ! These form the omitted element in the Rationalists' arithmetic. “Ye do err, NOT KNOWING THE SCRIPTURES NOR THE POWER OF GOD.”

If my reader thinks some of the cavils already dealt with were puerile, how shall we characterize the following, referring to the decay of the body after death :—

“And what was to become of the soul during the time this hideous and revolting process of dissolution was going on ? Was it shut up in the coffin ? Was it to remain shut up till the last trump sounded ? Or did it wander about in space formless, waiting till the body was resurrected ? And, finally, what was the soul to do with a physical body on the spiritual plane ?”

(“Argus,” 2nd June, 1902.)

Is it too much to say that such questions are both profane, and nonsensical ?—Profane in that they flout divine revelation ; while those about a soul being shut up in a coffin are beneath the dignity of either philosophy or religion. Of course these questions are not inquiries for information—but are the interrogative form of argument,—asked on the assumption that they cannot

be answered. But from the vantage of divine revelation, they are easily answerable.

FIRST :—

Does the soul wander about in space formless, waiting till the body is resurrected ?

The reply of Revelation is : No ; it does not. It does not wander at all, about space or anywhere else. **IN THE CASE OF THE CHRISTIAN : It is:—**

"To depart, and to be with Christ." (Phillipians 1 : 23.)

Being "with Christ" is not wandering about space !

"Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given Me, *be with Me where I am* ; that "they may behold My glory.

(John 17 : 24.)

"I go to prepare *a place for you*, that where I am there ye may be also."

(John 14 : 2-3.)

Again : When Christ comes, He will bring the departed saints with Him. (1 Thessalonians 4 : 14.) That does not look like wandering about space ! "Absent from the body" is "present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5 : 8.) And it is interesting to observe that Scripture does not speak of the believer's death as going to heaven—but, more definitely, going to be "*with the Lord*," which is a complete answer—at least as regards believers—to the derisive question as to wandering about space.

The dying thief, as a typical case, is most striking. He had merely petitioned that the wondrous Person beside him, would remember him when He came in His kingdom. The Lord says, as it were :—"I will give you better than that : this afternoon you shall be with Me in Paradise." Yes ! That is the portion of the believer,—that when he departs from this world—that same day, he is with Christ in Paradise. The body is the link that binds the soul to this scene : that snapped, the redeemed spirit is instantaneously with its Redeemer.

SECONDLY :—

So far with regard to the saved. The case of others (the wicked) remains to be considered.

In the 16th chapter of Luke (verses 19 *et seq.*) there is a solemn parable that sheds much light upon both. There are, there, two deaths : One—a poor beggar,—goes direct to bliss ; the other—a wealthy man, fashionably attired and sumptuously faring, dies, and has a funeral,—which last is, significantly, not mentioned of

the beggar. The rich man goes direct to Hades, as to which, the most vivid figures that our present nature can afford (burning fire and unquenchable thirst) are used to convey to our minds, the misery and suffering which follow on banishment from God. What a reflection does this suggest as to some of the funerals we see ! While the lengthy procession with pomp and plumes follows the body,—where may be the soul ? But the Scripture goes on :—

“ There is a great gulf fixed : so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot ; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.” (Luke 16 : 26.)

Notice, that this is not argument, merely a statement of fact. The justice of the two situations is slightly sketched in verse 25 : here, in verse 26, it is simply the unalterable *facts* of the eternal scene. There are no gradations between the blessed and the condemned, as forecasted by Sir Hartley Williams, but a great gulf, and it is a “*fixed gulf*” : there is no progress from one to the other : the state is eternal.

Where, then, are Sir Hartley’s successive spheres and progressive developments after death, and whence does he get them ? Are they not mere conjectures by a man who does not know, and who places his own imaginings above the solemn revelation of One who could say :—“ WE SPEAK THAT WE DO KNOW, AND TESTIFY THAT WE HAVE SEEN ” ?

But the general testimony of Scripture is clear that the wicked at least, are not wandering at large. Judas is described as, in his death, going “*to his own place.*” The Lord said to the recusant Jews, “*Ye shall die in your sins, and whither I go ye cannot come.*” (Acts 1 : 25 ; John 8 : 21.) No progressive stages here. Those who rejected the testimony of Christ (by the Spirit) in the days before the flood, perished : they have not yet been raised, but their spirits are *in prison* (1 Peter 3 : 19) and man, at present upon earth, not yet in prison, is on the road to judgment, though there is a way of deliverance, of which the wise avail themselves. Meanwhile the Lord advises man :—

“ When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him ; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the

judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison." (Luke 12 : 58.)

This does not look like wandering about space,—corporeal or incorporeal. They are not out of control, but like men who are in gaol awaiting trial : they will "come forth":—

"They that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5 : 29.)

The answer to this question ("Does the soul wander about space," &c.) virtually answers the others at page 22, except the last, and that may be left ; as it is simply a consequence of the misconception about a physical body, which has been already dealt with.

To which is my reader trusting : Scripture which tells of a gulf with no bridge over it ; or the pretty theory of His Honour Sir Hartley Williams, who may be quite sincere, *and* quite wrong ? He who takes Scripture is safe in either case : he who trusts to Sir Hartley Williams, is, if His Honour's scheme fails him, LOST FOR EVER !

3. THE CHRISTIAN REFUTATION OF SIR HARTLEY WILLIAMS' DOCTRINE.

If now Sir Hartley's refutation is refuted, there remains to consider the improved theory which *he* propounds.

What then is his view ?

"He believed . . . that the resurrection of Jesus took place on the cross. . . . Resurrection took place at the moment of death." ("Argus," 12th May, 1902.)

"If there were no physical resurrection, then at death we left our bodies not formless, but clothed in a spiritual body, and crossed to the spiritual plane."

("Argus," 2nd June, 1902.)

What is here referred to is not resurrection at all, but a totally different thing, namely, the passing of the soul from the body, at death, to its respective place in the unseen world. This truly takes place without interval. But it is *not* resurrection : and what His Honour does, is, by confusing two things together to deny one of them, that is, resurrection. When he says that the resurrection of Jesus took place upon the cross he is simply trifling with words. That the spirit of

Jesus—His human soul—went to be with the Father, we know ; for He said :—

“Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit : and having said thus, He gave up the ghost.” (Luke 23 : 46.)

and He told the thief beside Him, that that day he should be *with Him* in Paradise. (Verse 43.) But meanwhile, His body was being reverently handled, taken down from the cross, wrapped in linen, and laid in the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea,—all which and much more, of passing and pathetic interest, the inspired historians tell us. His body was in the grave the whole of the Sabbath, and it was not until the third day that He rose from the dead. To say, therefore, that the resurrection of Jesus took place on the cross is solemn nonsense. His resurrection was the resurrection of the body, as history abundantly shews. The angel at the tomb explained to the women :—

“He is not here : for He is risen, as He said. Come see the place where the Lord lay.” (Matt. 28 : 6.)

To His affrighted disciples, the Lord said, in His own tender way :—

“Why are ye troubled ? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts ? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself : handle Me and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them His hands and His feet.” (Luke 24 : 38-40.)

This shows that resurrection is a totally different thing from the separation of spirit and body at death. The Lord's resurrection was the re-uniting of the spirit with the body, and the rising of the complete person, in life and power, from the tomb. Hence the definite and concrete statements in the history of the Lord's resurrection : thus :—

“That He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures :

And that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve :

After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once ; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

After that, He was seen of James ; then of all the Apostles.

And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.” (1 Cor. 15 : 4-8.)

“He shewed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them” (Apostles) “forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” (Acts 1 : 3.)

Here we have, in anticipation, a specific refutation of

the invention—now attempted to be superimposed upon history,—that the resurrection of Jesus was from the cross, not from the tomb. The marvellous detail, the circumstantiality, together with the obvious independence of the accounts of the Resurrection in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are consistent with nothing but truthful narrative.

So far, as to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, which is apparently put forward, and rightly,—as an illustrative case. Accordingly we find that, with His people, death is the same thing.* The soul of the thief, released from the corporeal frame, went direct to Paradise. Stephen's prayer at his martyrdom was: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Consistently, Peter tells the Jews that David "is not ascended into the heavens." Not, of course, that his spirit is not there, but that he, with all the departed saints, is awaiting resurrection. (Luke 23: 43. Acts 7: 59. Acts 2: 34.)

The teaching of the Apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians 5, is confirmatory. He there refers to the present body as a tabernacle or tent-house; while for the resurrection-body, he uses the figure of "a house eternal in the heavens." The intermediate state of dying he describes as being "unclothed" (*i.e.*, disembodied): the proper hope of the Christian is not to be unclothed but "clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life." (2 Cor. 5: 4.)

To digress for a moment: this, for the thoughtful mind, is very wonderful: for it demonstrates that the passage of the spirit at death, direct to Christ—blessed as it is—does not give the full height of redemption. What the death of Christ has obtained for His people, is a perfect exemption from death, even as to the body. The proper hope of the Christian is not heaven at death,—but heaven without dying at all! And this will be actually experienced by those who are alive at Christ's coming; they will never taste of death: they will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4: 17) and Paul tells us that instead of being "raised" (as departed saints will be) they will be "changed," in

*Of course that *for* which Christ died—to make atonement—is not here meant; only His death as a man.

a moment, in the twinkling of an eye: that is, they will be "clothed upon":—

"Behold, I shew you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, *and we shall be changed.*" (1 Cor. 15 : 51-52.)

Thus, then, the full, normal salvation of the Gospel, is absolute exemption from death: it is only the contingency—so to say—of Christ's tarrying in order to admit of the salvation of others, that leads to some dying,—and, by that gate passing into heaven, instead of being caught away into glory without death. The recognition of these two classes of the saved, is the true explanation of that misunderstood—or not-understood—text, in the 11th of John, *viz.*:—

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. He that believeth in Me | } <i>i.e.</i> a saint who dies and who |
| though he were dead yet shall he live. | |
| 2. Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die. | } <i>i.e.</i> one who lives to the Lord's coming, and who will pass alive into glory, being caught up and instantaneously changed, and so never die. |
| John 11: 25, 26.) | |

Not seeing this has led to the text being tampered with; the word "eternally" being added after the word "die" making it read "shall never die eternally" (See Collect in the Burial Service)—but this addition destroys the very point insisted upon. Scripture is much more exact than people suppose: here, the addition of one word quite mars the sense.

To resume now after this digression: Precious as it will be to be caught instantaneously into heaven—clothed in a body fitted for its dazzling light—those who do die, will not lose anything, as Paul carefully explains in 1 Thess. 4—but will be raised *first*:—

"We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede them {which are asleep . . . the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

(1 Thess. 4 : 15-17. Rev. vers.)

Now, if at the coming of Christ, the dead are to be then raised first (before the living are changed) it is

quite clear that they have not been raised already, one by one, as they died.

The figure which Sir Hartley Williams uses, with regard to the body and spirit—"clothed"—is the same as that employed by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:—

"If there were no physical resurrection, then at death we left our bodies not formless, but clothed in a spiritual body."

("Argus," 2nd June, 1902.)

This, to speak familiarly, is a "*non sequitur*": what is introduced as a sequential proposition, is not sequential at all. The statement is illogical. If there be no physical resurrection, then, it *might* or might *not* be that the next stage would be our being clothed in a spiritual body. That would be as God willed.* Sir Hartley gives us no proof; and as he has no more knowledge of the Unseen world, than my reader or myself, he is as likely to be wrong as right, while the Lord and His Apostles, can, and do give us real information on these momentous subjects.

The learned Judge tells us that at death we leave our bodies clothed in a spiritual body: the Apostle Paul says exactly the contrary: he describes the condition as "unclothed," saying:—

"Not for that we would be unclothed but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." (2 Cor. 5 : 4.)

that is : the aspiration of the Christian is not, to go to the Lord at death ("unclothed") *not* the disembodied state, blessed though it be, but to be "clothed upon"—to be changed at the coming of the Lord, to pass deathless into glory, mortality being "swallowed up of life"! What a magnificent prospect! which man's puny and narrow mind would change for us, into the miserable progressive Purgatory of these lectures!

But if the Christian is, in the meantime, called upon to pass through death, is he dismayed? No: he knows that death is only a passage into the presence of the

* The full text of the Addresses now published, scarcely redeems the logic on this point. The chain of deductions seems to be this: There is no physical resurrection; but some resurrection is admitted; therefore, any other resurrection must be immediate. As to this one need only say: *non sequitur*.

One who bore his sins on Calvary. So the Apostle says :—

“We are CONFIDENT and well pleased rather (*ευδοκούμεν*) to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”
(2 Cor. 5 : 8.)

That, is the state of God's people at death : not clothed in a spiritual body, but unclothed ; not in the body at all ; but absent from the body, and present with the Lord. As to the idea of the wicked receiving resurrection-bodies at death,—it has already been refuted where it was shewn that they are not raised until a thousand years after the resurrection of the just.

TO SUMMARIZE : The resurrection of Jesus did *not* take place on the cross : neither does the resurrection of His people take place at the moment of death : nor is the spirit, either saved or unsaved, clothed in a spiritual body at death : it is unclothed, and remains so, until,—called by the voice of power at the ordained moment, the dead arise to either glory or judgment.

4. RESURRECTION THE CORNER-STONE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Has the reader ever noticed the value which resurrection has, as a constituent element of Christianity ? Probably those who make assault upon it, scarcely know what a vital citadel they attack. Why ! if there is no resurrection, there is no Christianity. For though Christianity rests upon the death of Christ, that death would not have been efficacious, if it had been possible for Christ to have remained in its grasp. He went to the cross as a sacrifice for sins : His resurrection is the demonstration that that sacrifice is accepted. Had it been possible that He could have been holden of death, He would have failed in His work : despair instead of hope would have been the consequence, and Death would have remained, what it still is to those who reject salvation,—a dark, appalling, exit from this world,—Christ died representatively for His people ; and *His* resurrection secures their resurrection.

“If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain ; ye are yet in your

sins. . . But now is Christ raised from among the dead, *the first fruits of them that slept.*" (1 Cor. 15 : 17-20.)

Not only, however, is the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, the corner stone of the Christian edifice, but resurrection in the abstract, is the crowning point of Christian testimony. The Lord was "DECLARED to be the Son of God with power . . . by resurrection of dead" (Rom. 1: 4. Gr.) and this is abstract, though doubtless referring supremely to His own resurrection. But that of the young man at Nain, and others alluded to in Matthew 11: 5, were proofs. More particularly however the signal case of Lazarus—taking place close to Jerusalem, was a public attestation not only that Jesus was Son of God, but Son of God WITH POWER. The force, the strength of death was wielded by Satan to the terror of man (Heb. 2: 14) but here was One in whose hands that power was broken like a stick. He was indeed "declared the Son of God with power, by the resurrection of the dead." The resurrection of Lazarus was intended as a testimony. The prayer shews this :—

"Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always : but because of the people which stand by I said it, *that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.*" (John 11 : 41-42.)

So significant and astounding was this act of power, that the leaders felt that the testimony must be crushed, and the resurrection of Lazarus, became in consequence, the proximate cause of the crucifixion of Jesus: "from that day forth they took counsel together to put Him to death." (John 11: 47.53.)

When, in prison, John Baptist's heart began to fail him, and he sent to ask Jesus if He were really the Messiah, the Lord simply referred him to the works which were being wrought,—and the acme of all was : THE DEAD ARE RAISED. (Matt. 11.) Yes! Death is the paramount of human woes—and if there be One, who, for Himself and others, has broken its power, the only question with the prudent man is, the terms on which he can be attached to that Mighty Conqueror.

To proceed : The successor to Judas was chosen that he might be—with the other Apostles—a *witness of the resurrection* of Jesus. The first persecution was because the Apostles "preached through Jesus the

resurrection from the dead." At Athens, Paul preached unto them *Jesus and the resurrection*. "And when they heard of *the resurrection* of the dead some mocked." (Acts 1: 22. Acts 4: 2. Acts 17: 18-32.) Before Felix he says :—

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, . . . And have hope toward God, . . . that there shall be a *resurrection* of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

(Acts 24 : 14-15.)

And when addressing King Agrippa, he asks :—

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should *raise the dead*?" (Acts 26 : 8.)

All these testimonies shew the large and prominent place which Resurrection had in pure and nascent Christianity. And why this insistence; why any opposition or mocking, if resurrection were no more, or only little more, than the severing of man's entity from the body at death? What provoked hostility and ridicule must have been something more tangible than the mere modified Platonism of these Addresses.

Those who stumble at the resurrection, should take note that Christ refused any other sign than His death and resurrection to those who, amidst a profusion of evidence before their eyes, professed to want another sign :—

"Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from Thee. But He answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas : for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matt. 12 : 38-40.)

And again, in John 2, the Lord gives His death and resurrection in a sort of divine enigma, as His only answer to cavillers :—

"Then answered the Jews and said unto Him, What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days? But He spake of the temple of His body. When therefore He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."

Once more : Christ's judgment of the moral state of

those who reject Holy Scripture, is :—

“If they hear not Moses and the prophets neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

(Luke 16 : 31.)

And as it ever happens : if the will is to reject the testimony of God, NO EVIDENCE WILL SATISFY.

5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RESURRECTION, AND ITS MORAL NECESSITY.

Resurrection is a tenet of Christianity exclusively, and would probably never have occurred to the mind of man, but for divine revelation. That man, constituted as he is, with mental and spiritual capacities, will, after death, exist in some state, is attested by the human conscience, save only where conscience has been silenced and hardened. But the highest human conceptions never rose to Resurrection. Socrates and Plato taught the immortality of the soul : and *that*, variously modified, is the general limit of thought. Resurrection is peculiarly Christian : the anticipation gives exulting joy to the believer : but there is in it a tangibility, a definiteness, which creates uneasy feelings in those who are not prepared for it : hence men are always trying to get rid of the very notion : a vague theory of the immortality of the soul is more acceptable : this occasions no moral perturbation. But resurrection, men persuade themselves, will not, cannot be : it is “irrational, improbable, incredible.” Through nearly twenty centuries the waves have been dashing at the foot of this rock ; and now, our lecturer makes another struggle to crush the uncomfortable doctrine ; or to refine it down to proportions little more than the old theory of the soul's immortality.

If, however, we reflect at all profoundly on the condition or principles of our existence, Resurrection appears to be almost a moral necessity. For sin has entered the scene, bringing with it Death : and if God deals with man's case in a way worthy of Himself, He cannot, if we may say it reverently, stop short of Resurrection. If He were to, would He not be leaving evil victorious in the arena ? Suppose now—what many

would wish—He were to nullify, merely in this life, the ill results of sin, dowering man with every conceivable earthly benefit and joy, would it be true beneficence to do so, and yet leave man to death and eternal misery at the end? But now, in His wisdom, He has left the woful consequences of sin to bear testimony to man's conscience; to let men see and feel what a bitter thing it is to depart from God. But He has consulted man's best, his eternal interests by meeting evil in its highest form—Death: and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, who was made sin upon the cross, is an open triumph over the furthest power of evil.

We inhabit a Universe which bears patent evidence of a vast catastrophe. What do we see around us on every hand? Perfection marred! not merely in the moral but in the physical world. Evidence of magnificent design, of beneficence, of power, everywhere displayed; but yet, good not attained—mysteriously cut off; and all,—the highest, greatest, noblest, finding their terminus in death! It cannot be that creation is as it left the hand of God: the stamp of death is upon everything; and not only in this world, upon which it was brought by man—but before man's era: for there was sin before the sin of man. The sin which makes this havoc in God's creation must be judged and dealt with. A righteous God could not bring man into blessing without putting away his sin.

But who in the wide Universe could offer that which should atone for sin and satisfy eternal justice? No creature could. Suppose a creature sincerely sorry for his sin. Will his sorrow undo its consequences? Judas may have remorse and hang himself; he may disgorge every coin of the lucre that tempted him; but he cannot undo his awful act, the consequences of which will roll on through eternity! If a man have committed murder, can his repentance, or his amendment, bring into being again, the life that he has destroyed? Not if he weep for a thousand years! And the sin *against God* of destroying one of His creatures, what can he do as to this? If he live all his future in unswerving fealty and uprightness, that, is no more than is due to God in respect of that

future: the past remains to settle. What about God's laws which have been broken; His authority which has been defied; His majesty which has been insulted? What can a creature do to rectify his committed wrongs? Is there anything he can give? Nothing: for all he has and is, belong to God already.

"Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" (Micah 6: 7.)

Is there *any one else* who can offer something *for* him? Suppose a father, or a son, willing to offer himself? Or an Angel? A fellow-creature cannot do it: his life is not his own to give: it belongs to his Creator already—whose will is that he abide in the place which He has appointed for him. Can Buddha offer a sacrifice for me? He is only a man like myself, and must give in his own account of himself to God. And Confucius? The same is true of him. And if Buddha, or any other, teach me how to live righteously, he only accentuates my past sin by the contrast, and makes it all the blacker. The past! the past! Who can answer to God for me in respect of the past? No creature can loosen off my soul, the sins that I have done! The only thing the sinner can do, is to suffer the just penalty of his deeds. As one who had been endowed with intelligence, with a will, with conscience, he must face his responsibility for having sinned. Guilt is an awful reality even before man; and what is it before God? Search the remote spaces of the Universe, and you can find nothing to atone for the guilt of a wretched sinner. Unless God's laws are to pass with impunity, and His authority to suffer detraction before all His created intelligences, the penalty of sin must be paid: His law must be vindicated. If God do not maintain His authority and His laws unimpaired, then the Universe will clash together in ruin and anarchy. What ill friends of humanity, are those false prophets, who hide the real future from men's eyes; and who for the sake of popularity, say, "Peace! Peace! when there is no peace."

Is there then no hope for the creature who has rebelled? None in his own resources! If there come no outside help, he is shut up to condemnation. But what

the creature could not do, God Himself has done. The Son, in love and compassion undertook the office. He became incarnate in order to offer in the nature of man that which the offended Majesty of Heaven could accept. The only One who had life to give, gave it for sinful man.

"For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith,

Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not,
But a body didst thou prepare for me;
In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou
hadst no pleasure:
Then said I, Lo, I am come
(In the roll of the book it is written of me)
To do thy will O God.

By which will we" (believers) "have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."
(Hebrews 10: 4-7. 10.)

Being God, the glory of His person, gave to the Sacrifice a value that was absolutely INFINITE. He went to the cross for Sin, and Sin having been dealt with, and its penalty borne, upon the Cross, God is now free, without infracting the principles of eternal justice, to restore to favour, and bless in the fullest way, the sinner who is reconciled to Him in Christ Jesus,—

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, TO DECLARE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

TO DECLARE, I say, at this time HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS: THAT HE MIGHT BE JUST, AND THE JUSTIFIER OF HIM WHICH BELIEVETH IN JESUS." (Romans 3: 23-26.)

The penalty of sin, death, having been paid, death is annulled for the believer.

"The sting of death is sin; . . . But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
(1 Cor. 15: 56, 57.)

Christ's rising again, has broken the power of death—a victory that is efficacious for all who believe. "By man came death, by man also the resurrection of the dead."

Think of it, Reader: The victory over death is a fact accomplished! And, owing to the marvel of the Incarnation, accomplished in the person of a man: God too, but very man. "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE," He could say. Resurrection at the last day, was Martha's

highest thought. She knew not, that potential resurrection was in the person of the lowly Man beside her. Resurrection at the last day? "I AM the resurrection"! Being God, the power was contained in His person. And so with life. Others might possess derived life : "In Him was life": its seat, its residence, its source and fountain were—Himself! "I AM the resurrection and the life." (John 11: 25 and 1: 4.) He was yet to grapple with Death in its stronghold—but the victory was assured, because He was God as well as Man. That the power was in Him, He had already exhibited at Nain, and was now going to repeat at Bethany : love, the motive in each case. But these were only pre-manifestations : bright beams that preceded the glorious Orb of day, when, after sinking in darkness at Calvary, He should rise in splendour at the tomb.

The result of Christ's resurrection is that, for the believer, death is cancelled : he only comes under death if the Lord's coming is delayed. As this tarrying means salvation to others, he cheerfully acquiesces, while the world, for whose benefit the day of grace is extended, basely makes capital out of that very grace, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" If, however, the Christian do pass through death, he does so, only as to the body ; and that but temporarily : his spirit departs to be with Christ which is far better. (Phil. 1: 23.) Even the disembodied state is, to the saved, better than continuance of life on earth. Christian, who art approaching thy term of pilgrimage, wouldest thou lengthen thy stay in this scene? It is far better to be with Christ in Paradise! But the RESURRECTION WILL BE GLORY ADDED TO BLISS.

CHAPTER III.

SUNDRY POINTS.

Some points remain to be noticed.

I. SPIRITISM.*

In the first Address Sir Hartley Williams is reported as having said :—

"It might be that the twaddle they heard of as coming from spiritualists did come from spirits, who had remained as they were on this plane. He did not see why it might not be true, and it gave a possible reason why so much that might properly, and not offensively, be designated as twaddle, might be accounted for as communications from what he might term a low class in the spiritual world."

("Argus," 12th May, 1902.)

But the report of the second Address says :—

"In opening, he explained that he had not . . . made any suggestion that spiritualism was twaddle. . . If there was truth in spiritualism, and he had little doubt there was, it might be that it was from the undeveloped and non-progressing spirits that much of the twaddle that we heard of as being communicated by spirits came. When such men as Professor William Crookes, Zollner, Oliver Lodge, James Barrett, and Hyslop, men of the highest scientific ability and most absolute integrity, and scores of others were converted from hostility into strong belief, he did not feel justified in believing Spiritualism to be all delusion. Though he recognised there had been much trickery and fraud on the part of dishonest mediums, he also recognised the undoubted fact that the evidence of its reality was far stronger both in quality and quantity than the evidence which courts of justice acted upon in dealing with issues of human liberty and human life."

("Argus," 2nd June, 1902.)

His Honour seems to have been tenderly concerned, lest some should have supposed that he meant any disrespect of Spiritism. And so we have a gentleman of learning and talent who has deliberately dismissed Christianity as "superstition," apologising for Spiritism ! Well ! *De gustibus non est disputandum* : but a few

*"Spiritism" seems more correct than "Spiritualism:" it is a cult based, not on spirituality—which is a christian, and a good thing—but upon Spirits, and commerce with Spirits.

words on this much-bruited Spiritism may be pertinent here.

First. As to what His Honour calls "twaddle." It is far too mild a term. Hastings says in his tract on Necromancy :—

"When we find the spirit of Mohammed unable to answer a simple question which is put to him in Arabic, his native tongue ; when we find the spirit of Pericles unable to understand the Greek language, and ignorant of the events which occurred in Athens when he dwelt there ; when we find the spirit of Voltaire talking passable English, dropping the "h's" here and there, but unable to tell how many two and two are, when the question is asked him in French ; when we find the spirit of Benjamin Franklin responding to calls, and delivering communications at *two places at once*, at the same moment, as determined by accurately timed watches ; when we read doggerel from the spirits of departed poets, bad spelling from the ghosts of good scholars, and empty platitudes from the orators of past ages, we are led, like the ancient Roman to wonder how any two of these oracle venders can look each other in the face without laughing.*"

This being contemporary history, the word "twaddle" may well be excused, though most level-headed people will be of opinion that such stuff does not come from spirits at all, non-progressive or other : but from very solid human beings, who now and again have been caught and exposed *in flagrante delicto* !

Secondly. Besides the atrocious tomfoolery of Spiritism, we may concede that it *does* include an element of reality. And this no doubt is what has impressed and baffled, the scientists whose names are quoted. But the worst part of Spiritism is not its humbug. It would be better, if less genuine : for any real spiritual influence it possesses is Satanic : the more real therefore, the more diabolic. But this partnership of humbug with Satanic influence is of the essence of the scheme. The impostures put some people off their guard, while the real action of dæmonic spirits is found out and felt by others. It is however of importance that what Spiritism actually is, should be recognised : so that positive Satanic influence should not steal a march upon us

*Necromancy. By H. L. Hastings. Boston, Mass. London: Marshall Bros., Paternoster Row.

in the harmless guise of mere foolery. Christians, as well as men of the world, are too incredulous as to the reality of dæmonic existences. But that there are wicked spirits against whom christians are to be on their guard, is as certain from Scripture as that there is the Holy Spirit, and that they were behind the drapery of ancient Paganism we are told by the Apostle Paul:—

“But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to dæmons, and not to God.”

(1 Corinthians 10 : 20.)

Hence, when treating of the actings of the Holy Spirit, he warns christians against WICKED SPIRITS or dæmons which might operate on and through the minds of christians. The test he applies is CHRIST. No dæmon will give a true confession of Jesus as Lord (1 Corinthians 12 : 3). The Apostle John gives the same warning and the same test :—

“Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ come in the flesh is of God : and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus Christ come in the flesh is not of God.”

(1 John 4 : 1-3. Alford's transl.)

The test is not, as in the Authorized version, a confession that He has come in the flesh—which is merely a fact with regard to Him; but a confession of *Him*—His Person, as known and owned by christians : not only His humanity, not only His deity: but the true confession of the person Jesus Christ,—God yet man. CHRIST IS THE TEST QUESTION in the Unseen world, and in this world too. Who desires to be on the winning side,—now and eternally? Let him seek to be with Christ the Son of God!

But it must not be supposed, because there may be reality in Spiritism, that therefore the devotees of that cult will, at their *seances*, have truth communicated to them. Quite the contrary. The Devil is the Father of lies (John 8 : 43) and his emissaries will dupe, delude, and mislead to their hearts' content, all those who lend themselves to his influence.

The spiritual communications which we hear so much about are *prima facie* discredited with the Christian—because he is instructed that the things of the Unseen world are incommunicable to us in our present state. People forget that there has been a man actually

caught up to the third heaven, to Paradise : whether in the body, or out of the body, he could not tell ; but the things he heard there, were unutterable. (*ἀρρητα ῥήματα*, 2 Corinthians, 12: 4.5.) Consistently, we find that those who have been brought back from the dead, —as Lazarus ; the son of the widow of Nain ; Dorcas ; the saints who rose and came out of their graves at the resurrection of Christ ; all these appear to have had sealed lips as to the Unseen world. Certainly nothing that they have said on the subject is reported—least of all, no such prattle as entertains necromantic *seances*.

The assumed messages from the dead, we know to be in many cases, arrant impostures ; but where not palpably such, they may be the fabrications of lying spirits : and the affectionate and soft-hearted man, who thinks he is receiving a message from his deceased wife or mother, is possibly being fooled by a cunning and malicious spirit, who may be supposed to grin with hellish laugh as he hooks the simple human fish.

There are two historic facts of great significance with regard to Spiritism. One is that in the ancient Oracles of Heathendom, the same elements are found as in Spiritism: that is, a probably real communion with dæmonic beings, but accompanied also, with extensive impostures. Cato wondered that two Augurs could meet with gravity; and Rollin tells us:—

“ A thousand frauds and impostures, openly detected at Delphos, and everywhere else, had not opened men's eyes, nor in the least diminished the credit of the oracles.”

(Rollin's Ancient History, vol. i, p. xxx.)

The Oracles at first gave their answers in verse; but as in modern Spiritism, their bad poetry was ridiculed; and they gradually sank to prose, though Plutarch defends their inspiration. (*Lecky*.)

The other fact is that in proportion as Christianity spread, the Oracles were silenced and ultimately ceased. But is it not a solemn fact to set beside these, that concurrently with that abandonment of Christianity which now is every where rife, there is a simultaneous revival of the ancient dæmonolatry, though in the meaner form of modern Spiritism ? This is only a pre-manifestation of the awful delusion which is to sweep over Christendom,

consequent upon the giving up of Christianity—a judgment for its rejection.

"For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one . . . whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that are perishing, *because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.*"

(2 Thessalonians 2: 7, 12. Rev. Ver.)

Those who dabble in Spiritism and the like, little know what they are doing, nor that they are tools in the hands of the great enemy of souls. The lurid lights of Spiritism, Theosophy, Agnosticism, so-called Christian Scientism, *cum multis aliis*, are only forerunners, of the great delusion that is coming, when there will be the most awful time upon earth, that the world has ever seen.

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."
(Matthew 24: 21.)

This is not yet: but what we already have, is in the terms of the prophecy:—

"The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart (apostatize) from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons."

(1 Timothy 4: 1.)

This inroad of dæmons therefore, and the apostatizing from the truth, are symptoms of the close of the dispensation, and a presage of coming judgment. CHRISTIANS OUGHT TO STAND CLEAR AND ALOOF FROM COMMUNION OR CONTACT WITH ANY SUCH AGENCIES OF SATAN.

2. THE FORWARD SCHOOL OF THOUGHT.

Preliminarily, Sir Hartley Williams said that his views had been given expression to by American writers of repute, and

"Also by ministers of the forward school of thought in Great Britain, among whom were Archdeacon Wilberforce of Westminster, Rev. H. R. Haweis and Rev. Dr. Momerie."
(*"Argus,"* 2nd June, 1902.)

Schools of thought, however, are as shifting as sand-hummocks in the desert. Christianity in contrast, stands not on "thought" but on Revelation, which God has

wisely deposited for us in unalterable written words, the Holy Scriptures. *Litera scripta manet.*

The very idea of a *Forward* School of Thought in connection with Christianity is a false idea ; for there is a difference in essence between religious knowledge and scientific knowledge, which it entirely overlooks. Scientific knowledge is the accumulation of facts by human observation, and the discovery of general laws by induction from those facts. Religious knowledge on the contrary is the result, not of observation but of revelation. God is not found out by searching. All the ancient philosophies terminated in this *impasse*: "they knew not God": that was the dead wall at which they arrived :—

"The world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. 1 : 21.)

We are dependent for divine knowledge, on what He is pleased to reveal. (1 Cor. 1 : 21; Job 11 : 7-9.) In science, men make progress from day to day, and from age to age ; and with reference to *this* it is true enough that,

"The thoughts of men are widened
With the process of the suns."

But this notion is quite incongruous to religion. The only progress in religious knowledge is that of revelation ; and therefore, when revelation stops or is completed, as in Christianity eighteen hundred years ago, any further progress then, is a progress of error. Hence the exhortation to "contend earnestly for the Faith *once delivered* to the saints"—once delivered, it cannot be added to : addition then, is not progress but corruption.

We live in an age distinguished above all others by scientific advancement : so marvellous have been the discoveries of science that a species of mental intoxication has resulted ; and men not seeing the difference in essentiality between the two classes of knowledge, have come to think that because there is progress in Science there must also be progress in Religion. Scripture contains however a remarkable text in which this imagined but mistaken progress is specifically condemned. The Authorised Version gives it as :—

"Whosoever *transgresseth* and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God." (2 John 9.)

Now the word *transgresseth* (*πρὸς ἔμπροσθεν*) should really be, —goeth forward or onward—as it is very properly ren-

dered in the Revised version. There are two things condemned by this scripture : one, going forward, that is beyond the doctrine of Christ as revealed ; and the other, not abiding in that doctrine ; that is, giving up what has been revealed : either one or the other is disloyalty to God as regards the complete and perfect revelation which He has vouchsafed. Going forward, or going backward, from the once-delivered doctrine of the Christ, are alike departure from Christianity, and unfaithfulness to God. This principle,—the difference in nature between Science and Revealed Truth will, if grasped, preserve many from falling into the errors and delusions of the last days.

Schools of thought can only give us thought ; opinions, surmises. **THEY CANNOT GIVE US DIVINE COMMUNICATIONS**—they dare not say—“Thus saith the Lord,” nor announce, as Apostles do :—

“We are of God : he that knoweth God heareth us ; he that is not of God heareth not us. (1 John iv, 6)

Manifestly such a pretension would be impious. But how is it that the like claim in Scripture never shocks ? Because the claim is genuine ! And so of the Bible as a whole, it bears its own witness on its face ; and the promise runs,

“If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.” (John 7 : 17)

Soul that art in earnest ! Be thankful that thou hast not to observe the varying movements of Schools of thought, nor to read up the last speculations of writers of repute. Schools of thought may be all in the dark, for the Lord of Heaven and Earth hides things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes :

“It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Where is the wise ? where is the scribe ? where is the disputer of this world ? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world ?

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

(Matt. 11 : 25 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 19-21).

CONCLUSION.

As a theologian. Sir Hartley Williams is behind the times : he is a belated philosopher. With his reasonings and conjectures on immortality, he would have been quite in place in the groves of the Academy, with Plato and Socrates: his proper date is about 500 B.C. In that stage of the world's enlightenment his speculations and theories might have been acceptable, even praiseworthy. But since that day, there has been ONE in the world, who brought a revelation of what actually is, not of what He thought might be. He could say: "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life:" and if any are still in the dark, it is because "Light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light." In still later times, Nero, Trajan, and the rest of them, regarded Christianity as a "superstition"; and our learned Judge having climbed down eighteen centuries, has arrived back at the same opinion; and yet fancies that his school is a "Forward School"! *

But seriously: Will any sober earnest soul *really* resort to Mr. Justice Williams for light as to the Eternal Future? It may be a nice drawing-room entertainment to listen to His Honour discoursing on such subjects; and the pleasure may be flavoured with the thought that some very uncomfortable doctrines are being got rid of. But when it is a question

*"They were accustomed on a stated day to meet before daylight, and to repeat among themselves a hymn to Christ as God, and to bind themselves by an oath, with an obligation of not committing any wickedness. . . . On which account I judged it the more necessary to inquire by torture from two females, who were said to be deaconesses, what is the real truth. BUT NOTHING COULD I COLLECT EXCEPT A DEPRAVED AND EXCESSIVE SUPERSTITION. . . . The number of the culprits is so great as to call for serious consultation. . . . The contagion of THE SUPERSTITION HATH SPREAD not only through cities, but even villages and the country."

LETTER FROM C. PLINY TO THE EMPEROR TRAJAN,
PLINY'S EPISTLES, X. 97. 98.

of the soul taking its flight for ever from earthly surroundings, is *this* the sort of thing that we want ?

Now all religions turn on the question of SIN. This itself, is a proof that man is a fallen being. If the creature were in normal relations with his Creator, this would not be. There would be no agonizing enquiry in the soul as to either present relations or the eternal future. But man being a sinner, there is no religion that is not concerned with,—as a crucial question—the solemn matter of sin. The truth or falsity of a religion is shown by its treatment of this central point.

How then does the scheme in question deal with it ? That scheme has absolutely no provision for dealing with sin as GUILT. Man is treated as an improvable and perfectible being: there is a process of disciplining or refining him here or hereafter—but there is nothing to meet his guilt : *he* may progress to perfection ; but the past is unatoned for. The responsibility of a moral and intelligent being is simply ignored: *in this respect*, man is placed on a level with brutes. The mountain of crimes and sins is passed by as if he were not accountable. The affront to God's majesty; the infraction of His laws; the rebellion against His authority ; the havoc, the abuse of His creation ; and, towering above all, the crucifixion of His Son, find no answer in the scheme. Are all these things a trifle ? a mere *quantité négligeable* ?

This scheme may very well suit people who are not sinners; or who, notwithstanding that they are, have no exercise of conscience about sin. With such, the holiness of God is a matter about which they are not concerned. They are morally asleep. But there *are* earnest persons who have deep and true feelings about their sinful state and their sinful deeds; and who think that Eternity is a great reality: who feel that it is coming, though stealthily, yet steadily, closer to them day by day; and they yearn for peace with God. To these it may be pointed out that the projected system affords nothing to mitigate the holy wrath of God against sin: it provides no shelter from judgment. It goes upon the hypothesis that there is to be no judgment. All the murderers of the world; all the brutal and the filthy it has produced for 6000 years, are to be put

into classes. Does a high judicial functionary really suppose that a righteous God is not going to judge the past nor punish rebellion and crime? Is it to be made known throughout the intelligent hosts of the Universe, by means of God's dealings with man—that every conceivable crime and enormity may be committed, that God's authority may be defied, and His blessed Son murdered; and that God will look on in apathy and only put the wicked into classes as in a Sunday School! *Credat Judæus Appelles, non ego!* Here is where this imagined Future is false: it is BASED ON ASSUMPTION; the chief, the grand assumption being, that God will not act according to the holiness of His nature in dealing with the guilty.

Let us turn, from this grotesque prospectus, to the sober record of Scripture:—

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." (Romans 1: 18.)

"God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good." (Romans 2: 5-10.)

In the final book of Scripture, is set forth an imposing scene, well worth the consideration of those who are in danger of being misled by the learned Judge:—

"I SAW A GREAT WHITE THRONE and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away.

AND I SAW THE DEAD, SMALL AND GREAT, STAND BEFORE GOD; and the books were opened: and another book was opened which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Revelation 20: 11, 12.)

For this mighty event, His Honour has scarcely left room, in his plan for Eternity—but He who can cause the Heavens and the Earth to flee away, will Himself find room for it, and will brush aside as a fly every objector to His decrees.

One further point: In the imagined heaven we have been considering, good and evil are not finally severed: they are all in the same "plane" (that seems to be the word) though there may be different forms and

classes. The murderer will be there *and* his victim. The martyr will be there, and the wretch who made him to groan; the seducer and the one whose life he blasted; those who are "hateful and hating one another" will all be there. Blessed that the christian's hope is entirely different! He knows that he will leave evil for ever, when he quits this world: he has been wearied with it here; and instead of a heaven in which all the wicked of 6000 years will be gathered: he goes to a golden city where nothing that defileth enters :—

"FOR WITHOUT are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

"And there shall in no wise enter into it ANYTHING THAT DEFILETH, neither worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

"Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life; and may enter in through the gates into the city."

(Rev. 22: 15.14; 21: 27. Revised vers.)

Were Sir Hartley Williams' forecast true, which happily it is not, it would seem almost advisable to keep, just for its æsthetic beauty, the christian prospect—so bright is it, so elevating, so worthy of God!

One final word: It is a remarkable fact that no one, in the hour of death, has ever been known to regret being a christian: MILLIONS HAVE REGRETTED THAT THEY WERE NOT!